

Ecclesiastes 8:1-3

I always count it a privilege and a pleasure to be able to share with you the Word of God on "It's a Good Life." Thank you for listening, and I pray for you. I may not have ever seen you. I may never see you in this life, but I pray that one day I'll see you in Heaven, because we'll be there together if you've trusted Jesus as your Savior. Today, we want to continue our study in the book of Ecclesiastes, and in that book last week we finished up with Chapter 7. This week we want to continue our study in Chapter 8, but first, let's look back in verses 27-29 of Ecclesiastes Chapter 7.

It says there, ²⁷*Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account. ²⁸Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. ²⁹Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*

I believe what Solomon is saying here is that a good man is hard to find, and as we look around us today, that seems to be the norm. You just can't find many good men. Now, don't get me wrong. I know there are some people who do good. I know there's people, once again, who have been saved, but Solomon through his studies and through his travels, and as the wisest man that ever lived on the face of the Earth, he said it's hard to find a good man. In fact, the Bible says there's none good; no not one.

The Bible says that we've all gone astray. We've turned everyone to our own way. And it goes on to say in that verse of Scripture that God hath laid on Him, that's Christ, the iniquity of us all. That means Christ has taken sin upon Himself. He took sin upon Himself, and He

died on the cross for you and I for the sin of this world.

Notice, Solomon says a good man is hard to find in verse 27, and then we see in his search, he found only one man in a thousand. Yes, he did find someone, and that's the way it is today. We look around and we say, "Is there anyone who's left that is good?" And once again, the Bible says there's none good, but we become righteous in the sight of God by trusting Jesus as our Savior. But Solomon said, "I can only find one in a thousand," and he said a good woman is even harder to find and rarer than the good man.

And then we also see in verse 29 there that God created man right, but man has looked for ways and things. In other words, he tries to invent and he comes up with many schemes to improve what God has given and offered. And keep in mind there's only one way to Heaven, and that's through Jesus Christ. No matter what man comes up with in his own mind and his own conceits, there's still only one way to Heaven and that is through Jesus Christ. That's coming God's way.

Now we need to look in Chapter 8 of Ecclesiastes, and I see in this chapter that there are several objectives here and we want to look at a couple of them in this chapter. First, it's to glean wisdom for enduring evil and oppressive governments. And then I notice that it's also to note the similarity between the preacher's conclusion... the preacher, once again, is Solomon... to note the similarity between the preacher's conclusion and the book of Job about the inability of man to discern all of the work of God.

It just doesn't seem like man wants to give God credit for anything anymore. And this is the way it's been down through the ages. Man wants to do it his way. And, you know, this is another reason that I know the Bible is the Word of God, because, had I been writing the Bible, I would have made myself look good. I would've been the best looking, the best working, the hardest working. You name it and I would've been the best that ever was, and this is another reason that I know that man has not written the Word of God, because God tells it just like it is. He says we've all gone out of the way. There is none righteous. No not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. God tells it exactly like it is.

In Chapter 8 verses 1-13 of Ecclesiastes, we see enduring the governments of men, and then to break it down even further, in verses 1-8 we see submit to authorities. Verse 1 says: *Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.*

Wisdom has its value and it's able to change one's countenance, according to that verse, and I think back when we look back in the life of Christ, and you may be familiar with the Scripture that says that He went to the mount of transfiguration. That's what it's known by there. He took some disciples with Him and Christ went up there and He was transfigured. And the Bible says that the people who were with Him, according to the book of John, they beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten, the Son of God.

In other words, it's like an osmosis took place there. It was like the cocoon broke open. We look at the butterfly before it comes out of that cocoon, and we can see the cocoon. We can't see the glory or really what's in that cocoon, but when that cocoon breaks open, we see the

glory of that butterfly, the beauty of that butterfly. We see that in Christ as He was transfigured. Now, I'm not trying to compare Him to a butterfly. I'm simply giving you an illustration as to what took place. We can look at it like this, that His glory shone. The inner glory, the inner beauty of Christ came forth, the glory of God.

And that's the way it should be in every Christian's life. We should have the glory of God on our faces, on our countenance. People should be able to look at us and say, "There's something different about that person. That person... there's something that I need." And as we let the glory of God come out of us and we submit to His will and give ourselves completely to Him as much as possible, then I believe that even our countenance... our facial expressions will even change. And that's what I believe Solomon is getting at here in verse 1 of Ecclesiastes Chapter 8.

Notice verse 2. He says: *I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.* In other words, obey the King's command, he's saying. Why? It's for God's sake. And then if you would turn with me... and I hope that you have your Bible if you're able to have your Bible today and follow along with me, but I've asked you to open to Romans Chapter 13. And as we look at these verses, we understand that God has ordained human government.

In Chapter 13, verses 1-4, it says, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Human government is ordained of God. Verse 2 says: *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* We'll see more about that in just a moment. Verse 3 says: *For rulers are not a terror to good*

works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

Now notice, God is telling us through His Word that He has ordained human government, and as we look at policemen today, they are ordained of God. They are actually, according to the Word of God here in verse 4, it says, *For he is the minister of God to thee for good.* It's sad that policemen do not have the respect that they should have today. It seems that when a policeman finds a person who has broken the law and they take the proper steps to apprehend that criminal or to do something that some would not think is right... in other words, some people get killed; the policeman has to kill someone. Well, instead of that policeman being praised for what he has done, that policeman is more or less put on trial for upholding the law. And that's not right. Things have turned around. We've gotten away from God's Word. That policeman is a *minister of God to thee* for the good, the Bible says, and we need to obey those who have the rule over us.

But notice here in verse 4 once again. It says, *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.* So God has ordained that we should have human government, civil government, that there should not be chaos, that we should obey those who have the rule over us, because God has placed those people here for a purpose, to keep order.

And I've said that it's sad that policemen do not have the respect that they once had, but it's also sad that some of the policemen are not worthy of respect, because they have gone the wrong way. Many of them are not doing what they're supposed to be doing. And we just

need to get back to the old Book, the Bible, and do what God says. Listen to the Word of God and do what the Lord wants us to do as human beings and also as Christians.

Ecclesiastes 8:3 says, *Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.* I believe what it's saying here, don't be so quick to get out of the king's range of seeing in order to break the law... in other words, to do something evil. Why is that? It's because he, that's the king, that's the person in power, has power to enforce the law. He is in the place of authority, according to verse 3.

Now, sometimes we'll go down the highway and we don't see a policeman and we get in our minds and we say, "Well, you know, there's nothing wrong with me speeding just a little bit here. I'm just going to go ahead and speed just a little bit, and I don't see anybody." But you see, there's a fear within us even when we don't see the policeman. We should have that fear, because God has placed that person there for protection to enforce something that is right, and that policeman, when he pulls you over for speeding, he's doing what God has told him to do and what the government has told him to do, what the person in charge has told him to do. They're actually following a command of God. They're keeping law and order.

Well, in Ecclesiastes 8:4-5, we read there, and we're going to pick up there next time with Ecclesiastes 8:4-5.

And let me ask you if you've trusted Christ as Savior. And if you haven't, you need to trust Him today by asking Him to come into your heart. "Lord, I know I'm a sinner. I can't save myself. I can't go to Heaven on my own. Please save me. Take me to Heaven."

Father, I pray for those who are listening now that you would bless, lead, and guide them. Save that person, Lord, who needs salvation today.

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