

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20
Refrain # 2: Live God's gift of Life
Understanding God's all-encompassing plan—3:1-5:20

Note: the keyword is “God” (4 times in 3 verses). He is the focal point.

- 1) The poor individual should enjoy God's gift—¹⁸ *Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting/beautiful* (cf. 3:11):
 - a) Three activities (cf. 2:24; 3:13)
 - i) *to eat,*
 - ii) *and to drink,*
 - iii) *and to find enjoyment in all the toil that he toils under the sun during the days of his life that God has given him,*
 - iv) cf. 1st Kings 4:20
 - b) Why? *for this is his allotment* (from God). (cf. 3:22; 9:9)

- 2) The wealthy individual should enjoy God's gift—¹⁹ *Furthermore, every man to whom God has given ...* (cf. 2:24-26)
 - a) Three gifts from God
 - i) *Riches*
 - ii) *and possessions,*
 - iii) *and given him the authority*
 - (1) Enjoy the benefits of your hard work—*to eat from it,*
 - (2) Enjoy your rightful share—*to receive his portion,*
 - (3) Enjoy your work—*and to rejoice in his toil;*
 - b) Restated: *this* (the ability to enjoy all that God gives) *is the gift of God.*

- 3) Contentment—5:20 ²⁰ *For he will not* (negatively) *reflect much on the days of his life,*
 - a) Why is this? *because God keeps him preoccupied with the joy of his heart.*
 - i) We should be soberly aware of our own mortality, but not obsessed with it. Don't brood over the past or worry about the future.
 - b) Cf. Psalm 4:5-8

“How sad that mortals spend all their days working and sweating to receive the enjoyment that God offers as a gift if people would only seek it in the manner that He, in His excellent and beautiful plan, has chosen to give it. Happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, and a knowledge of how the whole substance of life is integrated into a meaningful pattern in the plan of God are all linked in the living God.” (Kaiser, 120)