



# LIVING LIFE BACKWARD

How Ecclesiastes Teaches Us to Live Life in Light of the End

# BASED ON A BOOK BY THAT NAME

DAVID GIBSON

LIVING LIFE  
BACKWARD

HOW ECCLESIASTES TEACHES US

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TO LIVE IN LIGHT OF THE END ◀◀



# ECCLESIASTES 9:1-12

Chapter 7: From Death to Depth

# REVIEW

- Last week, we looked at Ecclesiastes 7.
  - Some things are better than others.
    - Good name better than perfume.
    - Mourning better than feasting.
    - Hearing the rebuke of a wise man better than hearing the fool's song.
  - Fear God.
- Some themes from Ecclesiastes 8:
  - The authority of the king.
  - No man has authority over death.
  - One man may have authority over another.
  - Righteousness and wickedness may not have their outcomes on earth, but fear God.

# THE UNKNOWABLE HAPPENINGS OF THIS LIFE

- We cannot know the great sovereign plans and works of God, 8:16-17.
  - “Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and unfathomable His ways! For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?” –Romans 11:33-34.
- Even what happens to the righteous and the wise is in the hands of God, 9:1.
  - To us in Christ, this can be comforting. See Romans 8:35, “Who will separate us from the love of Christ?”
- Any person may find himself loved or hated.
  - Christians should expect hatred from the world. Cf. John 15:18-19

# THERE IS ONE FATE FOR ALL

- All die, v.2. It makes no difference if they are:
  - Righteous or wicked
  - Good
  - Clean or unclean
  - Devout or not
  - Good or a sinner
  - Honest or not
- All men having the same fate is an “evil,” v.3
  - Romans 8:23
- The hearts of men are full of evil and foolishness.

# THE LIVING VERSUS THE DEAD

- The living have hope, v.4
  - The living know they will die.
- Live mutts and dead lions.
  - Caesar
  - Frank Sinatra
  - John Calvin
- What the dead have lost:
  - Knowledge.
  - Reward.
  - Remembrance.
  - Love, hate, and zeal.
  - Their place on the earth.

# HOW THEN DO WE LIVE?

- Go, and enjoy what God has given you! vv. 7-9.
  - Enjoy food, v.7
  - Wear happy clothing, v.8
  - Enjoy life with your wife, v.9
- Why should we?
  - God is pleased when we enjoy life, v.7
  - Our enjoyment of life is God's reward to us, v.9
- *Question: What have you enjoyed this morning? What do you enjoy well?*



# HOW THEN DO WE LIVE?

- Do whatever you do with all your strength.
  - “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance.” –Col. 3:23-24.
- Your earthly efforts are no more in Sheol.
  - The example of Paul, Php. 1:21-26.
  - The example of David, Psalm 31:9.

# THE RACE IS NOT TO THE STRONG

- Abilities and wisdom do not lead to earthly success, v.11.
    - Nevertheless, the general principle is that they do lead to success (see Proverbs).
  - Traps and miseries fall upon all men, v.12.
  - Man is not in control of what will happen in his life.
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- *Question: How does our lack of control change how we run the race?*