**The Futility of Godless Pleasure**

**Reading – Ecclesiastes 11:1-10**

**The Experiment:**

***(Ecclesiastes 1:13) And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised.***

***(Ecclesiastes 2:1) I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure"; but surely, this also was vanity.***

***(Ecclesiastes 2:10) Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor.***

**Discoveries**

Life under the sun is vanity: ***(Ecclesiastes 1:4-8) One generation passes away, and another generation comes; But the earth abides forever. {5} The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, And hastens to the place where it arose. {6} The wind goes toward the south, And turns around to the north; The wind whirls about continually, And comes again on its circuit. {7} All the rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea is not full; To the place from which the rivers come, There they return again. {8} All things are full of labor; Man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor the ear filled with hearing.***

There are some things you can't change: ***(Ecclesiastes 1:14-15) {14} I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind. {15} What is crooked cannot be made straight, And what is lacking cannot be numbered.***

Truth does not reside in an altered state of consciousness: ***(Ecclesiastes 2:2-3) {2} I said of laughter; "Madness!"; and of mirth, "What does it accomplish?" {3} I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.***

Frustration: ***(Ecclesiastes 2:10-11) Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor. {11} Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.***

Pleasure is important and, rightly understood essential. ***(Ecclesiastes 3:4)*** tells us that there is… ***A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance;***

Sorrow and hardship are more important than pleasure: ***(Ecclesiastes 7:1-5) A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth; {2} Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. {3} Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. {4} The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. {5} It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise Than for a man to hear the song of fools.***

Fornication will enslave you: ***(Ecclesiastes 7:26) And I find more bitter than death The woman whose heart is snares and nets, Whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God shall escape from her, But the sinner shall be trapped by her.***

**Conclusions:**

Enjoy the gifts of God: ***(Ecclesiastes 3:12-14) I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, {13} and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor; it is the gift of God. {14} I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.***

Living in sin and futility is my fault not my fate: ***(Ecclesiastes 7:29) Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes."***

Strive for eternity: ***(Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. {14} For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.***

***(Ecclesiastes 5:20) For he will not dwell unduly on the days of his life, because God keeps him busy with the joy of his heart..***

**The End of the Story:**

***(Ecclesiastes 12:1) Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them":***

***(Ecclesiastes 12:7) Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.***