

Hello. /We will begin the 7th lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /The message is from Ecclesiastes chapter 6. /The title of the chapter is “Futility.” /First, the vanity of wealth and honor. /Verses 1-2. /Second, the vanity of having many sons and living many years. /Verses 3-6.

/Third, /the vanity of the plans of the wise man. /Verses 7-9. /Fourth, one cannot dispute with someone stronger than he. /Fifth, the vanity of life, which passes like a shadow. /Verses 11-12.

/First, the vanity of wealth and honor. /Verses 1-2.

/Verse 1. Let us read. /There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind:

/Solomon saw that there was evil under the sun. /He saw evil deeds. /The verse says, “It lies heavy on mankind. /When it says “heavy” the verse is talking about something universal. /Thus it means something that we all have in common.

/The thing that lies heavy on mankind applies universally to every person. /Verse 2 explains what this is.

/Verse 2. /a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil.

/Wealth, possessions, and honor that a man received from God are all vanity. /This person may have wealth, possessions, and honor, /but later, all these things will not benefit him but will be given to a stranger.

/Someone’s parents may have worked hard and earned a lot of money. /But when they die, do they take their possessions with them? No. They leave it to their children. /Therefore, though they lacked nothing of all that they desired, it is all vanity.

/For this reason, the Preacher calls it a vanity and a grievous evil. /However, the Preacher confesses that wealth, possessions, and honor come from God. /Here, the Preacher has come to a proper realization. /Every blessing in life comes from God.

/God lifts people up and he lowers them. /He sometimes kills people. /He makes people rich. /He makes people poor. /God is in control of everything.

/1 Samuel 2:6-7 say, / “The LORD kills /and brings to life; /he brings down to Sheol /and raises up. The LORD makes poor /and makes rich; /he brings low /and he exalts.”

/God kills and he brings to life. /He makes people poor and he makes them rich. /Every blessing comes from God. /Thus Job came to realize this when he lost everything he owned, and he made this confession:

/ “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away.” /Job 1:21 says, / “And he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, /and naked shall I return. /The LORD gave, /and the LORD has taken away; /blessed be the name of the LORD.”

/God is the fountain of our blessings. /We need to realize that everything comes from God. /Here, the Preacher confesses that /wealth, possessions, and honor all come from God. /However, we do not enjoy those things.

/Thus everything is meaningless. /The Preacher says that honor and abundant wealth are all vanity. /Then what is not meaningless? God is not meaningless. /Therefore when God gives us wealth, possessions, and honor, we must use them for God.

/Whoever does this is the wise believer. /Beloved believers! /I hope we all invest our time and possessions /for God. /Then, we will receive heaven’s eternal treasures.

/Second, the chapter talks about the vanity of having many sons and living many years. /People had many sons, but that too was vanity. /People lived to an old age, but all they did was sin and die. /Today, the Preacher is speaking. A person may have one hundred children. /But if the spirit does not have pleasure, it all means nothing.

/Verse 3. /If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.

/Someone fathered one hundred children. /It is a good thing for people to have children. / But all of this is vanity as well. /Why is it vanity? How much do people suffer when they raise kids? /We’ll take a look at Jacob’s children.

/Jacob had twelve sons. /He had one daughter, which meant he fathered a total of thirteen children. /Can you imagine how much strife there would have been between all of them? /Joseph’s brothers sold Joseph. /Reuben defiled his father’s bed.

/Having many children cannot always be a good thing. /Eventually, people suffer in life and then they pass away. /David also had many children, but his son Absalom betrayed him. /Absalom, wanting to become king, tried to kill his father.

/People bear children, but if God does not give them pleasure, everything is meaningless. /Here, we must properly understand the words of the Bible. /It is very good for us to have many children while we enjoy life’s good things.

/It is a great blessing. /Psalm 127:3-5 say that /children are a heritage from the LORD. /It says, “Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!” /How precious is it when we have children and raise them to believe in Jesus?

/What this means is that our spirits must enjoy the pleasures as we bear many children. /Psalm 127:3 says, / “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, /the fruit of the womb a reward. /Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. /Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! /He shall not be put to shame /when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

/Children are a heritage from God. /The fruit of the womb are a reward. /The Preacher is saying that it is important to raise children while finding the spirit’s enjoyment. /He is saying that it is important to raise children in the faith.

/Then how great do you think our reward will be? /Here, children are compared to arrows in the hand of a warrior. /How strong must a man feel when his quiver is full of arrows?

/The enemy may attack, but the warrior can shoot his arrows to defeat the enemy. /He is referring to this. /How great is it when we have many children of faith who are faithful to God? /How great of a pride must this be?

/In my church, there was a deacon. /The first son of this deacon grew up to become a professor. /However, the youngest son did not become a professor. /The youngest son actually became a school teacher. /The deacon said that it was on a rare occasion that they saw the first son.

/The deacon had raised the son, but the son moved to the United States with his wife and kids, and he did not come to see his parents. /Once in a while, he would visit, but he would temporarily show his face and leave.

/If a person cannot find enjoyment, if a person teaches only the things of this world, everything becomes vanity. /This is what the Preacher is saying here. /It is no use raising one hundred children if they are not raised in faith.

/Children are a heritage from the LORD. /When we raise our children while enjoying the pleasures, they become like arrows in a quiver. /We must raise our children well. /Here, the verse also talks about wealth.

/I may be well off, but if I have no satisfaction, everything I own amounts to nothing. /Possessions complicate things for us in the world. /That is why Ecclesiastes 5:12 says, / “Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, /but the stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.”

/The poor person sleeps soundly at night. /But the rich man cannot fall asleep because he is calculating his expenses. /Then do we believers in Jesus have to be poor? /No, we do not. /It is good if we believers are rich.

/We must be rich in God. /We must give our possessions for God. /That is why Ecclesiastes 6:2 says that God has given us wealth, possessions, and honor.

/Because we have received our wealth from God, we must use our wealth for God. /We need to find satisfaction when we raise one hundred children. /Verse 3 also talks about a long life.

/A long life without enjoyment is an empty life. /A long life without Jesus is a meaningless life. /Until what age did Methusaleh live? /He lived until he was 969 years old.

/But all of this is meaningless because Methusaleh did not walk with God. /On the other hand, Enoch lived until the age of 365 as he walked with God. /Enoch enjoyed living his life with God.

/Genesis 5:23 says, / “Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. /Enoch walked with God, /and he was not, /for God took him.” /It says that Enoch walked with God.

/However, Methusaleh did not walk with God. /Genesis 6:27 tells us that he died at the age of 969. /Do you see how important it is for us to walk with God? /Even as you live to an old age, you can walk with God.

/In order for us to walk with the Lord, we need to follow his will. /We also need to be humble. /We need to be gentle. /Matthew 11:29 says that Jesus was gentle and humble. / Also, our purpose in life must match that of God’s purpose.

/Then we will be able to walk with God. /If we live to an old age, we must live life in enjoyment. /The verse tells us that a stillborn child is better than a soul not satisfied.

/Verse 3 says, “And he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.” /If our spirit is not at peace, living a long life is worse than being a stillborn child.

/The verse reads, “And he also has no burial.” /A person was rich. /He was wealthy and honored. /He had one hundred children. /Also, he lived a long life. /But when he dies, he has no burial.

/When this happens, his life is worse than a stillborn child who has not even seen the world’s light. /Israel’s first king was King Saul. /What kind of king was King Saul? /He was strong and had many sons.

/He was also a great king of the nation of Israel. /However, he lost the humility that he had, and he disobeyed God. /He did not listen to God’s commands. /He also tried to kill David, whom God was using.

/As a result, Saul was chased by the Philistines when he battled them at Mount Gilboa. /As Saul was in critical condition, he fell on his own sword and died. /He initially trusted in God, but as he prospered, he came to trust in his sword.

/He died on the sword that he so trusted. /Then what happened to his body? /His armor was stripped away, his head was cut off, and his body was nailed to the city wall. /Saul had no burial. /

/1 Samuel 31:5 says, / “And when his armor-bearer realized that Saul was dead, /he fell on his own sword and died beside the king.”

/1 Samuel 31:4 says, / “Saul groaned to his armor bearer, / “Take your sword and kill me /before these pagan Philistines come to run me through /and taunt and torture me.” /But his armor bearer was afraid /and would not do it. /So Saul took his own sword .and fell on it.”

/Saul lived by relying on his sword, but he died by his own sword. /What good is there in being a nation’s leader? /A person whose spirit does not have God will later see no burial. /If a person disobeys God, that person will have no burial. /Thus the Philistines cut off Saul’s head. /And they nailed his body to a wall.

/1 Samuel 31:8 says, / “The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. /So they cut off his head and stripped off his armor /and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, /to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. /They put his armor in the temple of Astaroth, /and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.”

/Saul’s head was cut off. /His body was nailed to the wall of Beth-shan. /He was shamed in front of many people. /This is the result of disobedience. /This is the result of Saul enjoying honor and wealth and glory without real satisfaction.

/Therefore we must first find our spirit’s satisfaction. /The Preacher makes this confession. /A person may live long without enjoyment, /but in the end, there will be no burial.

/Verse 4. /For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered.

/The stillborn child comes in vanity and goes in darkness. /This is talking about a miscarried baby. /The baby has no name, and it dies without seeing the light. /The verse says its name is covered in darkness. /The stillborn child does not have a name. /Next the Preacher says this.

/Verse 5. /Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he.

/The verse reads, “Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything.” /This too is speaking about the stillborn child. /Here, it says “he.” /The stillborn child is better off than he. /King Saul, born to this world, received God’s calling and was used by God to do honorable things.

/But Saul disobeyed God, and he died on the sword that he so trusted. /His dead body was cut into pieces, /and his miserable life saw no burial. /Then is Saul better off or is the stillborn child better off?

/Because Saul committed many sins, he will be rebuked in the presence of God. /This stillborn child did not sin, so it will not be rebuked. /Therefore, the Preacher is teaching us this lesson.

/The Preacher is teaching us that our spirits must have enjoyment while we use our wealth, possessions, and honor. /If we are satisfied, it does not matter if we do not have a burial. /There were many martyrs in Korea's past.

/There are many Korean believers who were persecuted and killed, their bodies lost without a grave. /During the Korean War, many believers were martyred. /At the time, the martyrs did not have a burial. /But because their spirits had enjoyment, it is okay.

/However, the Preacher wants to tell us that there are those unfortunate people who have wealth, possessions, and honor but do not have the spirit's enjoyment.

/Verse 6. /Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to the one place?

/The verse tells us that even though someone lives a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good, all go to the one place. /Where do we go if we do not believe in Jesus? /Unbelievers go to hell when they die.

/Thus we must enjoy good in our lives. /The person who has enjoyment in his life always expresses gratitude whether he is rich or lowly. /The apostle Paul speaks in the book of Philippians.

/Paul says, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." /Hence we must be thankful in every situation at all times. /Philippians 1:18 says, / "What then? /Only that in every way, /whether in pretense or in truth, /Christ is proclaimed /and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice."

/If Christ was proclaimed, Paul rejoiced. /Also, Philippians 1:20 says, / "Now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death."

/In Philippians 1:23, /Paul desires to leave this world and be with God. /He had joy in God. /I hope all of you can enjoy good in your lives as well.

/Third, the vanity of the plans of the wise man.

Verse 7. /All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied.

/The plans of the wise man are all vanity. /The wise person operates his business. /How prosperous must the wise man be when he does business? /However, this too is meaningless.

/The verse says, “All the toil of man is for his mouth.” /Why do we work so hard? /Yes, it is to eat food. /How hard do people work to eat food?

/People toil for their mouths. /They work to pay for their living expenses. /They wake up early in the morning and work until late at night. /But the Preacher here says that /people are acting in their greed.

/Verse 7 says, “Yet his appetite is not satisfied.” /It means people are working to satisfy their greed. /1 Corinthians 10:31 says, / “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

/We must do everything for the glory of God. /We toil in order to eat, /but we must not lean towards our greed. /James 1:15 says, “Then desire when it has conceived /gives birth to sin, /and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”

/When sin is fully grown, it brings forth death. /Therefore we must not act in our greed. / Whether we eat or drink, we must do all things for God’s glory. /We must be people who give God joy.

/Not acting in our greed means acting according to the word of God. /Many people go into the workplace on Sundays. /Doing this is meaningless. /The reason is working on Sundays is going against what the Bible says.

/We obey the word of God as we work hard in our lives. /Then God will delight in us. /One of the Ten Commandments tells us to remember the Sabbath. /If we do so, God blesses us. /Isaiah 58:13,14. /Exodus 16:22-27.

/Verse 8. /For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living?

/The wise man does not have an advantage over the fool. /The verse says, “And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living?” /If the wise man and the fool both live in greed, there is nothing good for both of them.

/Verse 9. /Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite: this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

/The verse says, “Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite.” /How greedy are people due to the appetite of their heart? /People daydream about a palace that is greater than Solomon’s palace. /They daydream about having the entire world.

/It is better to see with the eyes than to have a wandering appetite. /It is all a vanity when we have such greedy fantasies or when we lay our eyes on something with greed.
/Therefore, we must not be excessively greedy.

/We need to be faithful and thankful in the place we stand. /It is wrong for us to be greedy or to daydream about obtaining things. /If we are overly greedy, we become slaves to the devil.

/Jude 1:6 says that Satan became the devil when he left his own position. /Isaiah 14:12.
/Psalm 131:1

/Fourth, /one cannot dispute with someone stronger than he.

/Verse 10. /Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known what man is, and that he is not able to dispute with one stronger than he.

/The verse says, “Whatever has come to be has already been named.” /When it says “Has already been named,” it means that we have been predestined by God. /Here, it says, “One stronger than he.” /This is talking about God.

/We were named a long time ago. /We have been predestined by God. /The one who is stronger is referring to God. /We cannot dispute with God. /We need to abide in the truth, and we need to be obedient and humble before God. /We must follow God’s guidance and live within our means.

/Fifth, /the vanity of life, which passes like a shadow. /Verses 11-12.

/Verse 11. /The more words, the more vanity, and what is the advantage to man?

/Solomon is saying that living life like a shadow is vanity.

/Verse 12. /For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow? For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?

/Wealth, honor, and long life are all like a passing shadow. /Our life consists of all these things that disappear under the sun.

/Therefore, a meaningful life /accepts Jesus Christ as Savior, /fears God, /lives a new life in Christ, /and spiritually walks with God.

/When we live this way, our wealth, /honor, /long life, /and many children /will bring glory to God, /and all these things will be a great joy to us.

/This ends the 7th lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /Thank you.