



Blackfoot Church of Christ

Published by Blackfoot Church of Christ
Blackfoot, ID

Volume 6 Number 35

September 2, 2018

Labor Day

By Ross Ward

As we are about to celebrate Labor Day, a day where we usually take a break from our regular jobs, the words of the Preacher (we will assume it was Solomon) come to mind. He writes:

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, "Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?"

If this indeed is Solomon, we know this wisdom came from God.

2 Chronicles 1:7, 10-13, In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee...¹⁰ Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?¹¹ And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou may judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:¹² Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

The man who was given great wisdom, considered all that he had accomplished, all the possessions he had acquired, all his wealth he had amassed, and called it all vanity. What an astonishing and depressing

commentary. There is a great lesson for us and our society. It seems our lives are centered around and built upon our work and careers. We too often focus on: how I can make more money. Typically this involves working more hours, taking on more responsibility, or possibly making a career change. We can spend a significant amount of our life devoted trying to increase our standard of living and acquire wealth and possessions. By doing so we often sacrifice time that could be spent with our friends and family and even time that could be spent serving our God. Sustaining a comfortable life style is certainly not a sin but consider the wisdom of Solomon: He saw all his labors under the sun as vanity. Let's look at some of the lessons Ecclesiastes teaches us about our labors and time here upon the Earth

The Vanity of Wisdom, Ecclesiastes 1:12-18

Solomon found vanity in wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 1:17-18, "And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow."

We would rarely consider wisdom being vanity but Solomon did. Some of our wisest inventors may have been half mad. Maybe there is something about wisdom that we are not capable of understanding. Surely, searching out the wisdom of the world does not lead to spiritual success.

The Vanity of Self-Indulgence, Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

Solomon found vanity in the pleasures of the world.

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11, "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor: and this was my portion of all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

We find in this reading that Solomon tried and tested all sorts of pleasures and conveniences, yet he found them vanity. Sometimes we might look at the world and think that sure would be nice to indulge in. Solomon did and said it was vanity.

The Vanity of Living Wisely, Ecclesiastes 2:12-17

Really, the wisest man states that it is vanity to live wisely. We might ought to take a closer look at this one.

Ecclesiastes 2:15, “Then said I in my heart, As it happened to the fool, so it happened even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.”

In Ecclesiastes 9:11 Solomon said “time and chance happen to them all”. We can see that no matter how wise we are, we will never avoid failure or adversity. That is not how God created this world, nor it that how His creation works. The adversity and failures strengthen us. We will never escape these, nor should we want to when we understand their purpose.

The Vanity of Toil, Ecclesiastes 2:18-26

How about the hard worker, one who hustles around able to accomplish much in this world?

Ecclesiastes 2:23-24, “For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity. There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.”

We have all probably had times when we could hardly sleep at night because we had so much going on, so much to accomplish; thinking there is not time for sleep... I need to be about my work. That seems to be what Solomon is considering here. Sometimes it is good to sit back and take an inventory on what all this toiling and labor is about. What it is getting me. Even take time to smell the roses as it is said. Solomon said the things we have are from the hand of God and we should take time to enjoy the good in our labor.

Solomon closes out the book with a most profound statement that stands true throughout eternity. There is labor under the sun that is not vanity.

Ecclesiastes 12:13, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole of man.”

As we celebrate a day from our labors, let us keep in perspective the wisdom of Solomon: The whole of man is to serve God.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Dave and Catherine are working and visiting family back east. They plan to return Wednesday, 9/5.
- Brenda has started a series of treatments to improve her health
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class scheduled for tonight is postponed
- Business meeting after Services today
- We are planning a weekend meeting with Tim McPherson, Tentatively scheduled for September 14-16.

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Ben Palmer Lord’s Table – Tom Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Tom Mitchell Invitation – Ross Ward
<u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Lord’s Table – Ben Palmer Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



[www.facebook.com @blackfootchurch](https://www.facebook.com/blackfootchurch)
www.blackfootchurch.com