

PM 09-13 Enjoy Life with the Lord's Gifts

Text: Ecclesiastes 5:18–20 **Series:** Ecclesiastes: Under the Sun and Above It **Date:** September 13, 2026 **Speaker:** Ed Rangel **Location:** Waupaca Church of Christ **Bible Version:** NASB 1995 **Sermon Type:** Expository

Thesis

Our few years, the good we receive from our labor, and the ability to enjoy it are gifts from God to receive with gratitude.

Hook

A man can spend his life getting more and never enjoy what he has.

He works for the next purchase, worries about losing what he owns, and measures his life against someone who has more. There may be food on his table and people he loves sitting around it, yet his mind is somewhere else. He is waiting for enough.

Ecclesiastes brings that man back to the table. God has given him something good today, and today will not last forever.

Introduction

1. **Ecclesiastes 5:10–17** exposes the disappointment of trusting money. The man who loves it is not satisfied with it. Possessions bring concerns, wealth can be lost, and death takes a man away from everything he accumulated.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 — NASB 1995

He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity.

Ecclesiastes 5:11 — NASB 1995

When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?

Ecclesiastes 5:12 — NASB 1995

The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.

Ecclesiastes 5:13 — NASB 1995

There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches being hoarded by their owner to his hurt.

Ecclesiastes 5:14 — NASB 1995

When those riches were lost through a bad investment and he had fathered a son, then there was nothing to support him.

Ecclesiastes 5:15 — NASB 1995

As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand.

Ecclesiastes 5:16 — NASB 1995

This also is a grievous evil--exactly as a man is born, thus will he die. So what is the advantage to him who toils for the wind?

Ecclesiastes 5:17 — NASB 1995

Throughout his life he also eats in darkness with great vexation, sickness and anger.

2. The Preacher has looked honestly at that trouble. Now, in verses 18–20, he tells us what he has seen to be good within this brief life.
3. These verses do not erase the book's hard questions. Even those who fear God face loss, exhausting work, and death. Yet they can receive real good from God's hand in the years He gives.
4. Listen for what God gives as we move through the passage: life, provision, and the ability to enjoy His gifts.

I. Enjoy the Good in the Life God Has Given You (Ecclesiastes 5:18)

A. The Preacher calls ordinary enjoyment good and fitting.

1. Read Ecclesiastes 5:18.

Ecclesiastes 5:18 — NASB 1995

Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward.

2. After describing the trouble surrounding wealth, the Preacher directs us to a meal and the good found in our work. These are ordinary parts of life, but he calls their enjoyment good. A person does not have to feel guilty for taking pleasure in the lawful things God provides.
 3. Notice that labor is still present. The man in this verse has work to do, and that work involves toil. He can enjoy its good without expecting it to solve every problem or give him permanent control over his life. There is satisfaction in a task completed, a useful service rendered, and food provided through honest work.
- B. The years themselves come from God.
4. The verse speaks of “the few years of his life which God has given him.” Brevity gives urgency to receiving today's good. If you postpone all enjoyment until every difficulty is settled, you are waiting for a condition this passage never promises.
 5. Consider an evening meal. You can spend it complaining about work and talking about what you cannot afford, or you can acknowledge the provision before you and give

attention to the people with you. The day's problems may still require attention tomorrow. They need not take every good thing from this evening.

C. Receive God's good creation with thanksgiving.

6. Paul warned Timothy about teachers who forbade marriage and required people to abstain from foods God created to be received with gratitude. Their restrictions made rejection of God's gifts appear spiritual. Listen to Paul's answer.

1 Timothy 4:4 — NASB 1995

For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;

1 Timothy 4:5 — NASB 1995

for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

7. God's word and prayer govern our use of His gifts. Thanksgiving does not make a sinful appetite holy, but neither does refusing lawful enjoyment make us more faithful. Thank the Lord for the meal, and receive it as something good from His hand.

II. The Ability to Enjoy Is Also God's Gift (Ecclesiastes 5:19)

A. Having possessions and enjoying them are different things.

1. Read Ecclesiastes 5:19.

Ecclesiastes 5:19 — NASB 1995

Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

2. God is named as the source of both the provision and the ability to enjoy it. The man described here has wealth and is able to receive good from it. He has reason to thank God for both. His possessions alone cannot explain his gladness.
3. **Ecclesiastes 6:1–2** describes the painful contrast: a man has riches, wealth, and honor, but God has not empowered him to enjoy them, and a stranger enjoys them instead. Chapter 5 is therefore no guarantee that everyone with possessions will enjoy them. Being able to receive their good is itself a blessing beyond merely owning them.

Ecclesiastes 6:1 — NASB 1995

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men—

Ecclesiastes 6:2 — NASB 1995

a man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires; yet God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is vanity and a severe affliction.

B. Recognizing the Giver teaches us gratitude and humility.

4. **James 1:17** identifies God as the source of every good gift. Here Ecclesiastes helps us recognize how much we have received. If you have food and can enjoy eating it, give thanks. If you can work and take satisfaction in doing something useful, acknowledge God's kindness. Gratitude should reach beyond the things we own to the good we are able to experience through them.

James 1:17 — NASB 1995

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

5. We must handle this truth carefully with people who are hurting. These verses do not tell us that everyone who struggles to feel glad has failed God. Grief, illness, and hardship can make enjoyment difficult. We have no right to turn the Preacher's description of a blessing into an accusation against a suffering person. Thank God for the good you can enjoy, and show compassion toward those carrying burdens you may not see.

C. The cross shows how generously the Father has given.

6. The gospel takes our gratitude beyond the things on our table. God gave His own Son for sinners. Paul points Christians who face suffering to that costly proof of the Father's love.

Romans 8:32 — NASB 1995

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

7. God did not spare His Son. Jesus was delivered up to death for us. The cross deals with a need that food, money, and comfortable circumstances could never meet: our guilt before God. Our gratitude must reach the Savior who died for our sins.
8. Paul's question gives Christians confidence in the Father's care. It does not promise every possession we want or a life free from suffering. The chapter itself speaks of tribulation and persecution. We can trust the Father in hardship because He has already demonstrated His love in giving His Son.
9. If you measure God's love only by what you own, every loss will call that love into question. Look at the cross. Thank Him for His daily provision, and trust the love He has shown even when your circumstances are painful.

III. God Gives Gladness Within Our Passing Years (*Ecclesiastes 5:20*)

A. God's gift changes how a man experiences his brief life.

1. Read *Ecclesiastes 5:20*.

Ecclesiastes 5:20 — NASB 1995

For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart.

2. The man has not become immortal. Verse 18 has already called his years few. But the passing of those years does not occupy all his attention. God gives him gladness within

them. There is something to receive and enjoy while his life is passing.

3. The verse says he will not "often" consider his years. It does not promise the end of every anxious thought or painful memory. A person can thank God sincerely and still grieve someone who is missing from the table. Gladness is real even when sorrow has not disappeared.

B. Receive today's good without demanding that it last forever.

4. A meal ends. A satisfying day's work is followed by another task. The people we love grow older. Their passing does not make the good we receive through them worthless. We can acknowledge life's brevity and still be thankful for what God gives us within it.
5. The man who loves money in verse 10 remains unsatisfied. The man in verse 20 is occupied with gladness God gives him. That contrast exposes a question for us: has the desire for more made us inattentive to the good already present? A larger income cannot teach a person to give thanks. We need to recognize the hand from which our blessings come.

C. The risen Christ gives hope beyond our passing years.

6. Ecclesiastes teaches us to receive the good God gives within a brief life. The New Testament also directs Christians to what lies beyond that life. Peter blesses God for a living hope grounded in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3 — NASB 1995

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Peter 1:4 — NASB 1995

to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

1 Peter 1:5 — NASB 1995

who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

7. The Savior who died for us rose from the dead. Through Him, Christians have an inheritance that will not perish or fade. Earthly provision is good, but it cannot give us that future. Our hope rests in the living Christ.
8. Peter describes Christians as protected by God's power through faith. We continue trusting and obeying the Lord; possessions can never take His place. We can enjoy today's gifts without demanding that they last forever, because our eternal inheritance is with Him.

Application

Look honestly at what is taking your attention. If comparison has become a habit, stop feeding it. When someone else receives something good, be glad for that person without treating your own provision as an insult. Name a specific blessing in your prayers instead of moving immediately to the next request. At a meal this week, put aside the phone and give your attention to the food and the people before you. Receive that time as part of the life God has given you.

If life is painful right now, you do not need to pretend otherwise. Receive whatever measure of good is available today, and let others help carry your burden. Brethren, we can share a meal, visit someone who is lonely, or help with a difficult task. The passage should make us grateful for God's generosity and willing to share what we have received. When pain makes gratitude difficult, remember that the Father gave His Son for you. The cross demonstrates His love, and the resurrection gives you hope beyond what you may lose today.

Conclusion

1. The Preacher has told us plainly that our years are few and our possessions cannot satisfy the heart that always wants more.
2. Within those few years, God gives real good: provision, satisfaction in labor, and the ability to enjoy His gifts.
3. At the cross, the Father gave His Son for our sins. Through Christ's resurrection, He has given us a living hope. Receive today's good with gratitude and hold fast to the Savior whose gifts reach beyond the grave.

Invitation

Enjoying God's earthly gifts does not settle our need for forgiveness. God has also provided salvation through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose from the dead. Hear His gospel. Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Repent of your sins, confess Him, and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (**Acts 2:38**). Then live faithfully in His service. Receive His grace with a faith that obeys Him.

Read Acts 2:38.

Acts 2:38 — NASB 1995

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If you are a Christian whose love of possessions has displaced your gratitude and obedience, repent and put the Lord first again. If you need the prayers of the church, let us pray with you.

Receive God's gifts with gratitude.