

The fourth calming advice is to...

4. Enjoy Your Portion from God (v.18-20)

a. God chose your portion

- 1) Your portion may be to labour under the sun all the days of your life.
 - a) If so, accept that portion as a gift from God. God makes no mistakes in the portions that He gives.
 - b) It is good and comely (beautiful) to eat and drink of what you have worked hard to earn.
 - c) It is good and comely (beautiful) for you to enjoy the good of your labour.
 - d) God gave you that portion, so enjoy it!
- 2) To some, God has given a portion that includes riches and wealth.
 - a) If that person gives God the praise for his portion, God will give him the gift to enjoy it.
 - b) If that person does **not** give God credit for his portion, God may withhold the gift of enjoyment.

b. Focussing on God's gift will satisfy

- 1) Ryrie's Study Bible comments, "Man may overcome his frustrations over the futility of life by enjoying life and being occupied with God's good gifts."
- 2) God wants you to choose to enjoy the portion He gives you in this life. **It is not the size of the portion that satisfies; it is God's gift of enjoyment when we are thankful and content with the portion that satisfies.**

Conclusion: In this chapter, God has given us four words of calming advice. 1) **Think before you speak to God.** 2) **Leave injustice with God.** 3) **Do not focus on prosperity.** 4) **Enjoy your portion from God.** These words of calming advice will only help us if we will heed them. I challenge you today to put God's calming advice into practice.

If you have never placed your trust in Jesus Christ to save your soul from coming judgment, I urge you to do so today. Only Jesus can calm your spirit. For help, see "Resources" on our website.

Prayer

Calming Advice

19 April 2020 AM – Ecclesiastes 5:1-20 – Ecc20 – Scott Childs

Welcome: Welcome to our **Sunday morning** online church service.

Prayer

Introduction: In times of distress, pandemic, sadness, sickness or fear one of the best things we can receive is calming advice.

Transition: In Ecclesiastes 5, God gives us four words of advice that will calm our souls if we heed them.

The first calming advice is to...

1. Think Before You Speak to God (v.1-7)

a. Be swift to hear but slow to speak (v.1-3)

- 1) Solomon warns that when we go to the house of God, we must be ready to hear and not to speak foolishly.
- 2) When we pray, God does not need our advice. He wants our obedience. He wants our worship and submission.
- 3) As I look at the amazing prayers of men like Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Nehemiah recorded in the Bible, I find six ingredients that are often present.
 - a) Humility in coming to God
 - b) Praise of God's ability
 - c) Examples of God's past might
 - d) Claiming God's promises
 - e) Presenting the need at hand
 - f) Requesting God's intervention
- 4) When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, Luke records His instruction. (Luke 11:2-4) "*And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*" Proper prayer is seeking God's help, not giving Him advice.
- 5) When we are frustrated, worried, troubled or fearful, we have a tendency to say rash words without thinking (v.2). Many times, we blame God, question God's goodness, or

become bitter toward God because of what He allowed.

- 6) We have an earthly view of our circumstances. God has a heavenly view. He sees the beginning and end. He knows perfectly the reason for our situation. Therefore, we need to *let our words be few* (v.2).
- 7) We dream about things that trouble our minds (v.3). Fools speak things that occupy their minds (v.3). When we pray, God wants us to be attentive, listen and be slow to speak. (James 1:19) "*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*"

b. Keep your promises to God (v.4-7)

- 1) Vows are promises (v.4). If you make a promise to God, He expects you to keep that promise. When a person is in great danger, burdened by a major illness, facing a hopeless situation, or struggling with an addictive habit, they often pray, "God, if you will do... then I will do..."
- 2) *Have you made a promise to God? Have you kept it?*
- 3) God said it is better not to promise than to break one.
- 4) Verse 6 speaks of trying to find a way out of one's vow to God. God is not pleased with broken promises. Instead, we are to fear God (v.7).

The second calming advice is to...

2. Leave Injustice with God (v.8)

a. Oppression and injustice are not right.

- 1) Oppression against the poor is wrong.
- 2) Perverting of justice is also wrong.
- 3) However, we must not let these injustices burden our souls. Give them over to the Lord.

b. God is higher than the highest

- 1) God sees every injustice. One day He will settle the score.
- 2) God makes no mistakes. Leave all injustices with God.

The third calming advice is to...

3. Do Not Focus on Prosperity (v.9-17)

a. Loving riches is vanity (v.9-12)

- 1) Loving silver or abundance of things will never satisfy (v.9-10).

a) *Greed agitates; contentment satisfies.*

b) From what I have observed, poor people are more often satisfied than rich people.

- 2) When you get more you spend more, so you never really get ahead (v.11).
- 3) Those who work hard yet have little, sleep well; however, those who have much lose sleep worrying about keeping what they have (v.12).
- 4) This is another **Goad**. *Gaining more will not satisfy.*

b. Saved riches may perish (v.13-17)

- 1) If you work and save much for the future, trouble may strike and you may lose it all (v.13-14). The stock market may crash, business may fail, thieves may steal or natural disaster may destroy.
- 2) We all know that Covid-19 has turned our world upside down in many ways. If we call Covid-19 a natural disaster, it has certainly caused much destruction. Stocks have crashed. Businesses are struggling. Unemployment is soaring. For many, riches have perished.
- 3) Just a few month ago, bushfires ravaged more than 10 million hectares across Australia. Many people lost all their earthly possessions.
- 4) If your riches perish, that is a sore evil. You may be left with no daily provisions or with nothing to pass on to your son. That is tragic!
- 5) Here is another **Goad** (v.15). *You came into this world with nothing and when you die, you will take nothing with you.*
 - a) This is a sore evil (v.16). That is true.
 - b) There is no profit for those who labour for the wind. If the storms of life blow away all that we gain, that is vanity!
 - c) Such a life ends in darkness, full of sorrow, wrath and sickness of heart (v.17).
 - d) *We must find satisfaction and enjoyment in something other than wealth.*