NEW HEIGHTS

THIS LIFE UNDER THE SUN – A Study in Ecclesiastes
WHY MORE IS NOT ENOUGH
ECCLESIASTES 2:1-26
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October 18, 2026

What if you actually got the "more" you're after? Would it be enough?

> "If I can acquire enough and accomplish enough, I will finally be satisfied with my life."

What comes to mind when you think, "If I just had more of…"?

> *I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:1*

> *I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine —my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:2–8*

> *So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:9*

> *And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:10*

We can enjoy what we gain.

> *Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:11*

Real pleasure does not guarantee lasting satisfaction.

We cannot secure what we gain.

> *Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness. The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I perceived that the same event happens to all of them. Then I said in my heart, "What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?" And I said in my heart that this also is vanity.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:13–15*

> *For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool!*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:16*

Wisdom helps us navigate life. It cannot keep us from dying.

> *So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:17*

> *I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:18–21*

> *What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:22–23*

We receive enjoyment as a gift from God.

> *There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:24–25*

Having something and being able to enjoy it aren't the same thing.

> *For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes 2:26*

If joy is hard to find right now, that is not a verdict on whether you please God.

Receive God's gifts with gratitude.

When I think life owes me something, I keep checking the balance. But when I receive it as a gift, there's someone to thank.

Offer your work to God faithfully.

Work is good. The curse brought painful frustration into it.

> *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.*
>
> *Colossians 3:23–24*

> *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*
>
> *1 Corinthians 15:58*

Practice Receiving and Trusting

At the end of each day this week, pause. Name something good in that day—something you enjoyed, something you learned, someone you spent time with. Thank God specifically.

Then name one unfinished concern and bring it to Him.

You're still responsible to live faithfully. But you can receive today's good without waiting for everything to be finished or tomorrow to be certain.

That's what we're practicing: receiving the good God gives and trusting him with what we cannot secure.