

Can Pleasure Give Our Lives Meaning?

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

1. A list of Pleasures Solomon tried.
 - a. Laughter.
 - i. Proverbs 31:25 She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.
 - ii. Proverbs 14:13 Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.
 - b. Alcohol.
 - i. Psalm 104:15 wine that gladdens human hearts...
 - ii. Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.
 - iii. Proverbs 31:4-7
 - c. Great projects:
 - i. Houses.
 1. 1 Kings 7:1-12; 6:38
 - ii. Vineyards.
 - iii. Gardens and orchards.
 - iv. Reservoirs for watering.
 - v. Slaves.
 - vi. Herds and flocks.
 1. 1 Kings 4:22-23
 - vii. Silver and Gold.
 1. 2 Chronicles 9:13-28
 - viii. Singers.
 - ix. Women.
 1. 1 Kings 11:3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.
2. Solomon's conclusion:
 - a. Pleasures don't provide meaning.
 - b. Pleasures do not last.

BEYOND THE SUN:

1. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that godliness means avoiding pleasures or quenching desire.
 - a. Colossians 2:20-23
 - b. Matthew 5:29-30
 - c. Psalm 119:37 Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.
 - d. 1 Corinthians 9:27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.
 - e. Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

2. Look at pleasures as gifts from God and give Him thanks.
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:3-4 They will prohibit marriage and require abstinence from certain foods that God has created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving
 - b. 1 Timothy 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.
 - c. Psalm 9:1 I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.

3. Live for eternal pleasures: embrace suffering now for lasting joy later.
 - a. Philippians 1:29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him
 - b. Philippians 3:10-11 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.
 - c. Hebrews 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
 - d. Psalm 16:11 You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.
 - e. Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."