The Better Things In Life

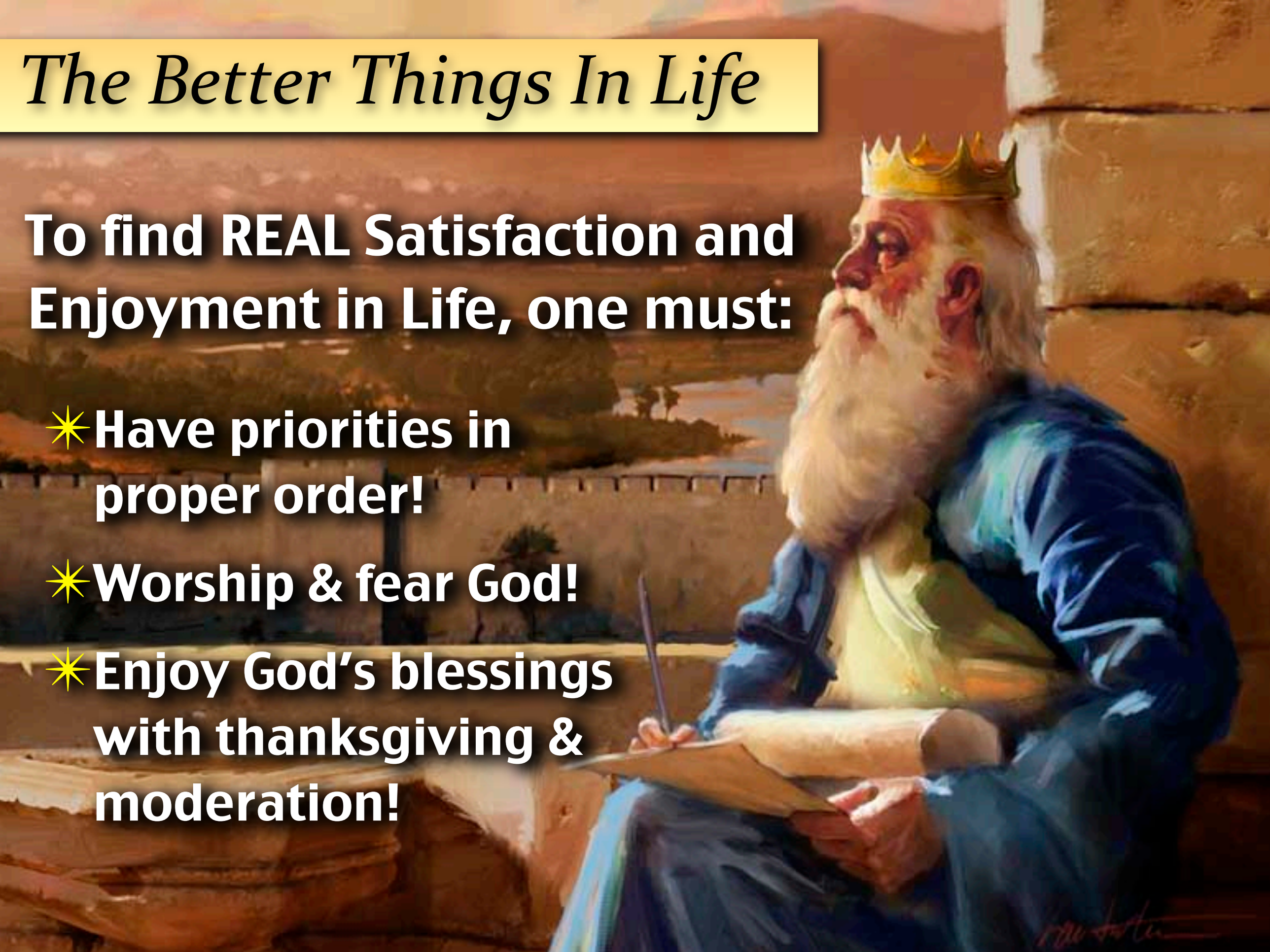
Can Be The Most Unpleasant Things In Life!

Words of Wisdom – Eccl. 7:1-14

The Better Things In Life

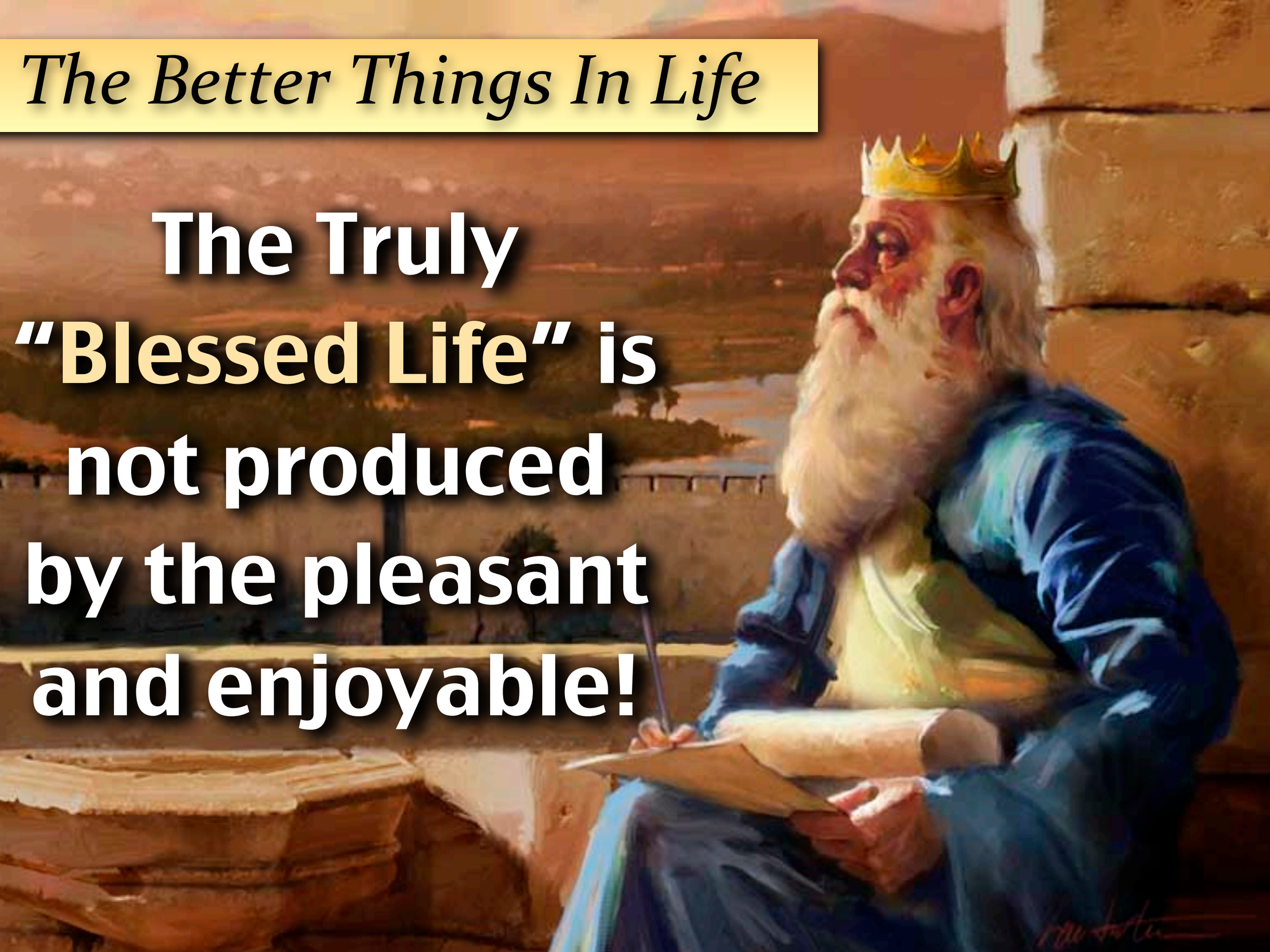
To find REAL Satisfaction and Enjoyment in Life, one must:

- **Have priorities in proper order!**
- **Worship & fear God!**
- **Enjoy God's blessings with thanksgiving & moderation!**



The Better Things In Life

The Truly "Blessed Life" is not produced by the pleasant and enjoyable!



Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 (NKJV)

[1] A good name is better than precious ointment,
And the day of death than the day of one's
birth; [2] Better to go to the house of mourning
Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is
the end of all men; And the living will take it to
heart. [3] Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a
sad countenance the heart is made better. [4] The
heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 (NKJV)

5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise
Than for a man to hear the song of fools. 6
For like the crackling of thorns under a pot,
So is the laughter of the fool. This also is
vanity. 7 Surely oppression destroys a wise
man's reason, And a bribe debases the
heart. 8 The end of a thing is better than its
beginning; The patient in spirit is better than
the proud in spirit.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 (NKJV)

9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be
angry, For anger rests in the bosom of
fools. 10 Do not say, "Why were the
former days better than these?" For you
do not inquire wisely concerning this. 11
Wisdom is good with an inheritance, And
profitable to those who see the sun.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 (NKJV)

12 For wisdom is a defense as money is a
defense, But the excellence of knowledge is
that wisdom gives life to those who have it. 13
Consider the work of God; For who can make
straight what He has made crooked? 14 In the
day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of
adversity consider: Surely God has appointed
the one as well as the other, So that man can
find out nothing that will come after him.

HONOR IS BETTER THAN LUXURY (7:1a)

- A godly reputation & influence is my choice – Prov. 22:1; 1 Pet 1:13-21
- Called to be different from the world
- Not that I have lived without sin, but I am one who acknowledges my sin and has repented of it! - 2 Sam 11,12; Acts 13:22; 1 Tim 1:15
- One who lives by faith & thus right with God – Heb 11:2,39; Rev 14:13

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THE DEATH-DAY of an HONORABLE PERSON IS BETTER THAN HIS BIRTHDAY (7:1b)

You can kill a Christian, but all you have really done is change his address

cf. Phil. 1:23

- The day of one's birth is the beginning of many sorrows - Job 14:1; 3:1-3; Jer 20:14-18
- But for the righteous, the day of one's death is the beginning of eternal bliss! - Isa 57:1-2; Ph 1:21-22; Re 14:13

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Phil. 1:23

- For those who have "fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith" - 2 Tim 4:6-10
- For the child of God, to die is GAIN – Phili 1:21-23
- We know and are confident – 2 Cor. 5:1-8
- Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord – Rev 14:13

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THE DEATH-DAY of an HONORABLE PERSON IS BETTER THAN HIS BIRTHDAY (7:1b)

"How different will be the state of the believer in heaven from what it is here! Here he is born to toil and suffer weariness, but in the land of the immortal, fatigue is never known. … Here, rest is but partial, there, it is perfect. Here, the Christian is always unsettled; he feels that he has not yet attained. There, all are at rest; they have attained the summit of the mountain; they have ascended to the bosom of their God. Higher they cannot go. Ah, toil-worn labourer, only think when thou shalt rest for ever! Canst thou conceive it?

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THE DEATH-DAY of an HONORABLE PERSON IS BETTER THAN HIS BIRTHDAY (7:1b)

"It is a rest eternal; a rest that "remaineth." Here, my best joys bear "mortal" on their brow; my fair flowers fade; my dainty cups are drained to dregs; my sweetest birds fall before Death's arrows; my most pleasant days are shadowed into nights; and the flood-tides of my bliss subside into ebbs of sorrow; but there, everything is immortal; the harp abides unrusted, the crown unwithered, the eye undimmed, the voice unfaltering, the heart unwavering, and the immortal being is wholly absorbed in infinite delight."

A FUNERAL IS BETTER THAN A PARTY (7:2-4)

- Serious reflection is of more value than frivolity - James 4:8-10; 2 Cor 7:10
- Death - an appointment all keep – Heb 9:27
- To realize the reality of death can motivate us to prepare for it. - Deut 32:29; Ps 39:4
- Coming face to face with reality should cause us to seriously reflect upon our own mortality and current standing before God! - James 4:13-17

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A FUNERAL IS BETTER THAN A PARTY (7:2-4)

- Not WRONG to laugh? – Ecc 3:4; Rom 12:15
- Laughter may have its place, but sorrow is superior to making the heart better - Ps 119:67,71; 126:2; Heb 12:11
- Laughter provides a temporary reprieve from the burdens of life but sorrow encourages us to make positive changes

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REBUKE IS BETTER THAN A SONG (7:5-7)

- A song MAY cause us to “FEEL” better, but a rebuked correctly received will help us to be & do BETTER - Rev. 3:19; Prov. 9:8; 15:31,32; 17:10.
- Flattery appeals to the ego - rebuke appeals to the humble - 1 Thes 2:5; Mat 5:3
- Vs. 7 - There is danger in extremes – Prov 30:8; Eph 6:4; 2 Sam. 12
- Externals do not rule the spirit unless allowed – 1 Cor. 10:13; Rom 6:16-18

THE END IS BETTER THAN THE BEGINNING (7:8)

- The benefits of a worthy goal are realized in the end – not the beginning of a thing.
  - A Worthy Task –
  - A Marriage –
  - A Christian's Life – 2 Tim 4:6-10; Rev 2:10
- There are some things in which the end is NOT better!! - Prov 5:4; 23:32

PATIENCE IS BETTER THAN RASHNESS OF PRIDE (7:8,9)

- Pride rest in the heart of the foolish and leads to and and destructive rash actions - 7:9; Pr 13:10; 16:18
- Patience is a virtue to be pursued by the man of God & indicative of wisdom - cf. 1Ti 6:11; Tit 2:2; Pr 14:29
  - *Patience works completeness - James 1:2-20*
  - *Brings forth fruit – Luke 8:15*
  - *Necessary to salvation - Pr 14:29; Ro 2:7; He 10:36*
- Patience is produced by a humble, trusting faith - Jam 5:11

LIVING IN "TODAY" IS BETTER THAN LIVING IN THE PAST (7:10)

- Not instructing us to forget the past, *(The present state of things is a product of history - and we are instructed many times in scripture to remember - Luke 17:32; 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Rev 2:5;3:3; 2 Pet 1:12-15)*.
- The warning is to those who become discontent with & complain about their lot, longing for the good old days (v. 10; Phili 4:10-13).

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WISDOM IS BETTER THAN WEALTH (7:11-12)

Ecclesiastes 7:11-12 (NKJV)
11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance, And profitable to those who see the sun.
12 For wisdom is a defense as money is a defense, But the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who have it.

- Both wisdom and inherited wealth are good – BUT – wisdom is far better – (Prov 8:11)
- Wisdom & money are said to be a defense – But only wisdom can give life!!! - (Prov 3:13-23)
- An inheritance given to our children is truly good ONLY if we first give them wisdom. (Mat 16:26)

ACCEPTANCE IS BETTER THAN ANGER or WORRY (7:13,14)

Ecclesiastes 7:13-14 (NKJV)
13 Consider the work of God; For who can make straight what He has made crooked? 14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, So that man can find out nothing that will come after him.

- The Value of Humility - realizing we are beings living in a fallen world - (1:15; Gen 3:16-19; Rom 5:12)
- When trials & hardships come, we may be tempted to be angry & bitter - (James 1:2-20)
- There is great value in trusting contentment - (Phili 4:10-13; Mat 6:25-34)

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We Are Not Made "Better" by the pleasant and easy things in this life!

(Compare James 1:1–12 & Hebrews 12:1–17)

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Do We See The Value In:

- ✶ Honesty & Integrity – (1a)
- ✶ Death – (7:1b)
- ✶ A funeral (7:2,3)
- ✶ Sorrow (7:3,4)
- ✶ Rebuke (7:5–7)
- ✶ Patience (7:8–10)
- ✶ Wisdom over money (7:11–12)
- ✶ Of Humility (7:13–14)

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Will You Benefit From These Inspired Words of Wisdom?

- ✶ Have priorities in proper order?
- ✶ Enjoy God's blessings with thanksgiving & moderation?
- ✶ Accepting & learning from the hard things in life – trusting God?
- ✶ Worship & fear God? – Ecc 12:13,14

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Luke 9:57-62 (NKJV)

57 Now it happened as they journeyed on the
road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will
follow You wherever You go." 58 And Jesus
said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of
the air have nests, but the Son of Man has
nowhere to lay His head." 59 Then He said to
another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let
me first go and bury my father."

Luke 9:57-62 (NKJV)

60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury
their own dead, but you go and preach the
kingdom of God." 61 And another also said,
"Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and
bid them farewell who are at my house." 62
But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put
his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit
for the kingdom of God."