

# Message Notes

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**Date:** March 19, 2017

**Bible Focus:** Ecclesiastes 2:17-26

**Current Series:** The Chase

**Message Title:** It's Off To Work We Go

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**Ecclesiastes 2:17-23** - So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. <sup>18</sup> I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. <sup>19</sup> And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. <sup>20</sup> So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun. <sup>21</sup> For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then he must leave all he owns to someone who has not worked for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune. <sup>22</sup> What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? <sup>23</sup> All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless.

## 1. Work Can Bring \_\_\_\_\_

**Ecclesiastes 2:24-26** - A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in his work. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, <sup>25</sup> for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment? <sup>26</sup> To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

## 2. Work Can Bring \_\_\_\_\_

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Ecclesiastes 2:17-26

1. Think back over your career. Have you for the most part loved or hated your jobs? Or something in between? To what would you attribute your work-related attitude?
2. In what ways do you identify with Solomon's awful work-related experiences? Read back through the ways work pained Solomon. How do you identify with what he experienced?
3. Like Solomon benefited from the WHAT question, we can, too. What's the payoff of the work you're doing? What are you happy about? What needs to change? Is it possible that the way you're doing what you're doing is bringing unnecessary work-related pain into your life? Is there anything that can be done about that?
4. Have you experienced the God-given gifts of satisfaction, enjoyment, and happiness in your work? In what ways can you see God's work in your work?
5. In what ways are you missing out on the work-related "attitude" gifts God gives? How would you explain their absence?
6. In all honesty, WHO are you working for? Is it possible that an intentional shift in your reason for working is needed? How can a God-centered focus make an immediate change in what you do and how you do it?
7. Do you agree with this statement: "Pleasure comes to those who work for God's pleasure." Why or why not?
8. What one thing do you hope to take with you out of this focus in Ecclesiastes?