

ETERNITY IN THE HEART



Ecclesiastes...The Search for a Christian Worldview

ROVING APPETITES (*Ecclesiastes 6*)

"At once we are faced with the fact that the power to enjoy God's gifts...is itself a gift which may or may not be allotted to us...One could have the things men dream of—which in Old Testament terms meant children by the score, and years of life by the thousand—and still depart unnoticed, unlamented and unfulfilled." —Derek Kidner

I. FLEETING PLEASURES (6:1, 2)

- A. The burdens of possessions (v. 1)
- B. Enrichment minus enjoyment (v. 2)

"It is because people live in the things they possess instead of in their relationship to God, that God at times seems cruel."

—Oswald Chambers

II. FRUSTRATING FUTURE (6:3, 4)

- A. The miscarriage of inheritance (v. 3)
- B. The mysteries of destiny (v. 4)

"Expectations improperly indulged must end in disappointment."

—Samuel Johnson

III. FADING PROSPERITY (6:5-7)

- A. Empty perspectives (vs. 5, 6)
- B. Unsatisfied appetites of expectation (v. 7)
 - 1. Note Philippians 1:20

"Those who dwell continually upon their expectations are apt to become oblivious to the requirements of their actual situation ." —Charles Sanders Pierce

IV. FAULTED PURSUITS (6:8-10)

- A. Reduction to materialism and secular humanism (v. 8)
- B. Resignation to appetite (v. 9)
- C. Realization of emptiness (v. 10)

"People who struggle the most with expectations tend to be driven by gusts of circumstance instead of knowing where they're going." -- Louis McBurney, M.D

V. FINDING PURPOSE (6:11, 12)

- A. The limitations of words (v. 11)
- B. Shadows and sunset (v. 12)

"Once more, a positive note has broken through...we catch a glimpse of the man for whom life passes swiftly, not because it is short and meaningless but because, by the grace of God, he finds it utterly absorbing." —Derek Kidner

FOR REFLECTION...

1. In this chapter, Solomon deals with the terms of spiritual appetites (vs. 7, 9). Since possessions and achievements, while pleasant, are seen to fail, what are the key ingredients for happiness?

2. What are the implications of verses 7 and 11 regarding the mouth and words in bringing happiness? Compare human and divine dialogue and the demand to read life correctly (note Psalm 19:13, 14)

