

Ecclesiastes 5:10 - 6:6

Discourse IV: Riches

“Riches Are Emptiness”

Study by Jason Labonte

I. Review

A. Theme: Life under the sun is emptiness.

B. Discourse I

1. Part A: Wisdom is better than folly, but both are emptiness.
2. Part B: Labor, too, is emptiness, but its profit is the good we find in it in relation to the eternal perspective of God.

C. Discourse II: A miscellany of disappointments further reveal the emptiness of life under the sun and our proper response to that.

D. Discourse III: Words are empty. Therefore vows should not be made. Rather, we should guard our steps, listen, and stand in awe of God in worship.

II. The Discourse

A. Because we live in a hierarchical system, oppression of the poor is inevitable. (5:8-9¹)

B. Riches... (5:10-17)

1. ...Do not bring satisfaction.
2. ...Do bring anxiety.
3. ...Do not bring themselves to the grave.

Restatement of Conclusion from a Previous Discourse (5:18)

C. The Conclusion in Regards to Riches: Exemplified by Two Rich Men (5:19 - 6:6)

1. Rich Man #1: One whom God has enabled to enjoy his riches — this is a gift from God.
2. Rich Man #2: One whom God has not enabled to enjoy his riches — this is an affliction from God.

¹ Verse 9 is translated very differently in different versions. In this case, I think the NIV does the best job.

III. Application & Discussion

- A. Do we ever further oppression indirectly from a position of hierarchy? How so?**
- B. Do we have Biblical view of riches? Do we seek satisfaction from riches more than from God. Do we seek satisfaction more from money and/or possessions than from God? Do we worry about stuff (See Mat 6:25-33)? Do we hoard foolishly (See Lu 12:15-21)?**
- C. Do we acknowledge that our possessions come from God? Or do we think prosperity is a right? Are we thankful for what He has given us or are we afflicted?**