

Finding Meaning: Wisdom from Ecclesiastes
The Problem with Pleasure
Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

We live in a day and age where the pursuit of pleasure is available at the click of a mouse or a call on a cell phone. Today's world lives for pleasure. Our hedonistic culture says if it feels good, do it; if you want it, but it. Morality and affordability that used to influence our decisions no longer seem to matter. We are taught not to hold back from whatever we think might make us happy. What we need to realize is that worldly pleasure may seem enjoyable, but the enjoyment is brief and temporary. Worldly pleasures will always leave us empty.

1. Any fulfillment in _____ is temporary.

2. Any fulfillment in _____ is temporary.

3. Any fulfillment in _____ is temporary.

Only God gives us a lasting joy. Only God gives us fulfillment and satisfaction that lasts. God wired us for pleasure, but He wired us to find and experience pleasure in Him and according to His design. We should do things we enjoy, but we do them with gratitude to Christ and with glory to God.

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” –Paul (Colossians 3:17, NKJV)

Reflection

What do you and the people around you think is necessary to be truly happy? Why do we continue to think possessing more than we have right now will make us happy when we are not happy with what we have? Why do pleasurable experiences and the accumulation of money and possessions ultimately not satisfy? Why do most of us kill ourselves to succeed in work despite the Bible's repeated warnings that we do not get to our stuff with us when we die? Were you given the impression growing up in church that pleasure was to be avoided? What are some ways we can enjoy pleasure, possessions, relationships, and work in ways God designed? How can we fight against finding satisfaction in created things and instead find it in God alone?