

TAKING HOLD OF THIS AND THAT
Ecclesiastes 7:15-29

Oakridge Community Church
Questions for Consideration and Discussion

Introduction:

1. Psalm 73:3-5, 12-14
2. Ecclesiastes 7:15-17
3. Ecclesiastes 7:18
4. The key to living properly in life's paradoxes is the fear of God

I. NOT TRYING TO MANIPULATE GOD

- A. Wisdom is to be pursued – 7:19 cf. Proverbs 4:5
- B. Righteousness is to be pursued
 1. Matthew 6:33
 2. 1 Timothy 6:11
 3. 2 Timothy 2:22
- C. But not to try to obligate God to give long, comfortable lives!
 1. No one is righteous enough to so obligate God – 7:20
 2. This is proven by examining your speech – 7:21-22
- D. You are not wise enough to understand the paradox – 7:23-24

II. NOT GIVING ONESELF TO INCREASING WICKEDNESS

- A. Sin is more bitter than death – 7:25-26 cf. 1 Samuel 15:32
 1. Lady Wisdom – Proverbs 8:1-5
 2. The Woman Folly – Proverbs 9:13-18
- B. Everyone dies – 7:27-28
 1. Exception – Enoch (Genesis 5:24)
 2. Exception – Elijah (2 Kings 2:11)
- C. Man alone is to blame for death's existence – 7:29
 1. Genesis 1:27
 2. Genesis 1:31

Taking Hold of This and That
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1. What situations have led you to wonder why “bad” things happen to “good” people and “good” things happen to “bad” people? What conclusions did you reach in those times? How did those moments shape your attitudes and approach to life?
2. Have you ever tried to obligate God to make your life easier, longer or better by attempting to be “super-righteous”? What was the outcome? What is wrong with such an approach?
3. Why should we pursue righteousness and wisdom even though our practice of them will not obligate God? How does the fear of the Lord lead us to pursue righteousness and wisdom?
4. What makes temptation and sin more bitter than death? Do you actually believe this is the case? How will this conviction be lived out in daily life?
5. How should the fact that death comes to all affect both our pursuit of righteousness and wisdom and our refusal to give ourselves over to temptation and sin?
6. Why is the fact that mankind alone carries the blame for the existence of evil and death in this world important to keep in mind when we ponder the paradox of Ecclesiastes 7:15? How does this lead us to see and magnify the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus? How should it affect our trust in Him?