

Living and Dying "In The Hand of God"

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[0 : 00] Although, man, that bow and arrow thing is pretty wicked, right? I'd like to do that. Yeah, it's exciting. I remember back in the day, this was back in the days of horse and buggies when Suzanne and I were married.

We were in youth ministry because we were youths. And we could do it. We could keep up. Not anymore, right? We used to do that kind of stuff. And I'll tell you, some of the fond memories in my Christian life are memories associated with college ministry.

When I was saved in college, came to know Christ, and got involved in Suzanne's home church where I met her. And the ministry there was so vibrant and so full of the wonder of being in the Lord Jesus.

And it was just a beautiful thing. And so, again, we just continue. I'm excited for you guys and want to continue to pray for you in that way. Well, beloved, I'm going to ask you to turn to Ecclesiastes 9. Now, we had some guest speakers today, and you would think, good. Okay, Jeff's going to abbreviate this. No, I'm not. You're going to get the full meal deal today. I can't let you go out of here undernourished.

[1 : 21] You're going to be well, well stocked up. Spiritually in all of this. The title of my message then is Living and Dying in the Hand of God. That's a big topic.

Living and Dying in the Hand of God. And I want to say a few things, as is my custom, before we actually dive into reading the text together that we'll be dealing with.

Think about this with me, and I hope that this sounds very basic to you. Let's just see where it goes, all right? Every day, every moment, and in every situation and circumstance of life that you and I encounter, every single one of us decides and chooses how we will live.

That sounds really basic, doesn't it? I'm just going to stop right there and say, do you realize that most of the world wants to believe that and doesn't?

It's fine and dandy that they believe in, yes, I make my own choices for my life. I'm an independent thinking person.

[2 : 25] I am the master of my own fate. You hear this kind of thing, right? Then let life slam them. Then whose fault is it? Then whose responsibility is it?

Then who's Mr. and Miss Individual then? It's my parents are to blame. My culture is to blame. My teachers are to blame. My government is to blame.

You are to blame. Anybody but me. But every day, every moment, in every situation and circumstance of life, we make the decisions of how we work.

We choose how we respond. Look, even unexpected influences that come into our lives leave us with a choice about how we will respond to that influence.

Right? Things come at you. You didn't know they were going to. You still have a choice how you're going to respond. And yet, what kinds of things do we say? You make me mad.

[3 : 29] You make me. Now, I can go from one minute saying, you don't control my life. You don't tell me what to do. I can't do my head like that. It hurts.

I'll throw something out. To the next minute of saying, it's your fault. You made me like this. You did this to me. You're responsible for this problem, this issue.

Isn't that crazy? Here's the point of what I'm trying to say to you. We'll throw this up on the first slide. Something, something is defining life for you and defining you.

The Bible reveals a really disturbing truth about you and me. There is something at the center of you, and it determines why and how you live your life.

Now, there are only two choices as to what this center of you can be. The world wants to tell you there are a lot of choices, but the Bible tells you there are two.

[4 : 34] Either God is at the center or you are at the center. Because the Bible says that there are two kinds of people in the world.

Those who are in Christ and those who aren't. Those who are believing and those who are not believing. Those who are born again and those who will die in their trespasses and sins. Let me give you this. Here is an example, because I did this last week with you as well. Here is an example of you.

And when I say that, I'm not trying to be terribly personal. Although there is an intent there. I want you to personalize this. But as I say, this is an example of you being at the center of your life. It just means simply that when any of us try to seize control of any given moment of our lives and just do what we want to do. Stuff like what I'm about to share with you happens. This is the way we can end up thinking and behaving.

[5 : 36] So here is an example of you being at the center of your life. It is a quote that I'm going to take from a secular book. And the title of it is Untamed. Untamed.

It is written by a woman for women. And it has been number one on the New York Times bestseller list. If you have read this book, I don't want to know about it.

Here is the quote. Throw it up here on the slide thing for you. I love myself now. Self-love means that I have a relationship with myself built on trust and loyalty.

I trust myself to have my own back. So my allegiance is to the voice within. I'll abandon everyone else's expectations of me before I'll abandon myself.

I'll disappoint everyone else before I'll disappoint myself. I'll forsake all others before I forsake myself. Me and myself.

[6 : 35] We are till death do us part. For the tape.

There are cringes and sour looks all throughout my congregation, which is music to my soul. Here is an example of God being at the center of your life.

This is a quote from another number one on the bestsellers list. In fact, I think that this particular book has been the bestseller among books for a lot, a lot, a lot of years.

Here it is. Let's throw it up here. If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. And then also from this same book.

But realize this, that in the last days, difficult times will come for men will be. Lovers of self. When the apostle Paul prayed for his fellow Christians in the church at Colossae, he asked God to fill each of them, not with a greater love and knowledge of self, but to fill them with this slide, the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that they would walk in a manner worthy of the Lord to please him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

[8 : 08] Friends, knowing God is life giving. Now, when I say that, I don't mean knowing about God. I mean knowing God as in God has come to your life, making himself known to you.

And you have come to the place where you are putting your wholehearted trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as God's one and only provision for your sins that affront this holy, high and exalted, lifted up God.

Anything short of you putting your wholehearted faith, belief and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as God's provision for your forgiveness for sins, you are headed to a devil's hell.

You say, well, preachers always say that kind of thing. Don't they know how put put off that is for people? Well, I'd rather you be a little bit put off and upset me than end up in the devil's hell.

So we're going to tell you the truth. This high and holy God who is exalted above the heavens has condescended in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to make salvation for you possible, to make salvation for you something you'll genuine, pure.

[9 : 25] And so he says, come. Come and know me. That was the Apostle Paul's prayer.

For us to know God. In the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, Ecclesiastes nine.

Is a chapter where Solomon is continuing to focus this issue of measuring all of life with God's wisdom. Solomon doesn't say, well, some people are really wise.

Some people are marginally wise. Some people are not so wise. But just take the wisdom that you have and do the best you can. And he says, use the wisdom of God to navigate life, to measure all of life so that so that you and I can see life God's way.

And in God's wisdom, give our lives to what the Lord says is most valuable and enjoyable.

Christians don't need to shy away from having a full and enjoyable life.

[10:36] So commending that to us. Right. We're not a bunch of sourpusses that walk around with this scowl on our faces because we have to suffer for Jesus and tell the world we love Jesus.

It's not like that. It takes grace for you to consider suffering for Christ as a joy and a blessing and something that you're called to.

So let's read in Ecclesiastes chapter nine. Now, we're only going to deal with a couple of verses today, but I want to read down through maybe verse nine or so. OK. For I have, Solomon says, taken all this to my heart and all of this has everything to do with what he's been saying now for eight chapters on the whole.

I've taken all of this into my heart and I explain it that righteous men are wise men. So we say the righteous wise and their deeds. Their life are in the hand of God.

Hallelujah. Man does not know whether it will be love or hatred. Anything awaits him. It is the same then for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked, for the good, for the clean and for the unclean, for the man who offers a sacrifice and for the one who does not sacrifice.

[11:52] As the good man is, so is the sinner as the swearer is. So is the one who is afraid to swear. And the question comes, what do these people have in common?

They sound polar opposite of one another. What is his point? Verse three. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun. And you'll remember under the sun means under the heavens in this life, under the gaze of God.

There is one fate. There it is again for all men or all mankind. This isn't just singling out male people. This is mankind.

Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards, they go to the dead.

This is very upbeat. For whoever is joined with all the living, there is hope. There it is. Surely a live dog is better than a dead lion.

[12:56] For the living know they will die, but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward for their testimony and memory is forgotten. Indeed, their love, their hate and their zeal have already perished.

They will no longer have a share in all that is done under the sun. Go then. Here it is. Eat your bread and happiness. Drink your wine with a cheerful heart. For God has already approved your works.

Let your clothes be white all the time. Let not the oil be lacking on your head. So enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life.

Your vaporous, transitory, ever-changing life, which God has given you under the sun. For this is your reward in life and your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

Those verses and the rest of the chapter will have to wait for maybe next week. God willing. What we want to zero in on now, verses 1, 2, and 3. I'm going to do a little recap with you from last time.

[14:02] All right? Taking Solomon's counsel then to our hearts, we need to prayerfully heed five important matters of life. And these five important matters of life show God's wisdom for what makes life worthwhile.

So this is the almighty God saying to us, here are the matters of life that make life worth living, that make it worthwhile, that help you drain all of the joy out of it that you can.

Now, the reason God says that to us is because we don't know. We'll turn to all different things to try and bring joy and meaning and happiness into our life, won't we?

These are the kinds of things these two folks are going to be telling the young people not to waste their lives on. Right? Come to Christ because Christ is the only way for you to know a purpose-driven, meaningful life.

That's it. This is where Solomon is coming from in a relationship with almighty God. So the first one that I shared with you from last time, this first matter of life, making life worthwhile, there is one God worth knowing.

[15:18] Come up here on the slide. One God worth knowing. That was last week. And here is the summary takeaway from last week's message. It was a particular quote that I shared with you.

We'll put that up here. When you move from your own personal experiences, what he's talking about, to God, you always distort God. When you see God in life through those personal experiences, you distort God.

In other words, I'll stop there. You're measuring your life by your experiences. What happens to you? What comes at you? And you're using those experiences to help you take measure and stock of what life really is all about.

Now, if you do that, you see why people get depressed and commit suicide and give up and drink and chase all these other things. Go on with the quote.

The Bible turns that perspective upside down. Don't start from your personal experiences and work up to God. Start from God and work down to your experiences, whether past or present.

[16:28] Define who God is and then bring that to bear on what's happening in your life. That's wisdom. That is good, good, good counsel.

When we don't start with God, beloved, his truth, his wisdom for life, then we will live life upside down, as it were. We will miss what life is really about.

So what Solomon now goes on to say helps you and I measure what we're living for and what we're aiming our lives at.

Are we aiming our lives at what God says is worthwhile? And how do we know if we're doing that? One of the most tragic things you will ever come across is a human being in old age looking back and feeling like they have wasted lives.

Can I introduce you to one? God says that he was one of the wisest men who ever lived other than the Lord Jesus Christ. His name is Solomon.

[17:37] And he's writing this to you. To say, I am that man. I got to the end of my life and I look back and realized I chased a lot of things I never should have chased.

And now I can't get it back and I can't do it over again. And so he's saying, heed me. Listen to me. And the Holy Spirit is using him to sober us about the issue.

Well, our second important matter of life. There is. Here it is. One fate worth studying. One fate worth studying.

Now, if you go back into the text with me and notice this. I have taken all this to my heart and explain it that righteous men, wise men and their deeds are in the hand of God.

Man does not know whether it will be love or hatred. Now, notice this. Anything awaits him. And closes with anything awaits him.

[18:36] If you have a different translation, it might say this. Both are before him. Both are before man. Anything awaits man. The sense is this. Man doesn't know.

Man doesn't know. You don't know what awaits you in the future until you live it. That's a you know what's real and what's going to happen.

You have to live it. As hard as you try to predict the future. See, you and I have this. We can't even predict what's going to happen to one minute from now. Here I am thinking I'm going to finish this sermon.

Because I worked on it this week and I want to finish it. But I can say four more words and keel over dead. And I didn't see that coming. Right? You can leave here and God forbid be in a car wreck in a heartbeat.

Do you think people go out and plan that? And they go, yeah, I didn't see it coming. It came out of nowhere. Or you lose a loved one. How many people have I counseled that have looked into my eyes with tears in their eyes and say no one should ever have to bury their own child?

[19:48] It happened in my family. It's happened in me. You don't know what's going to happen. So in an ultimate sense, the next minute of your life is out of your control.

That's what Solomon is saying here. Anything awaits a person. We don't know. And one critical aspect of our not knowing highlights what I'm going to call kind of a double-sided reality that we all share in regarding this.

You don't know when you're going to die. And you grow closer and closer to your death with every passing minute. The only person who knows when you're going to die is God.

You don't know. But every breath you take, you get closer to your past one. Right? Now, I'm preaching the text.

So don't get upset with me if this is a downer. It won't stay that way. But you've got to hang on.

Solomon is wanting to sober you. He's wanting to arrest you and shake you out of the party atmosphere that life can bring sometimes and bring you down and put your feet flat on the ground and say, you need to really think about these things.

[21 : 10] These are the matters of life. There is one fate worth studying. One fate. Now, all of this is said, but being in the hand of God means that you're among those Solomon is calling the righteous wise.

If you're in the hand of God up in verse one, then you are the righteous wise. Righteous. Righteous slash wise. Righteous means Jeff.

What does it mean to be righteous? Righteous means being right with God. Right. We take it a little further. It's showing God's own character in your life by being morally just and upright in your attitudes and actions.

You seeking to live a morally pure life to reflect the character of Jesus, to walk as he walked, to speak as he spoke, to have the attitude of meekness and humility and gentleness and tenderness that Jesus had, and then reflect that in your life.

That's the character of a righteous person, a right with. I am right with God person. OK. And wise, wise, he uses here in verse one, wise means living in and living from a true and saving knowledge of God in his ways.

[22 : 33] You're living out of that knowledge of God, that understanding of God. You're in a relationship with God and the difference in your life. So you can live a wise life.

So here it is. Let me throw this up here for you to see. A righteous, wise person puts his or her faith in God alone for forgiveness of sins, lives out that faith in a lifestyle.

And that lifestyle is self-denying, morally upright, God-pleasing and God-honoring. Say, Jeff, does a person like this struggle with sin? Absolutely. Does a person like this falter and fail in their walk with God?

Do they always honor God? No, they don't. They do falter and fail. That's why we run to Christ in grace and pray for forgiveness and walk in the faith that he's given us as a gift and look to him. Now, there's only one alternative about doing that, and that's living, trusting in your own self. But the righteous, wise person shows the ownership of God on their life.

[23 : 42] So a person like this would willingly, humbly, faithfully live under the life-defining reality that God is in control. And you're good with that.

You don't live your life bucking that. You don't look like a mad, bitter, resentful, always chip-on-your-shoulder person because you can't stand the fact that you're not in control.

And you're constantly reminded you're not in control. And you just can't get over that. You're constantly trying to wrest control of your life out of the hands of Almighty God.

And I say to you, how's that working for you? It doesn't work for anyone. The more you buck, the worse it gets.

There's irony about this righteous, wise life as it goes. And it has to do with this living out a morally upright life in the hands of God.

[24 : 48] Because those righteous, wise people who belong to God and live for God suffer the same fate as the people who don't do all that.

You're headed for the same place. And you say, that's why it's not worth it. See, you just made my point. Eat, drink, and be merry and get all you can while you can because this is it.

And then you're going to die. You just made the hedonistic point, Jeff. Now Solomon is saying, that's what you think. That's what you think.

But when God's at the center of your life, there's a whole other way of looking at it. And it's the true way. It's the genuine way. It's the way to life. It's the way to life.

God is in control. The righteous, wise do end up in the same fate. Look at verse 2 with me. It is the same for all. There's one fate for the righteous and for the wicked.

[25 : 56] In other words, there's not one fate for the righteous and a different fate for the wicked. It's the same fate for both. It's the same fate for the good person, the clean person, and the unclean.

It's the same fate for the man who offers sacrifice and the one who doesn't. For the good man and for the sinner. For the swearer and the one who doesn't. Now notice in verse 3. There is an evil in all that is done under the sun.

There's an evil in it. And here it is. There is one fate for all men. One fate for all men.

Now look, Solomon wasn't some sleazy philosopher. Some wannabe philosopher. He wasn't necessarily a debater of the age or a guru or a know-it-all or anything like that.

Here's what he was. He was a student of life and a servant of God. So Solomon has spent eight chapters, as we know them, studying life from God's viewpoint.

[27 : 01] His worldview was God-centered and saturated. With me? Taking that God-centered view of life and being saturated in the truth of God, he now turns all of his resources to study out that one fate issue and try to hit it head on and come to terms with it.

Now, I admire Solomon for his courage. He has the guts to say, I'm going to go at this thing, man. I'm going to get in there and take it apart. Dissect that thing.

I'm going to try to figure this out. For that, I applaud him. What he is saying here for us is life-giving. It's life-defining truth. And it goes beyond. It transcends time and culture and personality and personal opinion. He says this.

It's undeniable. It is the same for all. There is one fate for. And then notice that list that he has there for you.

[28 : 07] Notice that list of people that I just read. The righteous, the wicked, the good and clean, and the unclean. Right on down the line. Let's throw this slide up here for you. And I want you to see how I've kind of put this out for you.

This visual might help. On one side, we have the God-fearers. And on the other side, the God-fleers. Those fleeing from God. We want to have nothing to do with God.

The God-fearers are not the people who decide that God is something to be terrified of. And so they don't want to have any. The God-fearers are those who have come to the point where they understand this high and holy, exalted God who has condescended to know them.

That's why I gave you Psalm 138. I wanted you to hear this is the God who peers through all of the sin, all of the wrong and unrighteousness of your life, and sees you and calls you to himself.

And then owns you. Loves you and cares for you. How much did he love me and care for me, Jeff? Really? Yeah. He sacrificed his son to give you life.

[29 : 15] That's how much. I don't know of a price higher than that. That's the work of God. One thing I'll say before we move on to this, the righteous, the wicked, the good, clean, and the unclean, you kind of get that.

What is offer a sacrifice and doesn't? Here, it has everything to do with what we would understand Hebrew worship to be, right? These were people who, their worship, made sacrifice to God.

All right? That's what the... So these are God worshipers and those who don't. And then here, we have swearers or oath makers. So these are the ones who make oath to God and say, my life belongs to you.

As a good Hebrew and God-fearer and God-believer, my life belongs to you. These are the people who don't want to make that commitment. What he's talking about in this list.

So Solomon's intense study involved the fate of all mankind. What he wanted to come to was the end game for every single person. And the truth made a really sobering impression on Solomon.

[30 : 28] It made a critical reality about life very, very clear to him. And here's that critical reality. You ready? Death is inescapable.

And life-defining for every single person. I dare say most of the people on the planet will say death is inescapable.

But gosh, you just see so many people trying to put it off. Right? In so many ways. I won't even go into the whole cryo-technology thing that I know zero about.

You see it in the sci-fi movies where they freeze you and then bring you back later. Why would you want to do that? Just die and go be with Jesus and get it done.

Right? Why would you want to be frozen and be brought back when it's just, God tells us, it's going to keep getting worse. You want to come back when it's worse.

[31 : 28] Come on! Well, this is the craziness. We're just crazy people with this stuff. What's the end game? That's sobering. Death is inescapable.

Life-defining reality for every single person. Most people don't realize how life-defining death is.

Think about somebody you know who doesn't want to talk about dying, who doesn't want to plan for dying, deal with dying, who doesn't want to deal with anybody in their family dying.

I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to think about it. That's something I know one day it'll happen. It's just going to happen. I don't want to talk about it. May I suggest to you that there's something life-defining about that attitude?

You can't run from it. Whether you want to deal with it or admit it or not, you're going to die. The question is, when you die and wake up again, because you will, where will you be?

Friend, where will you be? Solomon says, you better think about that. Each person interprets this particular fate.

[32 : 45] And each person allows that interpretation to bear on how they live. There's one fate for everybody. Verse 3. But for all of us, there is this evil.

Now, evil as it's used here in verse 3, this is an evil in all that is done under the sun. There's one fate for all men. Dr. Barak says that evil here can be known as misery or have the sense of being made miserable.

We live with knowing that we all face the same fate. Death. Death. So the miserable reality of death is unavoidable.

And so is this. Notice what it says in verse 3. Furthermore, it's like, Solomon, stop already. No, he's got to go further. The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives.

Afterwards, they go to the dead. Afterwards, they go to the dead. Why is this important? Because what Solomon wants to do here is highlight depravity.

[33 : 56] This is the depravity that we all live with because this is inside each one of us. Isn't that what it says? I'm just telling you what it says. It's in every single human being.

This is the Bible's view. It's not cultures, societies, the schools, the government. It's not their view. This is the Bible's view of what is most wrong with us and where the worst wrongs we do come from.

I'm going to use you guys again as an illustration. You're just helping me out so much. When you guys go and you do your presentations and you do your games and all the other stuff, there's a purpose behind that, right?

And I'm going to guess that that purpose is to share with all of these young people that they can have a wonderful life if they will just figure out what's most important to them and do their own thing. And Scott's saying, no way, man. That is not the message. The message is there's only one way for you to know life, and it's through a person.

[35 : 04] And you've got to have a relationship with that person, and that person's name is what, Scott? Jesus. Jesus. The reason that they do that is because they know what's most wrong with people.

And what's most wrong with people is that people have affronted a holy God. There are all kinds of other problems in people's lives, and all of those problems stem from that one root issue.

What's wrong with me? I am a sinner by nature and by deed. And there's only one person who can help me with that problem.

And that problem gives birth to all my other problems. And the only person that can help me with that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Solomon didn't know it was Jesus Christ.

He knew it was the Messiah. The promised one. And he put his hope in the promised one that God would send. We look back on the cross, and we know who Jesus is. That's what we're dealing with here.

[36 : 17] The truth, let me throw this up on the screen. The truth is that every person lives in the evil and insanity of the sin of their hearts because there is no fear of God in their hearts.

They don't treasure God or live by his wisdom and his ways. And then this slide. Apart from God, evil controls our hearts.

Now notice the first part. Apart from God, evil controls our hearts. Unchecked. And insanity or madness characterizes our attitude.

Sin is insane. It's foolish and senseless. Right? We have to call sin insane.

What would you call doing something that ruins your life, ruins the life of the people around you you care most about, and sends you to a devil's hell? What would you call it? And then to say, oh, but I love doing that.

[37 : 16] I love sinning. In fact, I'm going to leave here, and I'm going to do some more. That's insane. And this is precisely the point Solomon wants to make.

An evil, foolish heart hates the reality that death brings us before this holy God who holds our life in his hands and our death in his hands.

So every explanation for death and for life after death, apart from the truth of what God has explained, is an attempt to throw off the reality of standing before the judgment of God. Say, Jeff, why do people run from this idea of death so much? Well, I'll tell you, because God has written eternity in their hearts as well. Do you remember we dealt with that earlier in one of the chapters?

They know. God has put the idea of eternity in every single soul. People know there's an eternity. They don't want to face up to it. And so they don't want to deal with death because they don't want to think in terms of not being in control.

[38 : 33] Do you see? Now, I just saved you \$130 an hour. Because you go sit in front of a psychologist and this is what you're going to hear, right?

You're going to have to deal. I just saved you all that by telling you. You can do with it as you will. I think this is where the, beloved, this is where the real crux or the heart of the matter takes shape for us.

Please hear this carefully. People living apart from God live out of the sinful deceptions. They live out of the earthly limitations of their own devices.

They live from hearts full of evil and insanity. Now, please don't get mad at the preacher about that. That's what the Bible says. But it says it over and over. You say, Jeff, I'm just having a hard time swallowing that.

You can come see Greg and see me and we can sit down with you and we can take you to scads of other places in the Bible where God says the same thing over and over about the hearts of human beings apart from God.

[39 : 45] Dr. Barak, the commentator that I read often for this material to help me understand and deal with it. Dr. Barak mentioned Pastor Charles Swindoll.

Chuck Swindoll, you might be familiar with that name. Dr. Barak quoted from Chuck Swindoll. Swindoll said that you see this insanity, you see this sinful madness in some of the answers people give to hard questions.

Here are a couple of them. Why did you abandon your wife and kids? And you just hear some of the strangest things people say about that. I once counseled a family, a wife and a couple of kids whose dad decided that he wanted to be with men now.

And so he had a man friend and he left his wife and his kids and went out and married this man. And lived with this man.

And left his family. They lived in a nice place. They had a he had he made a great salary. He was a good provider. And they went from that down into the poverty level.

[40 : 57] Because she had to join the workforce. Why would a man do that? Here's another one. Why do you keep living like that when you know it's wrong and that God is being mocked by how you're choosing to live?

Why would you keep doing that? I had to say that to people. We just get to the point where everything's been said and that's that's that's all that's left. You know, it's wrong.

You've admitted it's wrong. You say it's not good for your family and the people. But you're going to keep doing it anyway. Even though, you know, it brings shame on the Lord Jesus and you profess to be a Christian.

Why would you do that? Swindoll says the kind of answers that you get to questions like that proves the evil and insanity of men's hearts. That's that's as far as you have to go.

Someone once said you don't have to go any deeper than sin for the reason for sin. The peaks with what Solomon says next afterwards they go to the dead.

[42 : 08] Literally in the Hebrew, it reads this way. And afterwards to the dead. So here are some quotes from that book I mentioned earlier.

It's the one I actually encourage you to read. And he look at this one. There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. And then this one.

The foolishness of man ruins his way and his heart rages against the Lord. So how do you want to face the end of your life?

How do you want to die? Do you want to die with God or without God? Do you want to die under the mercies of God or do you want to die under the wrath of God?

The holy anger of God. There's only one fate worth studying. It's a fate where you die in the hands of God.

[43 : 05] As a person who belongs to God, who is loved by God, and who is taken to heaven by God.

That's the fate worth studying. That's the fate worth measuring your life by. Now as I close, someone may be thinking, but Jeff, I do want to die in the hands of God.

I do want to be owned by the Lord. I do want to go to heaven when I die, but I'm not dead yet. So what about living for God? Well, if you come back next week, that's the one we'll deal with.

Because verse 4 says, and there is hope for the living. The living. Amen? Amen. Let's pray together.

Well, Father, your word is true and deep and wonderful. And if we will just attend and attain to heed your word, the word of the living God would guide our lives and give us a richness about life and a confidence about life and a hope and a peace about life that would pass understanding.

[44 : 26] Go beyond anything human beings could ever really figure out. And that's Solomon's point, I think, Lord. Thank you for Solomon. Thank you for leading him in the spirit to write these things, to warn us and to help us.

And thank you for the time to study your word, to dig deep into the truths that make up and comprise the Bible so that we can live life to your pleasing and to your glory.

That's the end game for us as Christians. I pray that you would send us out today with a wonderful sense of the joy and the peace of enjoying life, of taking this wonderful gift of life that you've given to each of us and living it to the fullest for your pleasure and to reflect you to a watching world.

We thank you for your goodness to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.