

## ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20

### THE GIFT OF GOD

“Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.”<sup>1</sup>

**H**ow do you define what is good? The writer of the dark book of Ecclesiastes says that eating and drinking and finding enjoyment in one’s labour is “good and fitting.” How different from the caricature of the Faith presented by the world! How different from the caricature presented by many churches! The world, to say nothing of the attitude displayed in many pulpits, is that the Faith is designed to ensure that there is no joy left in life.

Many Christians seem to imagine that when they go to the House of God, they are to look sour and bitter as though God is somehow offended if His people express their joy. I briefly pastored a congregation that was opposed to anything that even appeared to spread joy among the members of the assembly. Early in my tenure at that doleful church, during a congregational meeting I proposed that the church schedule a picnic following a Sunday morning service. We could enjoy a meal in the park and play a game of softball and organise some fun events for the children. When I said this, a woman fairly exploded to exclaim, “Do you mean to play games on the Sabbath?” I was less inhibited in those days than I am today, so I casually responded, “Yes, I do propose that we enjoy some activities for those wishing to participate. It isn’t the Sabbath, you know.” Spontaneously, older members began to sing, “The Fight is On”—well, figuratively, at least. I was quickly informed that those dear saints didn’t even read the funny papers on a Sunday. They didn’t watch television on a Sunday. And they sure didn’t play softball or run races on a Sunday! They appeared to believe that anything that might bring a smile to their face was an offence to God.

God created mankind to be joyful. Christians, walking with the Living God, should express incredible, intense joy in everything they do. God’s purpose is our good and His glory. However, since the fall, mankind tends to choose that which is inferior, sacrificing the permanent on the altar of the temporary. Our immediate “happiness” leads us to surrender that which is permanent and good. Consequently, left to pursue our own interest without seeking God’s glory, we are incapable of discovering what is good. We know little of joy—intense, overwhelming joy that infuses every facet of life. Transience defines the pleasures we pursue and permanence becomes a phantasm, a will-o’-the-wisp, an ignis fatuus always just out of reach. Thus unfulfilled, we lurch from one meaningless pursuit to the next.

**GOOD AND FITTING** — “Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him.” Be cautious about making this an absolute truth. Solomon couches his language to clarify that this is his observation. Though it is a generalisation, it nevertheless generally holds true throughout life.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible: English Standard Version**. Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers, 2001. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Previous sermons provided exposition of the verses leading up to the text for this day.<sup>2</sup> I mention that because the opening word of our text serves to connect us to what has preceded. “Behold” is a discourse marker as the Preacher takes up his advice to enjoy life. The word could be translated, “Despite that” or “However.” It can be rendered as, “But this is what I discovered.”<sup>3</sup> It is as though the Preacher has said, “I’ve been exposing the fact that you seek satisfaction in all the wrong places. Now, contrast that to what God actually longs to give us!” Solomon is challenging readers to ponder that God seeks our good! And when we have received what is good, it always results in His glory. This assuredly means that God desires that His people should experience joy—settled, sustained, satisfying joy in our service and in our life.

Let that thought sink in: God wants His people to be joyful; our lives are to be characterised by joy. The idea that eternity will be dull and boring is a caricature of what God has planned. Citing the Prophet Isaiah, Paul declares,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the heart of man imagined,  
what God has prepared for those who love him”

[1 CORINTHIANS 2:9]

There will be no floating around on clouds, drifting aimlessly about God’s heaven throughout eternity. We are appointed to serve Him in meaningful, fulfilling work that always brings us joy. For this reason, the saints “shout for joy” [see PSALM 35:27; 65:8; 71:23; 132:9, 16]; and the redeemed of God will continue to rejoice eternally. Eternity will be marked by joyous service as we serve the One who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Because this is true, we are to find joy in our service now. How neglected is the teaching delivered by the Psalmist when he writes:

“I was glad when they said to me,  
‘Let us go to the house of the Lord!’”

[PSALM 122:1]

We are to experience genuine excitement at the opportunity to come into the House of the Lord. The absence of is a commentary on our character failure.

The redeemed are expected to “rejoice in all the good that the LORD ... has given” [DEUTERONOMY 26:11]. The joy expressed flows in great measure because we know that God provides what is good, even our prosperity [JEREMIAH 33:9]. Underscore this truth in your mind, the Lord gives “what is good” [PSALM 85:12]. Failure to acknowledge His goodness—what is good—is evidence of ingratitude [JUDGES 8:35].

From these citations, we note that what is “good” is an expression of our actions, our choices; as such, the things said to be “good” reveal the presence of the LORD God Himself. This becomes evident from God’s Word through Micah:

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Stark, “The Vanity of Wealth,” (sermon), June 5, 2016, <http://newbeginningsbaptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ecclesiastes-05.10-12-The-Vanity-of-Wealth.pdf>; Michael Stark, “As We Come, So We Leave,” (sermon), July 31, 2016, <http://newbeginningsbaptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Ecclesiastes-05.13-17-As-We-Come-So-We-Leave.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Graham S. Ogden and Lynell Zogbo, **A Handbook on Ecclesiastes, UBS Handbook Series** (United Bible Societies, New York, NY 1998), 184

“[The LORD] has told you, O man, what is good;  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?”

[MICAH 6:8]

In this context, believers are commanded, “Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good” [ROMANS 12:9]. Christians are divinely charged to “hold fast what is good” [1 THESSALONIANS 5:21]. All that I have cited to this point focuses on our attitudes and actions.

Surprisingly, the text before us this day appears to ignore our attitudes and actions, focusing rather on those temporal aspects giving us pleasure in daily life; Solomon focuses on commodities and goods that we may hold and use. This is often surprising to some Christians, though it shouldn’t be in the least surprising. God seeks our good; and when we are blessed He is glorified. Tragically, mankind, fallen as we are, distorts the will of God to make our immediate pleasure the *summum bonum* of life. Our inclination is to relegate the Living God to a mere footnote in life, if acknowledging Him at all.

Here are some examples. The alcoholic imagines that one more drink will be enough to quench her raging thirst. That one more drink is never enough; she still awakens the next morning nursing a headache, an ulcerated stomach and a taste in her mouth reminiscent of an opossum sleeping there all night. The sex addict is certain that all he needs is just one more tawdry affair and he will be satisfied. The sordid affairs, late night romps through air-brushed fantasies and multiple calls to sex lines only leave him craving more as he chases an eidolon. The greedy individual thinks that if she can acquire just one more bauble her life will be fulfilled. However, she is never satisfied; things can never satisfy nor can they give a sense of worth.

Fulfilment, our sense of self-worth does not grow out of what we possess. We gain our standing in our own eyes through our relationship to God who gives us what we need for life. The Preacher is directing our eyes to the LORD who gives richly to all. This concept must be complemented by the emphasis provided elsewhere that diligence yields a return. For instance, consider this series of statements concerning diligence and the accumulation of all that is necessary for comfort in this life.

“The hand of the diligent will rule,  
while the slothful will be put to forced labor.”

“Whoever is slothful will not roast his game,  
but the diligent man will get precious wealth.”

“The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing,  
while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied.”

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance,  
but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”

[PROVERBS 12:24, 27; 13:4; 21:5]

Among the Proverbs is found one additional pointed statement commending hard work as the means of accumulating wealth.

“In all hard work there is profit,  
but merely talking about it only brings poverty.”

[PROVERBS 14:23 NET BIBLE]

Clearly, the Word teaches that man is responsible to work hard, recognising that diligence is necessary if he is to provide for his own welfare and for that of his family. Recall that the LORD warned our first father,

“By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread,  
till you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
for you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.”

[GENESIS 3:19]

What a rebuke to the modern welfare system that has been structured to generate dependence on government and reward indolence! Before anyone protests that some people need assistance, let me remind you that the exception only establishes the rule. Of course there are exceptions! Nevertheless, the rule stands that our modern welfare system has destroyed the social contract on which western society was established. The home is denigrated, parents are restrained from acting as those responsible to transmit the collective wisdom of generations while government is exalted and the ideal of meaningful labour is debased.

Contrast this view with the text before us where the Wise Man compels us to look beyond our own strength and abilities to see that behind whatever we may do to better ourselves or whatever may be done to improve our personal situation stands the Living God. Though many dismiss this truth, Christians know that if they will please the Living God they must acknowledge the Lord God. Righteous thinking leads us to acknowledge that it is God who gives us strength and even the ability to reason. If we face adversity, managing to overcome the challenges faced, we know that God gave us the stamina. God gives us opportunity and the wisdom to seize the occasion. When we hesitate, it is not God holding us back from success in our endeavours. God gives us health and the support of family and friends. With the Apostle we ask, “What do you have that you did not receive” [1 CORINTHIANS 4:7]?

**THIS IS HIS LOT** — “This is his lot.” There is so much wrapped up in this one, brief statement that it requires its own heading. To eat and drink and find enjoyment is specifically tied to work. I find this to be quite exciting! This concept drives conscientious Christians back to review of a theology that has been largely neglected, if not forgotten, in this day. Lacking from the theology of too many of us who provide exposition of the Word of God is a theology of work.

To be certain, as already noted, mankind must earn his living by “the sweat of his face.” There is no free lunch; everyone must work. However, what is too often neglected whenever we speak of work is that work itself is not part of the curse arising from the fall—it is the toilsome, perhaps even monotonous aspect of labour that is the curse.

Adam was assigned duties when he was created. Note the account of creation given in Genesis. “When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” [GENESIS 2:5-9].

When Moses wrote “there was no man to work the ground,” he was not simply filling space; neither was he extrapolating from the present situation to some idyllic period when people did not work. Prompted by the Spirit of God, Moses is simply observing that man was not yet created. In phrasing the information as he does, he is informing us that man would have responsibilities after he was created. This becomes apparent when he writes in GENESIS 2:15, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.” Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden with the specific task “to work [the garden] and keep it.”

What is interesting to note is that Adam was to work the ground (till the soil, plant the seed and tend the plants) before the fall. After the fall, he would be engaged in the same work. “The LORD God sent [the man and the woman] out from the Garden of Eden to work the ground” [GENESIS 3:23]. Working in order to gain a harvest, and by extension, working to provide for oneself and for one’s family, is not a curse. However, that the work will not of itself bring happiness does appear to be part of the curse. Whenever an individual looks to her work as an end in itself, or looks to work as a means for personal happiness, she will be disappointed. Solomon expands on this theme when he pens the Proverb that says,

“Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread,  
but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.”  
[PROVERBS 28:19].

Adam was to till the soil and grow the crops required for life; he was also “to keep” the Garden. What is interesting about the Hebrew word behind this charge is the connotation that keeping the Garden meant to watch over it, or to guard it. It was Paradise! What’s to watch? God’s charge could imply that something sinister was taking place. I have sometimes pointed out that Paradise seems always to have a snake. At least a part of Adam’s charge, dare I say half of his responsibility, was to guard against spiritual invasion. The danger arose from one identified as the covering angel who would rebel. God knew before Satan ever rebelled what he would seek to do; and Adam was warned to guard the Garden and thus, to guard his own heart.

What is important is to note that work is not a curse. Likewise, the need for watchfulness in the spiritual realm is not a curse. The curse arises whenever we attempt to perform these duties in our own strength. Does your work give you fulfilment? Does your labour bring satisfaction? If the work you perform is offered up as a sacrifice to the Living God, it will bring satisfaction and joy. If you perform it merely to obtain a salary, you will discover that it is drudgery, toil that drains vitality and vigour. If you guard your heart, keeping time with God and placing your service to Him first in your life, that guarding will be joyful and fulfilling. If, however, you grow haphazard in your service to Him, your efforts to serve will drain your soul.

I've alluded to the fact that work is given by God. We were created to work; we find fulfilment in our labour. Strength, opportunity, co-ordination—all are given for our benefit; the attitude with which we conduct ourselves in our labours reveals our understanding that He has given us all that we possess and all that we employ to the praise of His glory. The vocational interests we attribute to experiences of a lifetime or to the influence of family and friends are used by God to direct our steps. I don't want you to imagine that we are automatons without choice in vocation; God is at work in each life, directing us and preparing us for the work He has given. The sum of our experiences and the influence of others are employed by God to prepare us for His service. Hence, the statement, "this is his lot."

**THE GIFT OF GOD** — "Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God." No one should imagine that the Preacher is saying that God shows partiality, giving some wealth and withholding wealth from others. I believe it is best to understand what is written to be a conditional sentence: "If God gives... etc." Perhaps it would even be acceptable to translate the verse, "Whenever God gives... etc."

When the whole sentence is considered in context, the Preacher is distinguishing between having wealth and knowing how to possess wealth. Holding the riches of this world as administrators while understanding that these riches are given by a gracious God who seeks our good and His glory, allows us to be able to enjoy them as He intended. The focus of Solomon's statement is the third independent clause, translated in my Bible as "power to enjoy them." The power to enjoy the riches one holds means the individual accepts his lot and rejoices in his toil. It is this acceptance that is the gift of God.

The emphasis must be on God's gift—power to enjoy what we hold; the focus is not on what people do. In our world, we turn this around and focus on what people do rather than understanding that God still rules over the world, and His rule includes directing the heart of people. Those reading this book will have noted a theme developing along this line of thought. For instance, early in the book, the Preacher writes, "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" [ECCLESIASTES 2:24]. The concept is identical to what is seen in the text. The best response to life itself—whatever our lot, but especially if we are given oversight of substantial goods—is to "eat and drink and find enjoyment" in the labour we perform. If your work gives no satisfaction, check your attitude. If your attitude is fine and you are still disgruntled, then change your work.

Again, the Preacher has written, "I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man" [ECCLESIASTES 3:12, 13]. Note the theme—to eat and drink and take pleasure in one's toil is God's gift! There is no better response to life itself than to be happy. This is not a plea for us to adopt a Pollyannaish approach to life; rather, it is a plea to recognise God's hand in all that you do. Recognise that He is at work in your life, accepting your responsibility to glorify Him through living a life of joy.

Again, we read the Preacher's assessment of mankind and their relationship to their work, "I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot" [ECCLESIASTES 3:22]. When we rejoice in our work, we reveal our understanding of God Himself. Enjoyment is God's gift to mankind! God gives us the ability and the opportunity to labour. Then, when we perform the work He has given, our enjoyment is His gift!

If we will understand what the Preacher is saying, we must look to the chapter that follows. That chapter opens by saying. “There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind: 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” [ECCLESIASTES 6:1, 2]. The teaching reminds us that there is a difference between having “things” and being able to enjoy the things we have! Having and enjoying are separate gifts.

I knew a preacher who was wonderfully gifted in presenting sound exposition of the Word. He blessed many with his insights. However, my brother harboured a dark secret. He was jealous of the possessions of others. He would complain that he didn’t have what another had, though he was considerably younger in the work and though he had only begun to work in the region in which he then lived. It became apparent that he was focused on acquiring, but he lacked the capacity to enjoy what he did have. His eye was not on focused on what God had given, and thus, he failed in the work God had given.

**OCCUPIED WITH JOY IN HIS HEART** — “He will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.” Life has passed far more quickly than I could ever have imagined when I first began serving the Lord in a preaching ministry. On multiple occasions I have been approached by individuals asking if I would be willing to serve in other, more prestigious places. At such times, I have often recalled a statement made by the great George W. Truett, who said, “I have sought and found the pastor’s heart.” I have sought the mind of the Master, learning to be content to serve where He placed me. I have discovered contentment and joy in serving Him where He placed me.

I can say with confidence that I have found unimaginable joy in my service before the Lord. I have faced opposition and challenges; God has suffused my soul with incredible joy so that the bitterness that might otherwise attend the difficulties has been removed. Truly, God has kept me occupied with joy in my heart. And He will keep each of His own occupied with joy, if we will permit Him to do so.

There are some lessons we should learn from this study today. First, ***encourage your heart to enjoy the situation which you occupy***. An identifying mark for Christians, one that is too often forgotten, is contentment. When soldiers asked John what they should do, he admonished them “Be content with your wages” [LUKE 3:14b]. Contentment would dissuade them from extorting moneys from others, a practise that was all too common in that day.

Some listening today may argue that they are content with their income, but they are not content with how others view them. The appropriate response for a Christian is to focus on Him whom we serve and not on how others view us. With the Apostle, we must learn to say, “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong” [2 CORINTHIANS 12:10]. The teaching is iterated by the Apostle when he affirms to the saints in Philippi, “I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content” [PHILIPPIANS 4:11b]. The point is sufficiently important to iterate, as Paul does when he reminds Timothy, “Godliness with contentment is great gain” [1 TIMOTHY 6:6].

We will do well to cease looking at what we don’t have and learn to appreciate what we do have. We are warned, “Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you’” [HEBREWS 13:5].

Learn to rejoice in God, praising Him for what He has given, for this is the mark of the one who knows the Living God. We are taught:

“Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous!  
Praise befits the upright.”

[PSALM 33:1]

This is not true for the unsaved. Listen to the Word of the Lord on this matter.

“Like snow in summer or rain in harvest,  
so honour is not fitting for a fool.”

[PROVERBS 26:1]

“It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury,  
much less for a slave to rule over princes”

[PROVERBS 19:10]

Another lesson all must learn is that *any good we enjoy is the gift of God*. Because this is true, we should look to God, enjoying the giver as much as the gift. The great sin of the prosperity Gospel is the misplaced emphasis of what is taught. Those trapped in that dreadful teaching praise the gift rather than the Giver. It is God who gives the greatest gifts, and among those great gifts is the ability to enjoy what is given! When we recognise the Giver, we will cultivate grateful hearts.

The absence of gratitude is characteristic of those sliding downward and away from righteousness, as we are taught. “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened” [ROMANS 1:18-21].

Yet another lesson for us to learn is to *give ourselves to labour*. Whether in earning our living or whether in service to the King, each Christian must give himself or herself to labour. The Apostle has taught us, “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” [1 CORINTHIANS 10:31]. To be certain, the message this day speaks to our labour with our hands or with our minds. However, we dare not neglect the fact that our service before the Master among His people is similarly in view.

The Word of the Lord also teaches, “Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” [COLOSSIANS 3:17]. Soon after writing these words, Paul delivered this encouragement for Christians to work. “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” [COLOSSIANS 3:23]. Give yourself to labour. Christians are to honour God through excelling at the labour they perform.

None of us know how long we have to accomplish whatever we will do for the cause of Christ. The days are fleeting, passing far too rapidly. Whatever is to be done for Christ must be done now. We Christians must learn to *number our days*. The Ninetieth Psalm is written by Moses, the great lawgiver. It appears to have been written after he had reached an advanced age. In that Psalm, Moses pleaded with God:



“Teach us to number our days  
that we may get a heart of wisdom.”

[PSALM 90:12]

Jesus urged His disciples to consider the brevity of time allotted to them when He said, “We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work” [JOHN 9:4].

The Apostle urges all who follow the Master to consider the brief opportunity to do good, “The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires” [ROMANS 13:12-14].

I suppose I could address young men and women and say that time will pass far more quickly than you could imagine. I know, however, that I speak to some individuals who are older who seem to be trapped in some weird time warp. It is as though they imagine there will be time to speak to the lost, time to plead for a lost child, time to take control of life, never realising that the days are passing swiftly, more swiftly than you could ever imagine. Listen to the urging of the Word. “Make sure that you don’t get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can’t afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don’t loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about” [ROMANS 13:12-14, THE MESSAGE]!

Christians must heed the urging of the Master. “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says,

‘Awake, O sleeper,  
and arise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.’

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is” [EPHESIANS 5:11-17].

I return to the theme of the text in order to emphasise that God insists that Christians must determine that *life—all the days we have—is His gift*. Your days are allotted by a gracious God. He has already demonstrated His grace in giving you life in His Beloved Son, if you are a Christian. If you are not a Christian, the fact that He has permitted you to hear this message demonstrates His love for you. He is giving you opportunity to turn from your own way that leads to destruction; He is giving you opportunity to turn and walk the path that leads to life everlasting. If you are a follower of the Christ, God gives you grace by giving you what you hold as an administrator of His grace; and with the oversight, He gives you joy, if you will receive it. The ability to enjoy what He has entrusted is a divine gift.

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**THE GIFT OF GOD**

My prayer for each one listening today is that your life will be occupied with joy in your heart. For if you are occupied with joy, it reveals that God is very much at work in your life, blessing you with the richness of His love. If your life is marked by chaos, disappointment, sorrow, is it because you have taken your eyes off the Master? Correct that flaw now and look to Him. May God bless us with joy is my prayer. Amen.