

# *Eternal* PERSPECTIVE *Ecclesiastes*

## BIBLE TEXT | ECCLESIASTES 2:18-26

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**18** I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me,

**19** and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity.

**20** So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun,

**21** because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.

**22** What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun?

**23** For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

**24** There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God,

**25** for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?

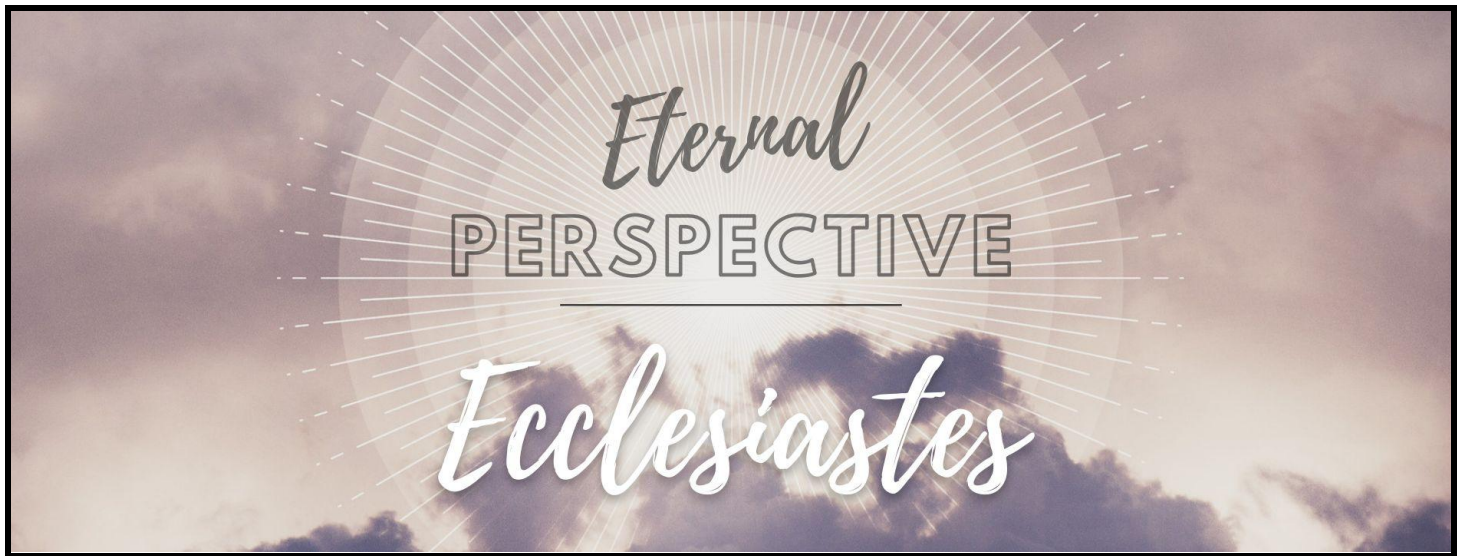
**26** For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind

## DEVOTIONAL FOR ECCLESIASTES 2:18-26

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Imagine yourself living a long time ago. On your way home, you see people gathered. You find out that they are learning from a great preacher. You are tired from being at work all day and today it was extra rough. You happen to ponder if it is worth the stay, however he says a phrase that catches your attention "I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be the master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity" Ecclesiastes 2:18-19.



The author here uses the word "havel" for vanity. It has a twofold meaning. On one side, it implies something empty, unsatisfactory, transitional, and worthless. On the contrary, it is mysterious. Metaphorically speaking, it is like a vapor. It can give you the illusion that something is there and just when you grab it, it vanishes.

I think we all have been in a place where you wonder if your work efforts will produce anything. "Is it worth it for me to keep doing this?" I bet that has crossed your mind at some point in your life. The author is not proposing for all of us to stop working or to hate our jobs. He is also not talking about having no ideas or achievements. However, he is challenging our perspective in two ways. One, we must know that our time here is very short. We really do not know how long we will be here before we get asked what we did with our possessions, time, and gifts. Second, we must work for one Master. We owe him everything we have and everything we are or will be. He is eternal.

If we work for God's glory, will it matter who keeps everything we gather in life? No, because He is sovereign. If we work for God, will we complain about our hard days at work? I think we will be grateful for his provision for our needs and for his provision of enjoyment in our work. Finally, will we work hard to collect and gather? No, we will be doing things for His glory.

I think the author is challenging us, will you accept it?

#### Questions:

1. Do you need to confess about complaining about your job?
2. Who can you ask to help keep you accountable to work for God, not for man? See Colossians 3:23-24.
3. Do you need encouragement and prayer? Share with your Journey Group, other biblical community, or reach out to [pastoraloffice@stonepointchurch.com](mailto:pastoraloffice@stonepointchurch.com).