

BIG PICTURE —

Read the following passage (Ecclesiasts 5:10-20). What do you observe about God? About people? About money?

*Whoever loves money never has enough;
whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their
income. This too is meaningless.*

¹¹ *As goods increase,
so do those who consume them.*

*And what benefit are they to the owners
except to feast their eyes on them?*

¹² *The sleep of a laborer is sweet,
whether they eat little or much,
but as for the rich, their abundance
permits them no sleep.*

¹³ *I have seen a grievous evil under the sun:
wealth hoarded to the harm of its owners,*

¹⁴ *or wealth lost through some misfortune,
so that when they have children
there is nothing left for them to inherit.*

¹⁵ *Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb,
and as everyone comes, so they depart.*

*They take nothing from their toil
that they can carry in their hands.*

¹⁶ *This too is a grievous evil:
As everyone comes, so they depart,
and what do they gain,
since they toil for the wind?*

¹⁷ *All their days they eat in darkness,
with great frustration, affliction and anger.*

¹⁸ *This is what I have observed to be good: that it is
appropriate for a person to eat, to drink and to find
satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the
few days of life God has given them—for this is their lot.*

¹⁹ *Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and
possessions, and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their
lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God. ²⁰ They
seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps
them occupied with gladness of heart.*

Observations...

NEW TESTAMENT PARADIGM

Read the following passage (2 Corinthians 9:6-11). What do you observe about God? About people? About money?

*The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also
reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully^[d] will
also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has
decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under
compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

⁸ *And God is able to make all grace abound to you,
so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.*

¹⁰ *He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for
food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing
and increase the harvest of your righteousness.*

Observations...

REFLECTION QUESTIONS / PRAYER

We are all on a journey in our apprenticeship to Jesus. For some Worshipping God with First & Best is a new concept. For many it has become a lifestyle of adventure – taking new steps of faith.

- Do you see generosity through the lens of joy or sacrifice? Why do you suppose that is?
- Over the past weeks we have been encouraged to pray and listen, inviting God to speak into and direct us in our generosity. Has that created excitement or hesitancy in you?
- Ask Holy Spirit to reveal any lies you are believing about God's ability or willingness to provide for your needs.
- Ask where did that lie come from? Invite Jesus to heal your heart and transform your mind.
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:8 above in bold. How would living into that truth instead of the lie change your financial apprenticeship to Jesus?
- PRAY... Father, who would you like me to pray for today? How would you like me to pray?
- Jesus, apprentice me and UGTN into excelling in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7)

