



## Finding Good in Unusual Places

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14

**Listen!** Shing Lee had a son and Shing Lee didn't know if that was good or bad....

**Tension:** Our culture and often our hearts teach us to look for good in the wrong places. So Solomon shows us "Where to look for good"—gives us proverbs for weighing the elements of our lives:

### THE BETTER THING:

**We find good in the house of mourning. (vv 1-4)**

A good reputation

The day you die

Funerals\*

*\* We should think about death while there is still time.*

Sorrow\*\*

*\*\* Sadness has a refining effect on us.*

Thinking about death

### THE WORSE THING:

The most expensive perfume

The day you are born

Festivals

Laughter

Thinking about having a good time

**We find good in being criticized by a wise person. (v 5, 6)**

Criticized by a wise person

Praised by a fool

**We find good in the discipline of self control. (vv 7-10)**

Wisdom with integrity

Succumbing to extortion

A pure heart

A corrupt heart that takes bribes

Finishing

Starting

Patience

Pride

Slow to anger

Quick temper

Today

"The good old days"

**We find good in the acquiring of wisdom. (vv 11, 12)**

Wisdom\*\*\*

Wealth

*\*\*\* Only wisdom can save your life.*

**We find good in submitting to the ways of God. (vv 13, 14)**

Submitting to the ways of God

Resisting the ways of God

Seeing prosperity and hard times as from God    Not seeing all as from God

**Therefore, the point—the closing admonition:** Realize that nothing is certain in this life...find good in God's places and cast yourself on God Who alone is certain.

**Live Differently:** Make an honest list of everything you are counting on to make life safe, fun, and fulfilling—the places you are looking for good.

# “Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

**Therefore, the point—the closing admonition:** Realize that nothing is certain in this life...find good in God’s places and cast yourself on God Who alone is certain.

- **Today:** Read Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 and reflect on the contrasts made there.
- **Monday:** How do we find good in mourning over our sin? Matthew 5:4
- **Tuesday:** How do we find good in being criticized?
- **Wednesday:** Make a list of all the good of self control.
- **Thursday:** What is the Bible’s plan for acquiring wisdom?
- **Friday:** In what ways are you “fighting against the ways of God in your life?”
- **Saturday:** Why does God give to us good times? Why does He give bad times?

# “Companionship Papers”

Dialogue questions for helping each other in the Christian walk this week.

## **GETTING STARTED:**

- Describe someone who is looking for “good” in evil or bizarre or ugly places.
- What is motivating that person to think there is “good” in those places?

## **LOOK AT THE TEXT:**

- Choose 5 of the 15 contrasts given by Solomon in this paragraph and discuss the meanings, some illustrations, and personal life applications of each contrast.

## **LIVE DIFFERENTLY:**

- Pick 1 of the 15 contrasts and make a concrete life-change this week.