

Meeting Your Final Deadline

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[0:00] Ecclesiastes chapter 9. Ecclesiastes 9, and I'll read the first 12 verses. So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands.

But no man knows whether love or hate awaits him. All share a common destiny, the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not.

As it is with the good man, so with the sinner. As it is with those who take oaths, so with those who are afraid to take them. This is the evil in everything that happens under the sun.

The same destiny overtakes all. The hearts of men, moreover, are full of evil, and there is madness in their hearts while they live. And afterward, they join the dead.

Anyone who is among the living has hope. Even a live dog is better off than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing.

[1:16] They have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate, and their jealousy have long since vanished.

Never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun. Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart. For it is now that God favors what you do.

Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun.

All your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life, and in your toilsome labor under the sun.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.

For in the grave where you are going, there is neither working, nor planning, nor knowledge, nor wisdom. I have seen something else under the sun.

[2:23] The race is not to the swift, or the battle to the strong. Nor does food come to the wise, or wealth to the brilliant, or favor to the learned. But time and chance happen to them all.

Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come. As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.

There's nothing like a deadline to get the old blood flowing. If you students probably have found that out, you've found new academic desires stirring within you late at night when that paper is due the next morning.

Before, you couldn't find any reason to work on the paper, but all of a sudden, things are quite different. Your creative abilities reach new heights in those small hours of the morning, and words flow.

And you, all of a sudden, are like Shakespeare, or so you think. And there is nothing like a deadline to get the blood flowing.

[3:38] And there's one deadline that we all have, and it's death. If we really thought about death, we would live differently.

And that's what the teacher, Koaleth, is teaching us this evening. He's going to look at death, and then he's going to command us to live differently.

He commands us because we have a problem taking death to heart. Koaleth basically is saying, wake up. You're going to die. You need to start living now. So don't stand around, or don't sit around all sad and gloomy like Eeyore or something.

You're alive. You're alive. And if you want to be like that 1% of humanity who is really living, then you need to take his word to heart.

99% of humanity is traipsing along, not thinking that the end is coming, and not thinking about just how extraordinary it is to be alive. And Koaleth is saying, if you want to be in the 1%, if you want to really live, then listen to what I have to say.

[4:54] Tonight we have four points. And the first point is that death is universal. Death is universal. And that means that everyone dies.

Look at verse 1 of Ecclesiastes chapter 9. So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no man knows whether love or hate awaits him.

So Koaleth, the teacher, looks over all the things that he's looked at in life so far. He looks at how God is sovereign over everything, and how everything is in God's hands, and how everything is unfair in a certain way.

It's uncertain. It's fleeting. It's Havel. And he says, I've concluded, when I look at all those things, that what the wise do, what the righteous do, and what they are, is in God's hands.

So the righteous and the wise are in God's hands. And in that respect, they're just like everyone else. If you're wise and righteous here, you're not special, because everyone is in God's hands.

[6:04] And the wise and the righteous are in the hands of God's providence like everyone else. So God in sovereignty determines whether good things or bad things happen, what will come their way.

And that means that no man, including the righteous, including the wise, knows what is coming, knows whether love or hate awaits them.

And we should just take the love and the hate as God sent blessing, or God sent difficulty. If you're righteous and you're wise, it doesn't mean that life is always going to go your way, and you don't need to be told that.

Sometimes the righteous experience what is apparently, what seems to be, God's hatred. See, God sends hard times, difficult times, on both the righteous and the wicked.

And He sends good times, happy times, on both the righteous and the unrighteous. So no one here can judge God's attitude toward them based on their external circumstances.

[7:14] Joseph was a righteous man, and yet he suffered horribly. And Saul chased David for years in the desert. And some of you know great suffering as well.

You've experienced it in your life. Sometimes God's friends suffer terribly. And sometimes God's friends enjoy great blessing, immense earthly blessing.

But most of us experience a mix of both. A real mix. And so no one can tell what's going to happen in the future, even if you're righteous.

Your righteousness does not guarantee you anything. Life is uncertain for everyone. But there is one thing that is certain. There is a deadline coming.

And verse 2 tells us about it. Verse 2, All share a common destiny. The righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices, and those who do not.

[8:14] As it is with a good man, so it is with a sinner. As it is with those who take those, so it is with those who are afraid to take them. Death is universal.

It doesn't matter whether you're good or bad. It doesn't matter whether you're righteous or unrighteous. You are going to die. And so you can go to the cemetery, and you can look at the gravestone, and you need to say, I am going there.

So read the dates, and put your birth date on there. And take the name off that gravestone, and put your name on there, because you are going to die.

And I think Cole Leth would probably die laughing if he heard some of the ways that we talk about death nowadays, and the way we think about things.

Just listen to some of these headlines. Listen to the foolishness that we do, that we say. Here's one. Believe it or not, it's possible to think yourself to death.

[9:20] Studies show that our thoughts influence everything from our heart rate to our blood chemistry. And so the story goes on, and it says this. Avoid thoughts like, I've got to get that promotion, or if I don't get into an Ivy League school, my future's shot.

It turns out that believing something is do or die actually increases your chances of dying. I thought they were pretty high anyways.

Or this one. Every hour of TV you watch increases your chances of dying by 11%. And that is phenomenal.

Not that TV kills you, because we all know that's true, but I was under the impression that the risk, the chance of dying, was already 100%.

And every day something new comes out, doesn't it? Don't eat red meat. Don't take vitamin E. Take vitamin E. Eggs are good.

[10:24] Eggs are bad. Get out and exercise. Wear sunscreen indoors. And this is us. This is our culture. We're worried about all the ways that we can die, but has the bare fact gripped us that we are going to die.

All of us. Pharisees and prostitutes, believers, unbelievers, the careful, the not careful, the good, the bad, everyone is going to die. They're going to wrap you up.

They're going to paint you up. They're going to put you in a box. They're going to put that box in the ground. They're going to pile dirt on that ground, and they're going to put grass seed on you.

The worms are waiting for every single one of us. And Colossus says in the next verse, that's the evil of everything that happens under the sun.

The same destiny overtakes all. So death is the evil, and you've seen this. He comes back to it time and time again. Anything that reminds Colossus of death, he's automatically there.

[11:34] He's drawn to it like a magnet. He says this is the evil that makes life, all of life, haveal, all of it confusing and vanity. It doesn't matter, in one sense.

It doesn't matter whether you exercise or you don't exercise. It doesn't matter. You're going to die. So the beer drinking, steer eating, TV watching, glutton is going to die, and you know what?

So is the vegetarian who exercises. It doesn't matter whether you buckle up or not. You can save your money, and you can die a year after you retire, or you could die later.

You are going to die, and Colossus says, you know what? But that just doesn't seem right. And if you think about that, that doesn't seem fair in a lot of senses, especially if you're trying to do your best to live a long life and a healthy life.

At the end, the evil of death is waiting us all. But the evil of death is bad enough, but we make it worse.

[12:37] We make it worse. The evil of death is compounded by the evil of men. Look at the middle of verse 3. The hearts of men, moreover, are full of evil, and there is madness in their hearts while they live.

And afterward, they join the dead. Men don't get it. We quibble over which door that we're going to go through, and we're concerned about avoiding certain doors, and the whole time we're not thinking, what is on the side of every door?

God is on the side of every door, and He is waiting to judge us, and we don't get it. We're mad.

We're insane. We're insane in our sin. And we all say this, that we know that we're going to die.

But how many people take it to heart? And yet, here we are. If we said that we're going to die, it doesn't make any sense that we keep on sinning.

It should be obvious. Death is coming. Judgment is coming. Stop sinning. But we don't get that. The madness of evil is in our heart, and we go right on sinning, and we live like there's no tomorrow.

[13:54] And isn't that exactly what Jesus taught in the parable about the farmer who did very well, and he built bigger barns for himself?

The crops were good. God blessed him financially, and he did a very sensible thing in some respects. He built bigger barns for himself, and he said, you know, I'll take it easy and enjoy the rest of my days.

What did God call that man? A fool. You fool. This very night, your soul will be required of you.

His riches drove every single thought of death and judgment out of that man's mind. He knew he was going to die, but he didn't act like he was going to die.

He didn't have any functional control in his life. And brothers and sisters, I'm being very serious. We have to be careful that we don't turn ourselves into fools, that we don't act like fools, because every single one of us is in the same difficult position that that rich farmer was in.

[15:08] We're in an incredibly difficult position in our culture. The poorest one here is incredibly wealthy. And Jesus' words can be applied to every one of us when he says, it is hard for a rich man to be saved.

You should be saying, it is hard for me to be saved. And you say, you know what, I don't feel rich. And that just shows you what you don't know.

You don't know what you're talking about. Maybe you don't feel rich. But the average person in the world lives on less than \$2 a day. I could probably take \$2 out of my wallet and throw it in the crowd here and people would be embarrassed to pick it up.

But that's what men live on. And so you should be saying to yourself, how hard it is for me to be saved. How hard it is for me to remember that death is coming.

We are rich and the wealth of this world can easily deceive us and easily turn us into fools and keep us from remembering that we are going to die and live like it.

[16 : 22] See, it's so easy to get caught up with this life and to think, you know what, this is where it's at. This is what I'm enjoying right now and this is all that there is. And we act like we're not going to die.

And that's how men live. Death never grips them. Death is universal, but we are blind to it. And that blindness keeps us from seeing the finality of death.

And that's our second point. Death is final. He goes on in verse 4. Anyone who is among the living has hope. Even a live dog is better off than a dead lion.

Kolath has a way of forcing the obvious on us. And in verse 4, there is something that is very obvious that we need to take to heart.

Anyone who is alive, who is among the living, has hope. There is hope for the living. And the implication is there is no hope for the dead.

[17 : 29] Well, what does that mean? What's this hope that he's talking about? Well, he kind of hints in the direction that we're supposed to think. He kind of helps us to understand with the proverb that he follows it up with.

Even a live dog is better off than a dead lion. And so, in those days, you shouldn't be thinking about your dog at home when he says this proverb.

You should be... Dogs were not kept as pets, generally. Instead, Kola has in mind those garbage-scrounging, rail-thin, flea-bitten mongrels that just roamed the streets and ate out of the garbage dump and ate rats and the trash of humans.

And he says it would be better off if you're a live dog than to be a dead, regal, majestic, king-of-the-beasts lion.

Or we could say it's better to be a live, homeless man than a dead king. Why? Because you still have hope if you're alive. There's still hope for the homeless man.

[18 : 33] There's still hope for the dog. There's still hope that they will be able to enjoy some of God's goodness, God's grace in this life. And so, there's hope that they'll be able to enjoy some of the food and some of the drink and some of the gladness that God gives under the sun.

But the lion has no hope. His days are gone. They're done. Well, verse 5 tells us more about this hope that he's saying, he's talking about.

For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing. Do you see that word for? For the living. The word for is telling us the ground, the reason why there is hope, why it's better to be alive than dead.

For, because the living know that they are going to die. Strangely enough, listen carefully, strangely enough, the hope that Coleth is handing out, is showing, is holding out to the living, is that they will realize that they are going to die.

So the hope is that they're going to realize that they're going to die. And that sounds strange, but that tells us something very important about living. The only way you can really live is if you really realize that you are going to die.

[20 : 11] The only way you can really live is if you really realize that you are going to die. the hope is that you will wake up and see that death is coming and time is short.

And so the hope is that you'll wake up and say, you know what, I am alive. I have to get on with living. I need to start really living well.

And maybe some of you are struggling with this. Maybe some of you don't quite understand what I'm saying. And you can say, wait a second.

Paul, who we're much more familiar with than Ecclesiastes, Paul says it's to live is Christ and to die is gain.

And Coleth seems to be saying that living is better than dying. Life is better than death. And we need to realize here, recognize here, that Coleth is not contradicting Paul.

[21 : 14] Ecclesiastes is not contradicting the New Testament. He is looking at things from a very different perspective. It's not an inferior perspective, it's a different perspective. Coleth, in this proverb, is affirming life.

That living in life is better than death. To live is Christ, to die is gain, is only true because of the resurrection. Because God is the God of the living.

He's the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob who are alive. See, Paul is only right because resurrection has happened.

Death doesn't have the final say. Life has the final word. Life is good. Death is bad. And Coleth is saying, if you are alive, it is good.

Life is good. And so we can't, we need to have a balance. We can't let the hope of life to come, which is good, we can't let that hope rob us of enjoying the life God has given us now.

[22 : 22] Both are good. Both are full of God's grace. And so we need to have a balance. And Coleth is talking about one side of the scales. So there is hope while you are alive that your eyes will be opened up to the possibilities of what that means, of the possibilities of life.

But when you die, that hope fails. Death is final. Look at verses 5 and 6. The dead know nothing. They have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate, their jealousy have long since vanished. Never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.

Death is final in respect to life under the sun. And that's what we need to remember. He isn't talking about soul sleep. He's not talking about annihilation.

He isn't talking about anything like that. He's saying death is final in respect to life under the sun.

Living here now. When you die, you can't come back in any way.

[23 : 27] There's no knowledge. There's no rewards. even the memory of you is going to fade and disappear.

Pretty soon you will be nothing but a name as far as under the sun goes. And people will walk by your gravestone and not know who you are.

And so like a stone that's dropped into a calm lake, your life makes ripples now. But soon the ripples will stop and all memory of you will fade.

How many of you remember all the balloons that you have ever played with? Our lives are like that. Here for now, we enjoy them, and then they're popped, and we forget all about them.

That's you. That's life under the sun, and that's death. It's final. So brothers and sisters, as the cold, hard fact of death gripped you.

[24 : 36] Whether by cancer or by car wreck, whether by infection or old age, you will die. Death is universal.

Death is final. So are you awake to that, or are you still sleeping? If you're awake, then you're ready for Coleth's commands.

You're ready for what his advice is, and that's our third point. Coleth commands us to live. He commands us to live. So in light of death, because we're living in the shadow of death, he commands us to live a certain way.

It isn't optional, and some of you wonder, is this okay? Is this God's will? This is God's will for your life, at least part of it. So in verses 7 through 10, he gives us five commands, five things that we have to do.

Previously, he's recommended these things, he's observed that this is the best way to live, he's suggested it, but in Ecclesiastes 9, the mood changes.

[25 : 47] It is now in the imperative mood. He is commanding us to live this way. He's raising the intensity, and so he commands. And first he says, go. Go.

Stop waiting around. Stop sitting around waiting for something better to come along because you don't know if something better is going to come along. Get on with living. Class time is over, school is out, it's time to get on with living.

So what are you waiting for? That's Coleth. He's saying, death is coming. Death is on your heels. It's approaching. says, go.

Get on with it. The Talmud, that's an ancient Jewish commentary on the Bible, says this, everyone must give an account before God for all good things one saw in life and did not enjoy.

Everyone must give an account before God for all good things one saw in life and did not enjoy.

God is going to hold you accountable for all the good things that he gave you and that you did not enjoy.

[26 : 58] So get on with living. The second command. Brothers and sisters, these are tough and I hope you can handle them.

It says eat. Eat your food with gladness. Can you eat your peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to the glory of God? Yes, you can when you do it gladly.

Brothers and sisters, the commands of God are not a burden, they're light, they're a delight. And Colas says death is coming, it's final, so eat your food with gladness.

So get your friends together, put something on the grill, and eat it with a smile on your face. Give thanks and enjoy it. Food is a gift of God, and good tasting food is a good gift of God.

So do you see? We can rob death of its despair that it's putting all over our lives, the shadow of death, if we would just enjoy our food.

[28:03] We would put something on the barbecue. We would call our friends together and enjoy our food. Now don't be a glutton, but don't be super righteous where you can enjoy God's earthly!

blessings. Christians have a nasty habit of trying to be more spiritual than God. Some think it's good to refrain from eating food or certain foods, but God made us creatures and God made food and He meant for us to enjoy it.

So what is the holy thing to do? It is to sit down and to eat with a smile on your face, to eat with gladness. Third command, drink, drink, drink your wine with a joyful heart.

In Psalm 104, the psalmist says this, He makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for man to cultivate, bringing food forth from the earth, wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread that sustains his heart.

Later on in Ecclesiastes chapter 10, he's going to say, a feast is made for laughter and wine makes the heart merry. So God makes wine to gladden the hearts of men.

[29:26] God nowhere forbids wine, he forbids drunkenness. And he forbids drunkenness just as he forbids gluttony.

But he does not rule out wine any more than he outlaws food. And so, of course, there are folks who struggle with drunkenness and so they shouldn't drink wine.

They're better off not drinking. And if you're around people who struggle with that, then yes, don't drink. But we have to be careful that we try not to be more righteous than God.

Wine was a favorite drink of the Israelites. It gladdened their hearts. And so, the point is not to drink wine or not to drink wine.

The point is whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it for the glory of God. If you're a teetotaler, that's okay. Find the thing that gladdens your heart and drink it.

[30:25] If it's not wine, drink a Diet Pepsi, Drink lemonade, drink your iced tea with a joyful heart. Death is coming and we can't waste any of those good gifts.

So don't waste your wine, don't waste your lemonade, enjoy God's good gifts. He commands us to. And he tells us why. For it is now that God favors what you do.

Or it could be translated, God's already accepted your works. This matter of eating and drinking, God has already said it's okay. And some of you might struggle with that, but Coleth is saying, it is okay.

God has said it is okay. He said, eat and drink. Remember in the garden, he gave them the garden to enjoy, and after the flood, he gave them all the green plants and all the animals that they could eat.

He's already told us to eat and drink. God doesn't have a problem with food. And so if we do it with a glad heart, a happy heart, with a thankful heart, with a heart that's ready to glorify him, then eat and drink and be merry.

[31:35] God smiles. And this isn't a call to hedonism. This is a call for full orb sanctification.

This is a call for holiness at the breakfast table and at the lunch table. It's a call for holiness on the patio with your friends eating something off of the grill.

God has accepted it. This is righteous. And so he says, go, eat and drink. Get busy at it.

Well, he goes on, always be clothed in white and always anoint your head with oil. White clothing is festival clothing. He's basically saying dress happy.

Maybe some of you men need to hear this. If your wife is telling you to go shopping, then go shopping. It is okay. Being a slob isn't godly.

[32:40] It isn't Christian. Not caring what you look like is not right. So has God saved you? Has he showered you with good things?

Then dress like it. Dress like it. He goes on, anoint your head with oil. So oil was used to bring comfort to someone. It was made to make people beautiful.

It was a sign of God's blessing. Remember Psalm 23? He's anointed my head with oil. My cup overflows. And Coleth is saying, God is blessing you now.

You're alive. And so act like it. Dress like it. You're alive. Enjoy life. And make it a festival. Dress. Make it a party. Because death is coming. Fourth command. Enjoy. Enjoy life with your wife.

[33:36] All the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun. All your meaningless days. So enjoy life with the wife whom you love.

Married couples, do you remember why you married your spouse? No one made you?

It wasn't for money. It was. I'm sorry it didn't work out for you. Remember you love each other. You love each other.

And maybe it's time to spark up the romance again. Men, maybe it's time to start dating your wives again. Gentlemen, we have a problem.

and the problem is we go into romance thinking, okay, I have to land me a wife. I have to get me a woman.

[34:38] And so there we go. We cast our bait out there and we're all suave and romantic. And then we get married. So we've landed our fish and we sort of check it off, put it in the pail.

This is you, this isn't me. We sort of check it off the list. It's done. And that isn't Christian.

That isn't Christ-like. The wedding day isn't mission accomplished. It's a promotion.

See, it was fun before when you were dating and now God is moving you up to the varsity level.

Koala says go.

Enjoy life with literally the woman. Go enjoy life with your woman. Enjoy wedded love.

[35:44] Now it's time to start buying flowers again. It's time to start enjoying life. It's time to schedule a date night. Life is too short to settle for a lackluster marriage.

So if God has blessed you with a godly woman, Proverbs says that she is a crown. And if you don't enjoy her, shame on you. God commands you to enjoy her.

So read Song of Solomon. If you have questions, go ask Pastor Aaron. Death is coming. Death is coming.

So you better get on with enjoying life with your wife, with the woman that you love. And he goes on, for this is your lot in life, and your toilsome labor under the sun.

Is life a bell? Is it frustrating and confusing? Does it make sense sometimes? Yes. And so what do you do? You do what God has given you to do.

[36:49] And what has he given you to do? Well, here is part of it. Go. Eat. Drink. Enjoy. Enjoy. Eat your food with gladness.

Drink your wine with a joyful heart. Dress happy. Enjoy your wife. His fifth command is found in verse 10. And he says, do. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.

For in the grave where you are going, there is neither working, nor planning, nor knowledge, nor wisdom. Brothers and sisters, now is the time. Do you understand that? Death is universal.

It is final. That means that now is the time. Now is the time to do. Whatever your heart has set before you to do, then you have to do. So work hard. Play hard.

Laugh hard. Love hard. Be in earnest about your life. Because now it is the time to really live. Why? Because death is coming. The deadline is on you.

[37:51] It's coming. In verses 11 and 12, Coleth gives us some more advice about how to really live in the shadow of death.

And we can sum up his advice with a simple phrase, expect the unexpected. Expect the unexpected.

And that's our fourth point. Verse 11, I've seen something else under the sun. The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong.

the fastest runner doesn't always win. And the best team doesn't always win. Life is full of upsets. David beats Goliath. Goliath was nine feet tall and he had a spear like a weaver's rod. And I don't know what that means, but it was something.

[38:46] And you know what? David defeated Goliath. There's only a boy named David, only a little sling, and you know how the song goes, one little stone went through the air, and the giant came tumbling down.

Unexpected things happen. Can you imagine being a Philistine that day? That would have been unexpected. He goes on, nor does food come to the wise, or wealth to the brilliant, or favor to the learned, but time and chance happen to them all.

Physical prowess, physical strength, it doesn't guarantee you anything, it doesn't guarantee victory, and mental agility, mental ability doesn't guarantee prosperity.

And life is just a tapestry proving that. And how many Israelite students had to hear that, and had to take that lesson in, that you know what, sometimes it doesn't matter how smart you are, it doesn't mean that you're going to be rich.

And how many college students in America need to learn that lesson. Rather, he says, time and chance, or time and an event, a surprising event, happens to them all.

[39:56] See, life is full of unexpected happenings. So get ready for it. Don't be surprised when your plans fail. Don't be surprised when the strong things that you trusted in fail.

Life is full of the unexpected, so get ready for it. and don't let that rob you of the joy of living. They're going to happen, so don't let it stop you from going and eating and drinking and enjoying your life.

And he goes on, he says, and be prepared to die, because no man knows when his hour is going to come. Expect the unexpected with your death.

These fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in, taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.

Death comes as a horrible shock to a fish. They're swimming along, finding their own business, and the hook takes them, the net falls on them, and they're on the fisherman's dinner plate.

[41:07] And the bird is flying happily through the air, and then the string is around his neck, and his days are over. Life is gone. And that is how death will come upon each and every one of us.

You will be alive, and then the car will hit you. You'll go in for a routine doctor's visit, and the tumor will be there.

So should you worry about it? Should you fret about it? Should you live scared? Colossus says no. You have to really live.

Go, eat, drink, enjoy, do. Now is the time that God has given you, so get on with living. Don't wait for something better to come along. You don't know what's going to happen, so get on with it.

The best way to prepare to die is to really live while you have a chance. Live for God's glory now, and expect the unexpected, and live while you have time.

[42:13] So my lost friend, all that I've been saying isn't for you at all. The life I've been talking about starts with Jesus, and it starts by embracing him.

He came that we might have life, and life to the fullest. And so you can go, and you can eat and drink and enjoy your husband, your wife, you can live a happy life, but if you don't have Jesus, what's waiting on the other side is hell.

Every single door that you go through will go to face judgment. So how do you prepare to die? You get Jesus. You embrace Jesus.

You cling to him. You have to stop holding on to your life. You can't love your life and have Jesus at the same time. And so if you would really, really love your life, you wouldn't want to lose it, then you would go to Jesus.

And see, Jesus doesn't come to take things from us. He doesn't come to take life away. He comes to give life. And he will give it for more than just these 60, 70, 80, 90 years that you have.

[43:31] He'll give you life forever and ever. And so if you're an unbeliever, your life begins at the cross. It begins with fleeing from sin and casting yourself on Christ.

And it is my privilege to tell you that if you do, he will save you. He has promised you. And as many people have come, he's accepted them.

He's that good. one last thing, brothers and sisters, will you remember Ecclesiastes 9 tomorrow and this week and this month?

Will you take it to heart? Because you do have a deadline and it is coming and so you better get to work enjoying your life.

Let's pray. Amen. Heavenly Father, these things are encouraging.

[44:38] Maybe for some people they're confusing. I pray that you would give light, Holy Spirit, that we would know how to live in light of your commands, that we would know how to live in light of your wisdom.

Father, thank you that you give us such a book as Ecclesiastes to balance us out, to give us ballast, to teach us all that we need to know to live a life that's glorifying to you.

Father, I pray that we don't take these things and destroy ourselves with them, as could be the temptation, but I pray that you would seal the truth in our hearts and that we would really embrace

it, that we would see now is the time that you have accepted, that you have favor on us, now you've accepted our works, and so I pray that you would help us to eat and to drink and to enjoy life with the wife that we love, the husband that we love.

Father, forgive us if we have hard thoughts of you, to think these commandments below you, because we think your commandments are all hard and difficult, and you wish our misery.

I pray that you would forgive us, will you help us to embrace all of your grace for this life and for the next. Thank you that it all flows from Jesus, it all flows from his cross, and so we willingly and joyfully throw our arms around Jesus and him crucified and the amen, the so may it is in him, and so we say in Jesus name, amen.

[46 : 29] Amen. Thank you.