

Advice for Living in Hebel

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[0:00] Ecclesiastes 6, we'll begin reading at the end of the chapter, verse 12, and read through verse 14 of chapter 7.

! A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man. The living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure. It is better to heed a wise man's rebuke than to listen to the song of fools.

Like the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of fools. This, too, is meaningless.

Extortion turns a wise man into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

[1:17] The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools. Do not say, why were the old days better than these?

For it is not wise to ask such questions. Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing, and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter, as money is a shelter.

But the advantage of knowledge is this, that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor. Consider what God has done. Who can straighten what he has made crooked?

When times are good, be happy. But when times are bad, consider God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future.

Picture a fall festival. The hard work of the harvest is over. The barns are full. It's time to celebrate. That was what the Feast of Tabernacles, or booths, was all about.

[2:24] It was a week-long celebration of God's goodness and the joys of life. It's a picture in your mind, eating and drinking, dancing late nights around campfires and singing.

And then the Sabbath came. And everyone crowded into the synagogue or the temple. And the head of the synagogue or priest in charge of the temple would take out the scroll of Ecclesiastes. And he would read. And he would begin at the beginning. And he would read all the way to the end. And if it seems strange that he would choose Ecclesiastes, it's because you haven't been tracking, you haven't been following, what the main message of Ecclesiastes is all about.

Because there's no other book like Ecclesiastes to teach us how to enjoy God and how to enjoy the gifts of God. And how to enjoy those things in a world of confusion and darkness.

And Ecclesiastes reminds us that frivolous joy is not possible in this world. And so the harvest is in. It's time to celebrate.

[3:45] But we can't let that celebration unhinge us from the realities of life. Have joy, but make sure that joy is still anchored in the reality of life.

That you are living in a passing world. And so joy must be anchored in God's grace. And who God is. And nothing in this world has to be anchored in the fear of the Lord.

So on Sunday evenings, we've been going through the book of Ecclesiastes. We've been tracking the author, who in Hebrew is called Koaleth. And we've seen Koaleth wrestling with certain realities, certain very difficult questions.

What does a man gain from all of his labor under the sun if he dies and he has to give it to someone else? What's good for a man to do in his few short days, short years of his life?

What's the best way to live when everything is meaningless? And the Hebrew word is Havel. When everything is vanity, empty, futile, useless, breath, vapor, ephemeral, temporary.

[5:06] How should we live in a world like that? Because that is the world that we are living in. Well, in the first two chapters, Koaleth tries finding a way out of Havel.

He tries wisdom and he tries laughter and he tries work and he tries the good life. And at the end, he said, I denied myself nothing my eyes desired.

I refused my heart no pleasure. Yet, when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was Havel.

A chasing after wind. Nothing was gained under the sun. Now, his failed experiment ended in depression.

He says in chapter 2, So I hated life. I hated life. My heart began to despair. But at the bottom of that despair, he came to a surprising realization that though you can't establish anything lasting, anything really meaningful with your two hands in this world that we live under the sun, joy is still available.

[6:19] Satisfaction is still possible if you receive life as a gift of God. If you're willing to live on grace, life can still be happy.

You can still find satisfaction in all your work. And that is the pattern of Ecclesiastes. Koaleth looks at some Havel, some crooked thing, something that is hard to understand.

He describes it. He looks into that frustration. And he says, So there's nothing better for a man to do than to eat and to drink and to find satisfaction in all his labor, for this is the gift of God.

And that's what we saw last time, several weeks ago in chapter 6 on the evenings. He looked at the pursuit of money. And not only the pursuit of money, but what happens if you have money, if you are prosperous.

And he looked at that whole scenario and his conclusion was that it was Havel. It too was meaningless. And so it would be better for a man to be a stillborn child, to come forth dead, than to live life without God's grace.

[7:32] But, with God's grace, you can actually enjoy this life that you live. And that brings us to where we are today.

Last time, Koaleth ended with these words from chapter 6, verse 12. For who knows what is good for a man in life? During the few and meaningless days, the days of Havel, he passes through like a shadow.

Who can tell him what will happen after, or under, what will happen under the sun after he is gone, or afterwards? And those questions are on the doorstep of chapter 7.

And chapter 7, verses 1-14, answers that question. What is good for a man to do? How do you live? What's the best way? How do you live wisely when your whole life is planted in a world of Havel?

A world of frustration. What's the best way to live when your life is a shadow? It's quickly here, and it's gone, and it's constantly moving to its conclusion. How can you enjoy life when you live in that?

[8:44] When everywhere you look is Havel. Now, Coleth answers that question, those questions, with six pieces of advice.

And if you're looking for a title, that would be a good title, six pieces of advice. And he puts this advice in the form of Proverbs, and we've already read those. And we see his first piece of advice about living in the midst of Havel in chapter 7, verse 1.

And he basically says, start with the end. Start with the end. And they often say, if you want to live well, start with what you want written on your tombstone, and work backwards from that.

And Coleth is saying something very similar. He says in chapter 7, verse 1, A good name is better than fine perfume. And the day of death is better than the day of birth.

A good name, that's a good reputation. It's better than fine perfume. Perfume in that world was used in very much the same way that it's used in our world.

[9:52] So if you want to smell good, you put perfume on. But perfume also had another application that we generally don't think about. And it was used to cover the odor of a dead body.

Part of the burial ritual was to wash the body and then to anoint it with spices and perfumes. And Coleth says here that a good reputation will cover the odor of your stinking corpse better than perfume will.

And that sounds shocking, but you know Coleth is the kind of guy that likes to shock people. It's better for people to go to your funeral and to remember what a godly man you were, a godly woman, a kind person you were, than to say how nice you look in your suit and how peaceful you look as you lay there in your coffin.

A good name is better than fine perfume. Coleth is saying, remember the end. It's coming. What do you want people to remember you for?

If you start there, if you start at that day, your day of death, then you will end well and you will live well. And he immediately follows with the day of death is better than the day of birth.

[11:20] Now if the first line of that proverb is shocking, this is even more shocking. How can that make sense? The day of death is better than the day of birth?

How can that be? The day of death is surrounded with sadness and the day of birth is surrounded with joy. We've had a couple of births lately and I don't remember anyone saying, I regret to inform you that Maxwell Shavey or Lila Rohde was born this past week.

So how can he say that? How can he say that it's better, the day of death is better than the day of life? I think the simple answer is this in light of the first line.

When we die, our reputation is sealed. It becomes permanent. It's forever safe. And while we live, we have lots of opportunities of ruining our reputation, of ruining our names.

And so how many people have ruined their reputation at the ends of their lives? And then their day of death comes and they have no perfume to cover over their stinking corpse.

[12:41] And that's why he says it's better to come to the end, than to be at the very beginning and have a whole life in front of you where you could ruin your name.

And you have a whole life of difficulty and frustration that faces you. Well, he keeps talking about death. It's better to go to the house of mourning than to a house of feasting.

For death is the destiny of every man. The living should take this to heart. Now it's fun. It's fun going to baby showers. So I've heard I've never been to one.

Baby showers and weddings. Birthday parties are fun. Anniversary parties are great. And Coalesce says, better than all those is the funeral.

That is the place that is really good to be at. Is that what he's saying? Yeah. That's what he's saying. So don't let this roll off your back.

[13:43] Don't let this go in one ear and out the other. Listen again. It's better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting.

For death is the destiny of every man. The living should take it to heart. Why is the funeral better? Because that is where we are all going.

That is the destiny for all of us. For you and for me. You are going to die. You're going to die. And if you're going to live well, if you're going to live a good life, then you have to take it to heart.

The benefit of the funeral is that it reminds us of our own mortality. So go to the funeral, look at the body, and say to yourself, that is going to be me one day.

There's no escape. There's no exceptions. That's going to be me. If you go out to Tombstone, Arizona, you can visit Boot Hill Cemetery.

[14:55] It was the cemetery in use in Tombstone's heyday when Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday were in town and the shootout at the O.K. Corral happened. And one of those tombstones, if you go, it reads this.

As you pass by, remember that as you are, so once was I. And as I am, you soon will be.

Remember me. Young people, do you hear me? You're going to die. And I don't say that to be morbid.

And I don't say that because I'm melodramatic. I'm not. I'm telling you because if you want to be happy, you have to realize that.

And I want you to be happy. I want you to live wisely while you live. If you take death as your starting point because it's going to be your ending point, then you will live a good life.

[16:03] And it will save you from living a pathetic little life that comes out to nothing in the end. Coeth goes on.

Sorrow is better than laughter because a sad face is good for the heart. The sorrow of the funeral home is better than the laughter because it does something to your heart.

And I think if you have been to a funeral, you know the good that it does to your heart. The funeral doesn't feel good. It's not happy. But it has a way of orienting our hearts to the most important things in life.

We can't live for stuff. We can't live for money when we see the person who is dead. When we see death.

See, death lances the abscesses of idolatry that grow in our heart. And so there's that idolatry.

[17:13] And it's festering like an infection. And death, the sorrow of death comes in and it cleanses us. It takes away our false joy and the idols that really cannot give us lasting joy.

And it makes us look again for real joy. It turns us to the true joy that only God can give. And so the day of death is better than the day of birth.

the sad face is good for the heart. The funeral home is better than the party because it turns us to God. It makes us see reality as it really is.

It takes away the mirage. It takes away all the games of pretending that we like to do with ourselves. Verse 4, the heart of the wise is in the house of mourning but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.

The wise aren't morbid. Some commentators have looked at this and said, yes, the wise people are morbid and Kohleth is saying this is the problem with the wise.

[18 : 21] It's not that. They just see the reality of death. That is what they are thinking about. If you are wise, that is what you think about. That I am going there.

That is my final destination whether I like it or not. And so they let that reality, that truth that is true no matter how you feel about it, they let that reality shape their lives.

So should I spend my money on this or on that? Should I really spend my time this way? Does that fit in with where I am going?

Because I am going there. The wise man constantly asks himself those questions in the light of death. Am I living the way I should?

So let me ask you, are you wise? Is death a regular part of your thinking?

[19 : 23] Not in a morbid sense, but in a realistic sense? death a regular part of your thinking? Fools reject this advice.

The fools are in the house of pleasure. They don't like funerals. I've had one or two people tell me, I just don't do funerals. That's it, huh?

You just don't do them. And Kohleth calls those kind of people fools. They do weddings, and they do parties, and they do bars, and they do birthdays, but they just don't do funerals.

Foolish. Foolish. Kohleth keeps going. It's better to heed a wise man's rebuke than to listen to the song of fools like a crackling of thorns under the pot is the laughter of fools.

This too is Havel. It's meaningless. And so the wise person tells you to think about death because it's real and it's going to happen to you. But the fool laughs it off.

[20 : 29] And any time death comes up, they have a joke, they have a song to push death away. I don't want to think about it. They keep their distance from it. And Kohleth looks at that and he says that's nothing but thorns under the pot.

And so this summer when you're out camping, pick up some thorns and put your cooking pot on the fire and throw your thorns in there and start them on fire and this is what you'll find.

They make lots of noise, but they don't last long and they don't boil water. And for all the noise and all the songs and all the laughter of fools, at the end of the day all they have is laughter.

You can laugh death. You can blow it off. You can go on your merry old way. But in the end, that whole approach is Havel.

It doesn't amount to anything. This isn't the best tasting medicine, is it?

[21 : 40] No one likes to think about death and no one likes to hear that a wise man thinks about death a lot. It's not the best tasting medicine, but it is the medicine that we need.

Death's coming. And you can live your life pretending like that it isn't. It isn't going to happen. Or you can live in the truth. You are going to die.

And so don't waste your life. Don't pursue shallow joy, shallow laughter, meaningless joking of fools. Start at the end and work backwards.

And live for something worthwhile. And that's his first piece of advice. If we're going to live wisely in this world of confusion and darkness, we have to start at the end.

So we keep going on. The second piece of advice is found in verse 7. Extortion turns a wise man into a fool and a bribe corrupts the heart.

[22 : 49] Money is dangerous. Money is powerful. Money can take a wise man who's thinking about death and it has a way of steering him away from the thoughts of death and into the love of money.

Extortion or oppression, the fear of losing money can corrupt you and the desire for it, the desire for the bribe, can turn a wise man into a fool.

And so he says, in all your thinking about money, be careful. Because money is powerful. It is dangerous. Love of money is the root of all kinds of sin.

And so when you face frustration, and when you're living in this life, and it can be so difficult, I know everyone knows this, this is part of what it means, you're frustrated and your house doesn't look like what you want it to look like, and things are difficult, and you're having all kinds of problems. And later on, he's going to say, money is the answer for everything. And that's true. If I just had enough money, I could solve this problem. But the problem is, we don't.

[24:17] No one has enough money. And so what can happen is it starts to corrupt even a wise man's heart. And they can start second guessing what they think and what they know.

Because they want money. And so Colas says, be careful. Be careful. I mean, all you have to do is look back at chapter 6 and see, money is dangerous, and it is Havel.

It can lead you into eating and darkness and frustration and anger, and so be careful. Well, his third piece of advice is take a long-term perspective.

Take a long-term perspective. verse 8. The end of a matter is better than the beginning, and patience is better than pride.

Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the laps of fools. The truth is that life is full of enigmas and difficulties.

[25:25] It is hard. And sometimes you look around and you just can't understand what is going on. And it is not in the sense that you just can't figure it out.

It is that you look at it and it is frustrating to you. You can't understand how things that are happening are happening. And you see the oppression that Koaleth looked at in chapter 3, and you see the monotony of your own work that he talked about in chapter 1, and then there is this tremendous temptation to get all worked up to get agitated about what is going on.

And when you see politicians going from bad to worse, or maybe just being politicians, you get all worked up and you start wondering what is going on.

How can they do what they're doing? And you become impatient, and you become agitated and vexed, and Koaleth says, no, no, no.

That's the way a fool thinks. That's the way a fool reacts to Havel. Instead, in Hebrew it says, it's better to be long in spirit, rather than tall in spirit.

[26:44] It's better to take a long-term perspective of what's going on, rather than being proud and lifted up, and thinking you know what is best.

You want to take a long-term perspective, instead of being exalted and think you have the answers for everything. So be patient. The fact is, is that you don't know what God is up to.

Only someone who thinks he is as wise as God becomes agitated when he doesn't get his way. You can only see a tiny slice of the pie.

And so Kola says relax. Stop fretting and getting all worked up. Everything isn't settled. We haven't come to the end of the matter yet.

So be patient. Wait until the end. And remember on that last day, we looked from Ecclesiastes 3.

[27:53] Right now we're on the underside of the tapestry. And there's lots of knots and tangles.

It's very confusing. But on the last day, God is going to take the tapestry off the loom and he's going to turn it over for all of us to see.

And we'll say that that's perfect. It was just the way it should have been. So be patient. And patience and pride is a surefire way to ruin your joy.

And Kola's fourth piece of advice brings out another way to ruin joy. To live foolishly. So if you want to be unhappy, just do what he says not to do.

Do not say, why were the old days better than these? For it is not wise to ask such questions.

Misplaced nostalgia, blind nostalgia, will turn you into a fool.

It will ruin your happiness. The Judds sang it. That's a country group. I'm not going to sing it, so you can put it to some country tune if you want, as I say it.

[29:14] Grandpa, tell me about the good old days. Sometimes it feels like this world's gone crazy. Grandpa, take me back to yesterday, where the line between right and wrong didn't seem so hazy.

Did lovers really fall in love to stay? Stand beside each other, come what may? Was a promise really something people kept, not just something they would say?

Did families really bow their heads to pray? Did daddy really never go away? Oh, grandpa, tell me about the good old days. It's a nice song, but honestly it's completely foolish.

It's nonsense. The world has always been crazy. And between right and wrong, from our perspective, there's always been a lot of gray.

Did lovers really fall and love to stay, stand beside each other what may? Did daddies really never go away? Yes, darling, they really did. They just didn't file the papers. And if you think life was really better in the 1950s with mom in the kitchen smiling as dad came home from work, then you're only fooling yourself, Coalesce says.

[30 : 35] The kids that grew up in the 50s became the kids in the 60s who threw off their parents' shallow morality. And I'm afraid in the church in America, we are in love with this Victorian sentimentality.

If you look at a lot of the covers of the books that we read, you would think that the godliest time ever was in the 1870s, when women all wore lacy blouses and long flowing skirts and dads wore suits at home.

And Coalesce says it just ain't so. The 1950s were full of people longing for the 1920s. And the people in the 1870s were full of people who were longing for the 1830s.

And Coalesce says people who talk like that are devoid of wisdom. They haven't grasped the basic fact that there is nothing new under the sun.

And they haven't grasped the basic fact that it isn't the era that you live in that is the problem. It's sin. It's havel. It's the curse. It's you that's the problem.

[31 : 49] So no matter where they put you on the time frame, on the timeline, the problem is still going to be there. Not only is it not wise to that, but that is foolish because wisdom doesn't ask, why was I born when I was born?

It doesn't ask, why do I live in the time that I do? God only knows that. Wisdom asks, how can I live in the time that God has put me in?

How do I live now? Wisdom is knowing how to rejoice in God's gifts, how to live wisely in the time that God has put you in. Not in some other time.

You don't have that time. This is the time that you live in. And so rest in God's gifts now. Rest in who God is now.

Don't ask questions that don't have meaning. And so that's his fourth piece of advice. Don't let this foolish nostalgia turn you into a fool.

[32 : 59] Well, he's already talked about wisdom and money. And in his fifth piece of advice, he brings them together. Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun.

Wisdom is a shelter, as money is a shelter. But the advantage of knowledge is this, that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor. Coaleth is hard on money sometimes, but he's very balanced about it.

You'll notice here that inheritance, money, land, is a good thing. Money can easily corrupt you. It's very dangerous, but he still says on the whole, it's better to have it than not to have it.

Money is a shelter. And the word in Hebrew, it could be shelter or shadow. And do you see what kind of shadow or shelter this is? It's shelter for a temporary time, because a shadow will move on. And wisdom will protect you for a time, but it too can go away. But money is able to protect you from many, many bad things that happen in this world of Havel.

[34 : 24] In this very convoluted and dangerous world, money can actually shield you from those things. And it's often the impoverished that get the brunt of Havel.

It's the impoverished who suffer the worst. They are the victims. They are the oppressed ones. And in our time, as in any time, if you had money, you might be able to get justice.

But if you have no money, justice is a rare commodity. You can't get a fair shake when you can't hire a lawyer. So money is useful.

But he says wisdom is better. It has all the upsides, but none of the downsides. Wisdom, like money, can shelter you, but more than that, it can preserve your life.

Money by itself can't preserve your life. I mean, if you look at chapter 6, if all you have is money, it can't make you happy. But wisdom can preserve your life.

[35 : 35] And it isn't obviously saying your physical life. It means that wisdom can give you life that is worth living. Money by itself leads to darkness and frustration, salvation.

But wisdom teaches us how to enjoy God and enjoy God's gifts in difficult times when you don't have money or when you do have money.

Wisdom protects you from many of the paths where Havel lurks. And so what's the point? What's the point of all this?

What's the practical application? It's the same as Proverbs. Wisdom is supreme. Therefore, get wisdom. Though it costs you all you have, though it takes up all your money, get understanding. Colet is arguing that you want to get wisdom if you want to live well. If you get wisdom, then you'll know how to live a meaningful, a purposeful, a joyful life, these few short years that pass like a shadow, that you're here.

[36 : 49] So, young people, how can I encourage you to be wise? Read Proverbs, read Ecclesiastes, fear God and keep His commandments, and you will really live.

Wisdom says, whoever fails to find me harms himself, and all who hate me, all who hate me, all who hate wisdom, they love death.

Do you understand that? If you turn away from lady wisdom, you get to go date with lady death. You get to go have a romance with death. So, pursue wisdom.

That's his fifth piece of advice. His sixth piece of advice is found in verses 13 and 14. Consider what God has done.

Who can straighten what He has made crooked? When times are good, be happy. And when times are bad, consider.

[37 : 59] God has made them one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future. Now, Colet ends not with wisdom, not with human wisdom, but with God's sovereignty.

He says, if you're really going to live, you have to get this down. This is the most important thing. You have to understand God's sovereignty. Think about what God has done.

What has God done? He's made things crooked. We like straight things, but God's made all these things crooked.

God has sovereignly acted. He didn't ask us what we thought. He didn't ask our opinion of the matter.

This is His work. And so the only question that really pertains to us is how do I live in the light of God's sovereignty? How do I live wisely in the fact that God is sovereign and He's made good times and bad times and He's made things crooked?

[39 : 18] Well, He tells us, when times are good, be happy. Be happy. When things are going your way, be happy.

There's some people that can't be happy for the life of them. But Colette is saying if you're having some good times, be happy. It's not godly to be a sourpuss about everything.

It's not godly to see the black cloud and the silver lining. Don't wait for things to be perfect.

Because they're not going to be perfect here. They're never going to be perfect here under the sun.

So be happy. Don't wait for something better to come along because you know what He says later on at the end of verse 14?

A man can't discover anything about his future. You know what? This time might be the best time of your life. It could be nothing but downhill from here. And so if you're not happy now, what a sorry state of affairs.

[40 : 23] Because you don't have anything but your worst days ahead of you. You don't know. So when times are good, be happy. happy. When business is good, businessmen, be happy. Don't lose your joy about what might have been.

Don't lose your joy about what might be. You don't know. So be happy now. young people, now is the time of your strength.

And he's going to end the book of Ecclesiastes with a long talk with young people. And he is going to say, you know what? Now is the time of your health, your strength, you have less serious obligations, God is giving you all these gifts, and so the thing to do is to be happy, to find enjoyment, to have fun, to use all the gifts of God for your enjoyment and for his glory.

Many of you say, well, times aren't good right now. Times aren't good. Times are bad. Nicola says, God has made the one as well as the other.

Stop and consider that. Stop and think about what God has done. Notice, when times are bad, he doesn't say, try to escape.

[41 : 53] He doesn't say, pray for release. Those things might be appropriate. He doesn't say, go back to the good old days. He says, stop and think about God.

God's made the one as well as the other. And we can't straighten the things that God has made crooked. Think about God. Is God above you?

Yes. Yes, he is far higher than I am. He's far above me. Is God loving? Yes, yes, he's given me his son to save me.

He loves me. Is God wise? God is the only wise God. He's wise. He knows what he's doing. Has God promised that all things will work together for your good?

Yes, he has. So when times are bad, think about what? Think about God's sovereignty. God is sovereignly making these things happen.

[42:56] It's God. It's God who is exalted, who loves you, who is wise, who's given you a precious promise. He's working all things for your good.

It doesn't look like it, but he is. So can you understand everything that God is doing? No. We can't. It's easy to say these words, but when you're living it, when you're faced with confusion, it's hard to think about that.

That God is doing this, he's doing it for my good. Can we understand everything that God does?

No, but we don't need to. Because God knows how to draw a straight line with a crooked stick.

And the cross of Jesus Christ should teach us that. Because Jesus went on trial for blasphemy.

[44:06] And he was crucified to appease a riotous mob. And the light of the world by darkness slain. Times were bad, or so it seemed.

But God moves in a mysterious way, way, his wonders to perform. So it was the worst of times, it was the best of times.

And the death of his son, God was doing something amazingly good. He was saving his people. He was using a crooked stick to draw a straight line.

And he was crushing Satan. And he was pouring the foundation for the forgiveness of our sins. And so he was doing something so amazing for so many people, but it didn't look like that at all.

And so out of the fires of all this evil, he brings out the righteousness of God. That if you would believe in Jesus Christ, you could have the very righteousness of God.

[45:22] And that is something very good, but it didn't look like that. And so when times are bad, think about God. This is the way he works.

So he's at work. He's done wonderful, marvelous things for you. And he's still at work in your life. He's bringing good out of evil to his praise.

And so when you're at work and they call you into the office, and your life has been reduced to a financial calculation.

And they let you go. You weren't worth enough for them to keep you. Don't complain. Don't fret. God's at work. And he knows how to take care of his own. He's just rearranging things. to do you good in a different way.

[46:28] He's given a son for you. And if he gave his only, one and only, beloved son for you, will he not give you everything else that you need?

And when you go to the doctor and they find a lump, or they find something that means really bad news, and the doctor tells you, you know what, the next few months are going to be the worst days of your life.

Don't fear. Don't long for the good old days. Think about God. He is at work.

And he knows his plans for you to prosper you and not to harm you. And when you look at the world around us, things, and you just say, this is too much.

This is too much. Things are horribly, horribly broken. Don't worry. God is still sovereign.

[47:33] No one has disturbed him on his throne. No one shaken that. And he's big enough to take care of things. And so we can relax and enjoy God's gifts.

So some time ago, I was working on my car. It was broke. And I'm working on it. And for some reason, A1 was very concerned about it.

She wanted to help me fix it. And as you know, as good as her intentions were, she couldn't do anything to help. She couldn't change the situation.

And so I told her, don't worry about it. go ride your bicycle. And that's what she did. Brothers and sisters, we need that kind of faith.

The havel of life is too big for us. This is a problem that we can't manage. But we have a father who loves us. He sent his son to die for us and to give us a new home.

[48:42] And so he's going to take care of everything. And so we can stop worrying and we can just go ride our bicycles. We can enjoy his gifts.

He knows what he's doing and that's enough. Well, let's pray. O Lord, my God, may the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight. may the to live meaningful lives to your glory, not to be distracted with petty things that will not matter on that day.

Will you give us wisdom to think about death? Will you give us wisdom to not love money? Will you give us wisdom to not get trapped in nostalgia, but to pursue wisdom and to rest in your sovereignty?

Lord, we need you to work. The words have been spoken, but your spirit must come and make them effectual in my life, and your spirit has to come and make them effectual in these people's lives.

[50 : 41] That they would hear your word and live in light of the truth. That they would be transformed by the renewing of their mind, and that they would see that Jesus Christ is enough.

His life is enough. His death is enough. And so we can rest completely on Him, that we can trust that You are doing us good because You've already done us good at the cross.

So it's nothing but the blood of Jesus that gives us hope in this world of darkness and confusion.

And thank You that You are bringing us to a new home, the home of the righteous. And You are bringing us to a new home, a heavenly country where the curse is not there anymore.

and everything will have perfect meaning. And it will be full of life and joy and light. And I pray that we would live for that world and not get trapped in this puny, confused world.

[51 : 47] Will You help us to live for Christ and for His kingdom. Thank You that You are on the move. And I pray that You would be moving here.

Save sinners. Revive Your people for Your glory, for Your name's sake. And I ask it for Jesus' sake, in His name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.