

Message #38

Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

THE PERSON WHO WILL FIND MEANING AND FULFILLMENT IN LIFE IS ONE WHO WILL REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE HE CONTROLS EVERYTHING, BUT STILL WILL WORK HARD TO ACCOMPLISH SUCCESSFUL OBJECTIVES.

Wise, fulfilled people are not excuse makers. They are not apathetic. When they tackle something they give it their best. God may not always allow them to succeed, but it was not because of a lack of effort.

Now **verse 5** is critical to the context for it lets us know that God is always the one in sovereign control. God is always doing things we know nothing about. So even though we may work hard and make the right moves, we must always leave room for the sovereign work of the Sovereign God.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #1 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that realizes success and increase are not instant or immediate, and require expansion, not hoarding. **11:1**

There have been at least two different ways this verse has been interpreted: 1) This has been interpreted commercially; 2) This has been interpreted philanthropically. Ultimately, there is a third way and that is spiritually.

Those who hold to the commercial interpretation believe that it means we should trust God and be willing to keep spreading and expanding our business, knowing that someday we will find prosperity.

Those who hold to the philanthropic interpretation believe that it means “don’t hoard what you have, but give it out and eventually you will discover that much more is coming back to you.”

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #2 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that realizes diversification is a key in view of the unknown future. **11:2**

Real reward in eternity will be based on diversity. As believers, we need to be witnesses, students and teachers. As believers, even though we may have one specific spiritual gift, we should still demonstrate all the fruits of the Spirit.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #3 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that recognizes proper timing of certain events. **11:3**

As we have already learned, there is a timing for everything (Eccl. 3:1). A wise person knows how to read that timing and then proceed. The image of clouds being full is the image of looking into the sky, seeing heavy clouds and realizing that those clouds will pour out rain.

We cannot control the clouds and we cannot control the rain, so the wise person reads the clouds and makes proper preparations in view of the coming rain.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #4 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that realizes that regardless of the direction of life, once the life ends it is over. **11:3b**

Many people are like trees in life; they sway this way and that way, they make a lot of noise and even at times a thundering roar. But then they fall and die. Down they go it is all over.

There is something to be said here for the sovereignty of God. God determines which tree falls and which tree doesn't. He determines ultimately which direction it will fall and He determines where it will lay.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #5 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that does not make excuses, but trusts in God. **11:4**

A foolish person is always making excuses for not doing the work or not working. The foolish person will look at the wind or the clouds and use them as an excuse for not getting the job done.

But the wise person gets at his work and leaves what God is going to do to God. He may send a strong wind or He may send rain or He may not. It is His decision. Therefore, the wise person gets to his tasks anyway.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #6 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that recognizes there are things in this world that only God knows. **11:5**

Wise people stand in awe of God's sovereignty. We cannot ever figure out the path of the wind, and no medical scientist will ever figure out the mystery of a pregnancy in the womb. These are things controlled by God. The wise person accepts this and keeps working.

WISDOM PRINCIPLE #7 – A meaningful and fulfilled life is one that keeps working in the morning and evening. **11:6**

Forget the clouds, forget the wind, forget the falling trees; we must keep at our work for God will, at some point in time, grant us success. It may be in the early part of the work or the late part of the work, but we need to keep at it.

These principles are business principles that are wise principles of God. We need to see them and apply them.