Vanity of Pleasure
Ecclesiastes 2

"All that my eyes desired, I did not deny them. I did not refuse myself any pleasure, for I took pleasure in all my struggles. This was my reward for all my struggles."
-Ecclesiastes 2:10

What are some drawbacks of having everything you want in life?

*Less a_____ *Reduced growth *Loss of p_____

*Unrealistic desires *Weak c_____ development

*Relationship issues *Spiritual d_____

"Getting everything you want may satisfy your desires, but it does not necessarily satisfy your soul."

- ## Vanity of Pleasure

1-3 I said to myself, "Go ahead, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy what is good." But it turned out to be futile. I said about laughter, "It is madness," and about pleasure, "What does this accomplish?" I explored with my mind the pull of wine on my body—my mind still guiding me with wisdom—and how to grasp folly, until I could see what is good for people to do under heaven during the few days of their lives.

What is King Solomon testing himself with?

✔ P_____: Inner emotion expressed outwardly. Exceeding, gladness, joyfulness, rejoicing, delight, festival.

King Solomon was so wealthy, that he had the means and authority to do just about a_____ his heart desired. He decided to test his own heart to see how he would respond to two experiences if life, enjoyment and employment.

- **Enjoyment:** Experiencing the finer things in life, such as l_____ and p_____.

What are some things people look to today for enjoyment?

*Entertainment *M_____ & P_____ *Success

*R_____ *Technology *Self-I_____

*Escape & distraction

“You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

Solomon’s choice of enjoyment was the pull of w_____ on his body. However, while enjoying and reflecting, he’s still in his right mind, and able to grasp the impact of foolishness and wisdom.

What conclusions did Solomon come to about enjoyment?

*Enjoyment was f_____ *Laughter was m_____

*Pleasure was q_____

How could you encourage someone who is struggling with over indulging in enjoyment and pleasures?

*God offers lasting and e_____ joy *Small steps matter

 Proverbs 14:13; Luke 6:25

4-8 I increased my achievements. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. I made gardens and parks for myself and planted every kind of fruit tree in them. I constructed reservoirs for myself from which to irrigate a grove of flourishing trees. I acquired male and female servants and had slaves who were born in my house. I also owned livestock—large herds and flocks—more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. I also amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I gathered male and female singers for myself, and many concubines, the delights of men.

What is King Solomon testing himself with here?

P_____: The action or process of carrying out or accomplishing an action, task, or function.

Notice how Solomon shifts from enjoying the finer things in life to looking at one’s work as a means of fulfillment.

- **Employment:** The condition of having work. A person’s trade or profession.

How does King Solomon go about over indulging in work?

*I *increased* ….. *I *built* houses and *planted* vineyards…..

*I *made* gardens and parks…. and *planted* every kind of fruit tree…

*I *acquired* male and female servants….

*I also *owned* livestock—large herds and flocks…..

*I also *amassed* silver and gold… *I *gathered* male and female singers….

What are some ways people overwork today?

*Working e_____ hours *Constantly chasing promotions

*Taking on too many r_____ *Sacrificing health

*P_____ *Neglecting relationships *Obsessing over m_____

"The wise rest at least as hard as they work."

How could you encourage someone who is struggling with over working?

*Rest is not l_____ *Work is not your I_____

*God cares about the w_____ not just the w____.

 Genesis 2:2-3; Matthew 11:28-30

Again, Solomon sought out to pursue all of the achievements and work he desired. However, God blessed and allowed his wisdom to remain and in order to see the end result.

After all of his testing, what conclusion did he come to?

9-11 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem; my wisdom also remained with me. All that my eyes desired, I did not deny them. I did not refuse myself any pleasure, for I took pleasure in all my struggles. This was my reward for all my struggles. When I considered all that I had accomplished and what I had labored to achieve, I found everything to be futile and a pursuit of the wind.' There was nothing to be gained under the sun.

✔ He found everything to be f_____ and chasing the w____.

✔ He learned there was nothing to be g_____ under the sun.

 Matthew 16:26

As you reflect on your desire for enjoyment and employment, how can you keep an eternal focus and not be distracted?

What is one thing you have learned that you are willing to share with someone else?

“Where focus goes, energy flows”