

Does life have meaning?
4. The problem of wealth (Ecclesiastes 5v8-20)

John Percival

Introduction

- Respectable sins?

Godless consumption (v8-17)

- Harms the poor (v8-9)
- Harms yourself (v10-17)

The love of money:

- Addictive
- Stressful
- Insecure
- Hopeless

Godly contentment (v18-20)

- God provides
- God enables
- Application

Conclusion

Bible references: 1 Tim. 6:9-10, Rom. 1:21, 1 Tim. 6:17, Phil. 4:12-13, Heb. 13:5, 1 Tim. 6:6.

Ecclesiastes 5v8-20 (NIV)

⁸ If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. ⁹ The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields.

¹⁰ Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. ¹¹ As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? ¹² The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep.

¹³ I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner, ¹⁴ or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him. ¹⁵ Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand. ¹⁶ This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind? ¹⁷ All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.

¹⁸ Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him-- for this is his lot. ¹⁹ Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work--this is a gift of God. ²⁰ He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.

Good books:

Julian Hardyman, *Idols*, IVP, 2010

Tim Keller, *Counterfeit Gods*, Hodder and Stoughton, 2009