

The Prudence and the Conclusion. 8:1-15

by W.J. Erdman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of mirth and enjoyment in life, despite the limitations of human understanding and the contradictions of human experience.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 8:14-15, Ecclesiastes 9:3

Topics: "Mortal Life", "Simple Pleasures"

Description

In this sermon by the Preacher, he reflects on the futility of human life and the inevitability of death, noting that neither foresight nor wickedness can save anyone from the grave. He contemplates the perplexing contradiction between the fate of the righteous and the wicked, expressing his confusion and despair at the unfairness of life's outcomes. Ultimately, he concludes that the best one can do in the face of life's uncertainties is to find joy in the simple pleasures granted by God, such as eating, drinking, and being merry.

Transcript

But "the Preacher," cheering himself up again, and making his face shine with "sweetness and light," and interjecting further praises of prudence and seasonable conduct touching "the powers that be," however oppressive their rule, speaks sympathetically of the misery of men because of the lack of foresight, yet confesses also that neither foresight nor prudence of common men, nor wickedness of mighty kings can deliver high or low from the hand of the grave. He notes also the utter vanity of the evil life of a wicked ruler who, too, must not only die, but also will soon be forgotten when dead. "Out of sight out of mind; " a vanity indeed!

From this the wise man, as if he must solve the problem, turns to consider again the contradictory treatment of righteous and wicked, the deepest, most perplexing problem, so tantalizing in its ever-vanishing solution. His "golden mean" will, somehow, not fit in or explain at all. He thinks human life should not be so full of these appalling contradictions and frightful extremes. He affirms and recants, and is soon involved in hopeless perplexity. He had once said, "Be not overmuch righteous," and now he says, "I know it shall be well" (on earth he means) "with them that fear God." In brief, in this world of the righteous and the wicked, he sees the righteous fares ill and dies early, the sinner fares well and lives long; and then, thinking if one fear God it will be just the other way, and finding out to-morrow it is, after all, not the other way, he sighs, "this also is vanity," and again commends mirth and the having a good and thankful time anyhow.

In view of this strange inscrutable allotment, and as if he had gotten to the end of his wits, he most emphatically, says, "Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink, and to be merry, and that this should abide with him in all his labors all the days of his life which God hath given him under the sun." He has gotten back to his old resort again, " And the tossed bark in moorings swings."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/wj-erdman/the-prudence-and-the-conclusion-81-15/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net