

The Preacher Reflects on the Evils of Oppression and a Balanced Life

Ecclesiastes 4

Outline

- 1-3 | The Preacher's despair over oppression in the world
- 4-6 | The Preacher decries labor motivated by rivalry
- 7-8 | The Preacher promotes a balanced life: pleasure/rejoicing and work/labor
- 9-12 | The Preacher promotes common unity
- 13-16 | The Preacher encourages an attitude of humility and being teachable

Reflections

There is much in this text that causes one to reflect on a person's life: how both the oppressor and oppressed are uncomforted; jealous competitive pursuits; a workaholics an unbalanced life; one who shuns partnerships and the blessings of them; being humble and teachable throughout one's life.

It reminds me of the time when Jesus began His public ministry. He stood up to read a passage from Isaiah 61.

Luke 4:16-21 NASB And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. **17** And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, **18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."** **20** And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21** And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus gives rest. Not necessarily a physical rest but a rest in one's spirit. We will still have to work and go about our daily tasks, which might be oppressive but Jesus can give us rest.

The Preacher in Ecclesiastes had a dim view of life because he did not yet understand the peace that God can provide. He had pursued many interests but was unsatisfied. Jesus gives us that satisfaction, that abundant life.

Lord, only You can give us rest when we are oppressed or sick or captive or blind. Only You can give real peace. May Your Spirit refresh us with a sense of peace that can only come from You. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Note: This was originally published by me on studythebook.org on June 18, 2015.