

P.M. OUTLINE
8/22/2021

"BETTER" THIS THAN THAT

(Ecclesiastes 7:1 - 10)

INTRODUCTION

Christians believe in things that the world finds foolish:

(Matthew 10:39, 23:11-12; Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35)

"Paradox" - a statement contrary to received opinion; conflicting with expectation.

1. (v1) **"A good name is better than precious ointment"** ("A good name before good ointment")
(Proverbs 22:1) "A good name is to chosen rather than great riches"

2. (v1) **"And ("better is") the day of death than the day of one's birth"**

What happens between those two days determine if your name is "good."

At birth your future is unknown; however, at death it is known if your name is "good."

3. (v2-4) (v2) **"Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting"**
(v3) **"Sorrow is better than laughter"**

1) (v2) "For that is the end of all men" - we learn about the brevity of life.

(Ecc. 9:5; 1 Kings 2:1-3; Job 14:1-2; Psalm 90:10; James 4:13-17)

2. (v2) "The living will take it to heart"

(v3) "For by a sad countenance the heart is made better" - apply what we learn.

(v4) "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning"

This "house" is the wise man's school. (1 Peter 1:13)

(v4) Avoid the opposite: "But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth"

Bumper sticker: "He who has the most toys wins" - only "under the sun"

4. (v5) **"Better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools"**

Solomon's proverbs: (Proverbs 6:23, 10:17; 12:1; 17:10; 27:6)

(v6) "For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. Vanity"

Thorns make a loud noise, burn quickly, and die out quickly.

The "song of fools" is flattery: (Psalm 12:2-3)

5. (v7 - 10) (v7) **"Surely oppression destroys a wise man's reason, and a bribe debases the heart"**
(KJV) **"Surely oppression makes a wise man mad; and a gift destroys the heart"**

It is possible for a wise man (strong man), through constant oppression or discouragement, to become weak; and there's the temptation to take a bribe or gift, and the gain he seems to reap from it will destroy his heart at the last.

Solomon gives the rationale to avoid the "debase" and "destroying the heart".

(v8) "The end of a thing is better than its beginning" - have an eternal view.

(v8) "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit" - persevere.

(v9) "Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools"

Don't be quick to harbor resentment over oppression or constant trouble.

(v10) "Do not say, Why were the former days better than these? For you do not inquire wisely" - today will be the "good old days" in a matter of years.