

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—<sup>18</sup> *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. 1<sup>st</sup> 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—<sup>19</sup> *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 <sup>20</sup> *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)