

# Ecclesiastes

FINISHING WELL  
REQUIRES SUBMISSION

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CHAPTER 8:1-17

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- **Ecclesiastes 1:2 (NKJV)** “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher; “Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity.”
- **Ecclesiastes 1:2 (NET)** “Futile! Futile!” laments the Teacher, “Absolutely futile! Everything is futile!”
- **Ecclesiastes 1:2 (NIV)** “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

- **Ecclesiastes 1:2 (NKJV)** “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher; “Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity.”
- Dr. McCabe: “Most frustratingly enigmatic (puzzling)!” says Qohelet (the Teacher). “Most frustratingly enigmatic (puzzling)! Everything is frustratingly enigmatic (puzzling).”

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 6:12

For *who knows what is good for man in life*, all the days of his vain (frustrating and puzzling) life which he passes like a shadow? *Who can tell a man what will happen after him* under the sun?

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 7:1

*A good name is better than* precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth;

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 7:14-15

In the **day of prosperity** be joyful, But in the **day of adversity** consider: Surely **God has appointed the one as well as the other**, So that man can find out nothing *that will come* after him.

<sup>15</sup> **I have seen** everything in my days of vanity (frustrating puzzlement): There is **a just *man* who perishes in his righteousness**, And there is a **wicked *man* who prolongs *life* in his wickedness**.

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 7:25–29

I applied my heart to know, To search and seek out wisdom and the reason *of things*, to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

A. Submission Begins In Our Relationship With Human Authorities.

# 1. Submission is characterized by loyalty to God-given authorities

- Ecclesiastes 8:1 *Who is like a wise man?* And who knows the interpretation of a thing? A man's wisdom makes his face shine, And the sternness of his face is changed.
- McCabe: Who is like the wise man? And who knows the interpretation of a matter? A man's wisdom **brightens his face and changes his hard appearance.**

➤ **Ecclesiastes 8:2-3**

I say, “**Keep the king’s commandment for the sake of your oath to God.**”<sup>3</sup> Do not be hasty to go from his presence. Do not take your stand for an evil thing, for he does whatever pleases him.”

➤ **Colossians 3:20**

Children, **obey** your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

➤ **Colossians 3:22**

Bondservants, **obey** in all things your **masters** according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

## ➤ Hebrews 13:17

**Obey** those who **rule over you**, and **be submissive**, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

➤ **Philippians 2:12**

Therefore, my **beloved**, **as you have always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

➤ **1 John 5:2**

By this **we know** that we love the children of God, when **we love God and keep His commandments.**

# What has our King commanded us to do?

## ➤ **Matthew 28:18–19**

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

<sup>19</sup> **Go therefore and make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

## ➤ **Ecclesiastes 8:4**

Where the word of a king *is, there is* power; And who may say to him, “What are you doing?”

## 2. Submission provides protection from lasting harm.

### ➤ Ecclesiastes 8:5–6

He who **keeps his command** will experience **nothing harmful**; And a wise man's heart discerns both time and judgment,

<sup>6</sup> Because **for every matter there is a time and judgment**, Though the misery of man increases greatly.

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 8:7-8

For he does not know what will happen; So who can tell him when it will occur?

<sup>8</sup> No one has power over the spirit to retain the spirit, And no one has power in the day of death. *There is no release from that war,* And **wickedness will not deliver those who are given to it.**

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 8:9

All this I have seen, and applied my heart to every work that is done under the sun: ***There is a time in which one man rules over another to his own hurt.***

**B. Submission Trusts God's Administration of  
Justice (v.v. 10-14)**

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 8:10–11

<sup>10</sup> Then I saw **the wicked** buried, who had come and gone from the place of holiness, and **they were forgotten** in the city where they had so done. This also *is vanity*.

<sup>11</sup> Because **the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily**, therefore **the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil**.

➤ **Ecclesiastes 8:12–13**

<sup>12</sup> Though a sinner does evil a hundred *times*, and his *days* are prolonged, yet **I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him.**

<sup>13</sup> But **it will not be well with the wicked**; nor will he prolong *his days, which are as a shadow*, because he does not fear before God.

➤ McCabe's Translation:

Ecclesiastes 8:12–13

<sup>12</sup> Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, **I know that it will go well with those who fear God**, for they stand in fear before God.

<sup>13</sup> **But it will not go well for the wicked**, neither will they lengthen their days as a shadow, for they do not stand in fear before God.

➤ **Ecclesiastes 8:14**

There is a frustrating enigma done upon the earth: there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the conduct of wicked men. I say this too is frustratingly enigmatic.

C. Submission Rejoices In God's Gift Of Life (v. 15)

- **Ecclesiastes 8:15** So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor *all* the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.
- **McCabe:** So I commend **the enjoyment of life**, for there is nothing better for man under the sun than to eat, drink, and be glad, for this will accompany him in his toil during the days of his **life that God has given him** under the sun.

➤ **Philippians 4:11**

Not that I speak in regard to need, for **I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.**

➤ **1 Timothy 6:6**

Now **godliness with contentment is great gain.**

➤ **1 Timothy 6:8**

And having food and clothing, with these we shall **be content.**

## ➤ Hebrews 13:5

Let your conduct *be* without covetousness; ***be content with such things as you have.*** For He Himself has said, ***“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”***

D. Submission rests in Gods Sovereignty (v.v. 16-17)

## ➤ Ecclesiastes 8:16–17

<sup>16</sup> When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night,

<sup>17</sup> then **I saw all the work of God**, that a man **cannot find out** the work that is done under the sun. For though a man labors to discover *it*, yet **he will not find it**; moreover, though a wise *man* attempts to know *it*, **he will not be able to find it.**