

At the start of the Reformation of the Church in Scotland in 1557, John Knox wrote to his congregation before going into exile and said,

*“You are bishops and kings; your wife, children, servants, and family are your bishopric and charge. Of you it shall be required how carefully and diligently you have instructed them in God’s true knowledge . . .*

*And therefore I say, you must make them partakers in, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.”*

# Let's Worship God

17th-22nd October 2016  
Ecclesiastes



Let's Worship God is a ministry of



Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church

[airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org), 01236 620107  
Part of the RFCS - [rpcscotland.org](http://rpcscotland.org)

**Family worship, a joy to be experienced every day!**



Mon.  
17th Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:1-3 - Comforts or Crosses

**notes** Solomon now comes face to face with a problem that has perplexed the minds of many down through the centuries; the little difference there appears to be between the righteous and the wicked in, what Matthew Henry calls, 'the distribution of comforts and crosses, and the disposal of events'.

Although he is somewhat confused by what he sees all around him, the preacher at least clings on to one undoubted truth; that although it does not seem to matter whether a person is good or bad with regard to the 'comforts or crosses' they receive in life, yet the sovereign God has a special care for those who are his own. He realised, as did the Psalmist, that the believer is always able to say, 'my times are in your hands'. Psalm 31:15. Even when bad things happen to them, they know that they do not come to them by chance, but in the sovereign will and purpose of a loving God. This was a truth recognised by Joseph when he said to his brothers, 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives'. Gen. 50:20.

What really causes a problem is that even Christians tend to make assessments according to worldly considerations; to see things from an earthly perspective rather than a heavenly. When the ungodly prosper and flourish and the child of God suffers need, it can be seen to be unfair and cause us to question the love of God. It is easy to equate material prosperity and worldly comfort with the favour of God which is not always the case! The knowledge of the love of God in Christ, the sure knowledge of the forgiveness of sin and the absolute certainty of life everlasting in heaven, makes a believer content even though he may suffer or be in reduced circumstances whilst here on earth.

**questions**  
1. What is the problem Solomon faces?  
2. How is the sovereignty of God a comfort?

**praise pray**  
Ps. 21:1-6

1. Give thanks for God's loving care.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.



Sat.  
22nd Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:13-18 - Wisdom Forgotten

**notes** Solomon tells a story, whether true or invented, about a poor wise man whose wisdom saved a city against the siege of a great king. We are told nothing about what this wisdom consisted of nor how it saved the city but it obviously seemed great to Solomon. He admired it, and thought it was a wonderful and significant display of wisdom. The tragedy was, however that no one remembered the poor man! This for the preacher was truly sad, for to be remembered was the only lasting meaning that his life would have in the meaninglessness of life 'under the sun'.

Even the best of men and the most noble of deeds are soon forgotten - men very soon forget, but God never does. He knows those who are His (2 Timothy 2:19). He has a book of remembrance before Him for those that fear the Lord (Malachi 3:16), and their names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20).

Even although wisdom is soon forgotten, the preacher still realised that wisdom was better than strength even if it is not always listened to or appreciated! He contrasts wise words spoken quietly to the shouting of fools. It is a true saying that 'empty cans make the most noise'! Unfortunately, we are more prone to listen to the one who shouts the loudest rather than to the one who speaks wise words quietly!

The words attributed to Winton Churchill at a White House lunch in June 1954 'jaw jaw is better than war war' well summarise what Solomon says in verse 18. Wise words can be much more successful in resolving problems than the use of weapons, but as Solomon points out, all the good that wisdom does can quickly be taken away by one sinner who destroys much good. As one commentator says, 'Adam's sin infected the whole race of man; Achan's transgression caused Israel's defeat (Joshua 7:11, 12); Rehoboam's folly occasioned the great schism (1 Kings 12:16)'.

**questions**  
1. Why is it good to be wise?

**praise pray**  
Ps. 23A:all

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.



Fri.  
21st Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:11-12 - Uncertainty of Life

**notes** The uncertainty of life is something of which everybody is aware. Every day the newspapers or television news brings us accounts of tragedies occurring in various parts of the world; earthquakes, terrorist bombings, the drowning of refugees escaping poverty or war, and the senseless murders committed by wicked people. The truth of Solomon's words is abundantly clear to us, 'no man knows when his hour will come' v. 12. For Solomon, if the world 'under the sun' made more sense, the swift would always win the race, the strong would always prevail, the clever would always be wealthy and favoured; but he recognises that it doesn't always work out that way! What he saw as 'time and chance' and what we know as the providential hand of God happens to change the 'expected' order.

What Solomon has been saying could very easily lead to disillusionment and despair if we were all subject to the vicissitudes of time and chance, for it is absolutely true that we do not know what lies ahead tomorrow, we do not know if the plans we have made will come to fruition and we certainly do not know the hour of our departure from this world.

For the Christian however, disillusionment and despair are replaced by trust, faith, and hope, for the future is not controlled by an impersonal chance, but is under the control of a sovereign and loving God for whom there are no unexpected events. We may not know what is around the corner tomorrow, and the hour of our departure is mercifully hidden from us, but we do know the one who holds the future!

Given the uncertainty of life 'under the sun' it is vital that the certainty of the Word of God is fully laid hold upon, so that there can be confidence for future days, no matter what they hold and an unshakeable assurance that when the time of our departure from this world comes, it will be 'absent from the body and present with the Lord'. 2 Cor. 5:8

**questions**  
1. What happens to all people?  
2. In whom should be our confidence?

**praise** Ps. 22:19-25

**pray**  
1. Give thanks that God holds the future in His hands.  
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.  
3 Pray for family matters.



Tue.  
18th Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:4-6 - Death

**notes** We are all familiar with the saying; 'while there is life there is hope', but how many would know that it comes from the book of Ecclesiastes? No matter how poor a person's condition may be, while he still has life, there is hope of improvement; no matter how wicked a person may be, while he is still alive there is hope that the grace of God may transform his life. The one state of man in which there is no hope is death! For the believer, his death takes away the need for hope, for all that he has longed for and hoped for is now a reality, for 'we shall see him as he is' 1 Jn. 3:2. For the unbeliever, death means that the hope that was offered in the gospel has been finally and irrevocably taken away, there is nothing left but wrath and condemnation.

Whether rich or poor, wise or foolish, every man and woman born into this world face the same solemn hour when life departs from their body, all must face the last enemy of death! The preacher highlights this when he says, 'the living know that they will die', but the sad truth is that many live with this thought as far away from their consciousness as possible! The certain knowledge of death is however, a necessary and extremely useful knowledge for it will enable us to make proper preparation. As Solomon tells us, when death comes, everything that we have known on this earth vanishes v. 6. And that includes the opportunity of hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the opportunity to repent of our sins and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ - 'the dead know nothing' v. 5.

Although the living know that they will die - even if they try to suppress that fact - the one thing that no man knows is when that great event will take place, so the apostle Paul tells us, 'now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation'. 2 Cor. 6:2

**questions**  
1. What happens when an unbeliever dies?  
2. What happens when a believer dies?  
Ps. 21:7-12

**praise**  
**pray**  
1. Pray for the salvation of family and friends.  
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.  
3 Pray for family matters.



Wed.  
19th Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:7-9 - Enjoyment

**notes** Given the certainty of death and the uncertainty of the timing of it, the preacher now gives advice about how to make the best of the time that man has upon the earth and although he is still seeing things from an 'under the sun' perspective, he nevertheless gives highlights some important things:

1. Whatever material things we possess and enjoy come from the hand of God v. 7. The very fact that life is in the hand of God means that the life that we currently enjoy is because of the favour of God!

2. The life that God grants, whether long or short upon the earth, is to be enjoyed. Everything that we have comes from God, even the most basic things like food and drink and are to be received with thankfulness. This can only truly be done when man recognises the fact that without the mercy and goodness of the Lord, he would have absolutely nothing - not even life itself! A starving beggar who receives food to keep him alive is grateful to the one who has given it to him!

3. One of the means by which man can enjoy the life that God has given him is set out in v. 9, 'enjoy life with your wife'. At the very beginning of creation, God said that it was not good for man to be alone and so began the institution of marriage. It is very sad that marriage, created to be the basic building block of society, is denigrated, abused and perverted by sinful society, and therefore there is all the more need for Christian men and women to demonstrate to the world the beauty and delight of God centred marriage. The example of Christian marriage, in which the husband loves his wife with the sacrificial love that Christ had for his church, and the wife is subject to her husband in the same way that the church is subject to Christ, can have a real impact upon a society where temporary liaisons seem to be the norm.

**questions**

1. How are we to enjoy the things God has given us?

**praise** Ps. 22:1-6

- pray**
1. Give thanks for all God has given you.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  - 3 Pray for family matters.



Thur.  
20th Oct.

# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Wisdom is better than weapons  
of war, but one sinner destroys  
much good.  
Ecclesiastes 9:18

**reading** Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:22-24 - Work

**notes** One secret of an enjoyable life, says the preacher, is to do everything that you undertake as well as you possibly can! This was reiterated by the apostle Paul in Colossians 3:23 when he was giving instructions to those who were suffering under the yolk of slavery. If even those who were slaves were urged in whatever they did, to work at it with all their heart, how much more should those who have been granted freedom from sin in the Lord Jesus Christ. Especially so as the reason Paul gives for this injunction is that 'it is the Lord Christ you are serving'.

As far as the Christian is concerned, everything that he does should be done in awareness of the presence of Christ and for the honour and glory of God. No matter how menial or mundane the task, when it is done in service to the Lord Jesus Christ it is truly worthwhile and glorious. No Christian should be guilty of doing his work, whether that is in his secular employment or in the work and service of the church, in a haphazard or sloppy manner. Our work may not always be the very best - somebody else may be able to produce better work than us - but it should be the best that we can possibly produce.

The great Baptist preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon makes two very significant comments on this issue when he writes, 'Man was not created to be idle, he was not elected to be idle, he was not redeemed to be idle, he was not quickened to be idle, and he is not sanctified by God's grace to be idle', and 'No man ever served God by doing things tomorrow.'

We have a far better reason than Solomon gave for doing everything to the best of our ability - not that death is coming when we will no longer be able to work, but because we are the bondservants of Christ and want to please him.

**questions**

1. How should we do everything?
2. Why should we do everything this way?

**praise** Ps. 22:7-12

- pray**
1. Pray that you would do everything to the best of your ability.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  - 3 Pray for family matters.