

Our Attitude Toward God

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the futility of life without God, the emptiness of wealth, and the importance of sincere relationships and enjoyment of life's blessings.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Joshua 3:5, 1 Samuel 15:22, Nehemiah 8:8, Psalm 37:5, Ecclesiastes 4:4, Ecclesiastes 5:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Attitude"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the emptiness of a life lived solely for material possessions and temporal things. He emphasizes the importance of living for Christ and the eternal inheritance that awaits believers. Solomon's observations in the book of Ecclesiastes highlight the futility of pursuing wealth and success without God. Pastor Chuck encourages listeners to focus on the eternal and not be consumed by the temporary pleasures of this world.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Chapter 4, verse 4. And now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Again, I consider all of the travail and every right work that for this a man is envied of his neighbor. This also is vanity and frustration.

So, you try and do the right thing and all you get for it is your neighbor becomes envious of you. The emptiness of it. The fool folds his hands together.

He eats his own flesh. But better is a handful with quietness than both hands full with travail and frustration. And so I returned and I saw the vanity, the emptiness under the sun.

The emptiness of being alone. There is one who is alone. There's not a second.

He's by himself. Yea, he has neither child nor brother. And yet there's no end of his labor.

Here he is all by himself. No heirs or relatives to leave his money to. And yet the guy is working like crazy to build up a fortune.

And he says, how ridiculous that this fellow should travail and labor and work so hard when all he's got is himself. No one to really leave his goods to. There's no end to his neighbor and neither is his eye satisfied with riches.

Neither does he stop to say, for whom am I laboring? And bereave my soul of good. So this also was emptiness. Yes, it is a sore travail.

And so Solomon observes life. Life under the sun. Life lived apart from God and the consciousness of God and the emptiness of it.

The folly of it. A man without any relatives laboring so hard trying to get rich and never satisfied. Never satisfied.

Never enough. The eye is not satisfied with his riches. So he came to the conclusion two are better than one.

Because you have a better reward for your labor. At least you're feeding someone else. And if one falls, the other will lift up his fellow.

But woe to him who is alone when he falls. The loner. No one to help him.

If he falls, no one there to lift him up. And if two are lying together then at least you're warmer. But how can one be warm alone? It's a cold bed when you're there by yourself.

And so two better than one. If one prevail against him, two shall withstand him. And a threefold cord is not easily broken.

So the value of close relationships, not being just a loner. Better is a poor and a wise child than an old foolish king. And there he sees himself.

This poor little child doesn't have anything but he's wise. This old king. Foolish king.

Who will no more be admonished. Who has seen it all and you can't tell him anything. For out of prison he comes to reign.

Whereas he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor. So Solomon actually had placed heavy taxation upon the people and they were impoverished by his heavy taxation. It was greater than the people could bear.

And it was only enriching himself living in this total opulent lifestyle and luxurious lifestyle. And he sees now the emptiness of it. I considered all of the living which walk under the sun with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

And there is no end of all the people. Even of all that have been before them. They also that come after shall not rejoice in him.

Surely this also is empty and vexation of spirit. So I saw that one passes and other comes and they pass and other comes. I see the generations going.

And so he sees life as just an empty frustrating rut really. So he said keep your foot. When you go into the house of God and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.

For they consider not that they do evil. The sacrifice of fools. When Saul disobeyed God.

In the command to utterly destroy the Amalekites. And he brought back some of the finer cattle and sheep when faced by the prophet Samuel for the sin. He said I brought them back to sacrifice them to the Lord.

The sacrifice of fools. For Samuel responded to obey is better than to sacrifice. And to hearken is better than the fat of rams.

The sacrifices that God desires is a penitent heart. That he'll not turn away. They were going through religious ostentatious kind of demonstrations and one of the things to show a great religious kind of a fervor and feeling was to tear your clothes.

It showed great remorse and grief and all. To tear your clothes and God says hey tear your hearts and not your garments. I'd rather see a broken heart than your shredded clothes.

God's interested in what's going on in your heart. And if your heart isn't really right and honest before God then the sacrifices become an abomination. He said I've observed them.

Be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools. For they don't consider that that sacrifices is evil. Be not rash with your mouth.

Don't let your heart be hasty to utter anything before God. For God is in heaven you're on the earth. Therefore let your words be few.

For a dream cometh through the multitude of business and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words. Now when you then vow a vow unto God make sure you pay it. For he has no pleasure in fools.

Pay what you have vowed. So this is what he's saying. When you come in the house of God don't be quick to speak.

To make promises to God. Usually when a person makes a vow to God it is seeking to sort of drive a bargain with God. God if you'll do this for me this is what I'll do for you.

And the vow is usually to, it's a means by which I'm trying to strike a deal with God. And so he is warning us not to be hasty in making vows, making promises. Through the years I've learned a few things.

And one of the things I have learned is not to make vows. I had a period in my life in my early Christian experience where I was promising God every week that I would do better. Next week's going to be better.

And I was constantly making promises to God. And God if you'll do this for me then this is what I'll do for you. But I came to the place in my understanding of God's grace for me where I quit making vows.

Quit making promises to God. Because to promise to be better is really to trust in my flesh. And in my flesh there dwells no good thing.

And thus my promises were not kept. I wanted to do better. I wanted to be better.

But I failed to realize that God accepted me as I was. And God accepts you as you are in Christ. And to promise to be better is only to trust in the flesh.

So I quit promising. And I just began to see myself complete in Jesus Christ. And let God work in me.

So better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. Don't allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin. Neither say you before the angel that it was an error.

Wherefore should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands. Oh you just misunderstood me God. That's not what I really meant you know.

For in the multitude of dreams and in many words there are also diverse vanities. But just fear God. Reverence God.

If you see the oppression of the poor and the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province marvel not at the matter. For he that is higher than the highest regardeth and there be higher than they. Now this is something that I need to really take because I do see oppression of the poor.

I do see a violent perverting of judgment. I think that we have some classical instances of it at the present time as the courts have taken such a firm and obdurate stand against those who went out to protest abortions and the unjust sentences that are being given to these people. I compare that with the sentences that were meted out against the gay activists that went into St. Peter's Cathedral and maliciously destroyed things and upset the services and all.

Suspended sentences. You know \$15 fines. And I see that violent perverting of judgment and justice in this province.

But he said he that is higher than the highest takes note of it. God sees. And there is a higher judgment than they.

And so they themselves will one day stand before the judge of all the earth. Moreover the profit of the earth is for all. The earth is the Lord's the fullness thereof and they that dwell therein.

And God has intended that the earth produce for all men. The king himself is served by the field. God has made the fields to bring forth food.

The profit of the earth is for everyone. And he that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver nor he that loves abundance with increase. For this also is emptiness.

If to be rich is your goal in life you'll never have a place of satisfaction. You'll never have enough riches. You'll always be after more.

He that loveth silver will not be satisfied with silver. Donald Trump. You know if you ever figured what the interest would be on a billion dollars.

Surely you could be satisfied living off the interest of a billion dollars. Don't touch your principal just live on the interest. You know you should be able to get by.

But it doesn't work that way. When money is your God you're never satisfied. There's never enough.

It's empty. When goods increase they are increased that eat them. Now here was Solomon you know a rich man.

But he had that many more servants to feed. So it took 10 prime beef and 20 commercial beef and you know 100 sheep to feed the servants every day. Plus the 300 bushels of fine flour and the 600 bushels of

meal.

Not counting all of the deer and the chickens. For a single day for every day. So he says hey the more you've got the more you have to feed the more mouths there are.

So when goods increase they are increased that eat them. And so what good is for the owners thereof. You know you've got a lot of money but you've got a lot of debts.

You've got a lot of people now that are really depending on you for their food. The sleep of a laboring man is sweet. You know you work hard and man the sleep.

You get in bed and as soon as you hit the bed man you're gone. You've been working hard and you know been laboring and it's a sweet rest. But the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep.

I had a friend who was one of the neatest easygoing fellows you could ever run across. Fun. Always joking.

Just a great guy. He owned a manufacturing plant and his business started picking up. Had to buy bigger equipment.

Got a bigger plant and things kept growing. He got so much money. So much business that he started worrying about all of his money.

Worrying about bank failures. Worrying about business orders and things of this nature. You get all of that investment and then you've got to make the payments.

This fellow who was such an easygoing great jovial fellow ended up walking the streets at night. Couldn't sleep. You'd find him three or four o'clock in the morning just walking the streets.

Worried. Finally died of a heart attack. And it was tragic.

The sleep of a laboring man is sweet but the abundance of the rich man will not allow him to sleep. There is a sore evil which I've seen under the sun. And namely it is riches that are kept for the owners hurt.

Those that keep their riches and are hurt by this tragic thing. This man's riches led him to a heart attack. But those riches perish by evil travail.

And he begetteth a son and there is nothing in his hand. Now when you're born in this world he says look you don't have anything in your hand. You come into the world empty.

As he came forth from his mother's womb naked shall he return to go as he came and shall take nothing of his labor which he may carry away in his hand. And when you were born there was nothing in your hand and when you leave there will be nothing in your hand unless someone puts a Bible in your hand in the casket or something. But you go out empty.

All of your labor all of that sore travail to get rich when you go you go empty. You don't take anything with you. And so this also is a sore evil.

That in all points as he came so shall he go. And so what profit do you have of all of your labor. It was just to be blown away by the wind.

You leave it. It's empty. All of his days also he eats in darkness.

He has much sorrow and wrath with his sickness. Behold that which I have seen it is good and beautiful for one to eat and to drink and to enjoy the good of all of his labor that he takes under the sun all of the days of his life which God gives him for it is his portion. Enjoy what you have.

Every man also to whom God has given riches and wealth and hath given him power to eat thereof and to take his portion and to rejoice in his labor. This is the gift of God. I saw a beautiful motor home going down the street a while back had a little sign in it.

We're enjoying our kids inheritance. That's pretty much what Solomon is saying here. You know you worked hard you might as well enjoy it.

Who knows what they'll do with it when you're gone. God has given you the power to eat take your portion rejoice in your labor. This is the gift of God for he shall not much remember the days of his life because God answers him in the joy of his heart.

So observations of life by this rich jaded king. An empty life that's lived for self and apart from God. But how in contrast how rich is that life that is lived in Christ.

How rich the reward of our labor for Jesus Christ. And so the whole thing is living for now or living forever. Living for the present or living for the eternal.

Paul the apostle said we look not at the things which are seen for the things which are seen are temporal. But we look at those things which are not seen for the things which are not seen are eternal. How tragic is the man who lives only for the temporal material things.

How empty is his life when he comes to the end of the road. On the other hand how full and rich that life that is lived for Christ. What richness and fullness as you come to the end of the road.

Because you know it isn't the end of the road. It's the beginning of the eternal inheritance. The saints of God in Christ.

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And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck continues his verse by verse study through the Bible. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today. And now once again here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing comments.

God bless you and may the Lord guide you in his plan for your life. And may you learn as David to just commit your ways unto the Lord knowing that the Lord will take care of things as you just submit your life its facets unto him. And may God just continue to use you as his instrument in bringing his love to a needy world.

I just got the Word for Today Bible and I'm really enjoying the commentaries by Pastor Chuck. Listen to this one from the book of Joshua. You see God has already gone before me.

God is already there tomorrow. Joshua is telling them tomorrow God is going to do wonders in your eyes. And that's the thing that I need to hold in my mind.

Yeah that's really good. I have one too from the book of Nehemiah. So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and then they gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading.

That's what expository teaching is all about. That's what we have devoted our ministry to. The study of God's Word.

The Word for Today Bible is available in leather and paperback editions with more commentaries by Pastor Chuck. Simply teaching the Word of God. For more information please call the Word for Today at 1-800-272-WORD You can read a preview of the Word for Today Bible by visiting thewordfortoday.org This program has been sponsored by the Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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