

Life in the Fast Lane

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Ecclesiastes 2.
- B. We are all looking for something that satisfies—we are looking for the secret of contentment.
- C. There is nothing in and of itself that can make us content.

II. An examination of the various ways men have sought contentment.

- A. Living lavishly.
- B. Solomon lived with enough food to feed twenty thousand people in one day.
- C. Laughter only deals with the periphery of life.
- D. Pleasure only consumes resources—it does not build them up.
- E. Projects, parks, and pools fail to bring satisfaction as well.
- F. Playmates leave one empty too.

III. The result of these pursuits: vanity.

- A. There were some gains: fame, wisdom, and some enjoyment.
- B. In the final assessment, it was not worth it.
- C. Some may have said that Solomon did not go about it the right way—it was too planned. However, this is foolish abandon because wisdom can help avoid some of the negative results of pleasure seeking.
- D. However, death is the end of both wise and foolish pleasure seekers.
- E. The final reaction: a hate of life and despair at one's inability to curb the law of diminishing returns.

IV. Putting a relationship with God back into this life changes the entire picture.

- A. There is nothing inherently in man that he should find true enjoyment from the things he does.
- B. Enjoyment is a gift from God.
 - 1. The man who pleases God is given the gift of joy.
 - 2. God wants us to have joy—He gives us richly all things to enjoy. (I Timothy)

3. We must understand that enjoyment does not come from the people.
4. It is faith that pleases God.
5. We must see that all of life is a gift of God—even sorrow, pain and grief. (Proverbs 3:4-5)

Application questions:

1. Which pleasures have you pursued in the past that you have found to be vanity? Explain.

2. Does a life of God preclude any pleasures whatsoever? Defend your answer.

3. How does faith energize what we do and make things enjoyable? How have you experienced this personally?
