

In commenting on this passage, Matthew Henry wrote that "Life is God's gift. We must not view our calling as a drudgery, but take pleasure in the calling where God puts us. A cheerful spirit is a great blessing; it makes employments easy, and afflictions light. Having made a proper use of riches, a man will remember the days of his past life with pleasure."

Some people look at the demands and labors of life as part of the curse, or at the very least it is something to be minimized and escaped if at all possible. Many don't see work as a blessing that gives life meaning and purpose.

Henry went on to say, "The manner in which Solomon refers to God as the *Giver*, both of life and its enjoyments, shows they ought to be received and to be used, consistently with his will, and to his glory."

God gives us the blessings of deep satisfaction in the small but meaningful blessings of life...family, friends, fellowship and enjoying the "portion" that He has given us. Our world today often has a problem with "portions." That is, the portions they have are never big enough...those without the right perspective are never satisfied with their job, status, homes or relationships.

But God give us the power and ability to not only receive our "portion" but to enjoy it and put it to good use.

**Questions for Parents:** God gave Adam work to do in the Garden before the fall, and in this passage Solomon appears to say that work and toil are actually a gift from God and gives us satisfaction. Many of us may recall the deep pleasure at the end of a hard day's work.

*Do we rob our children of this satisfaction by doing too much for them?*

*How do we talk about our own work or calling in life when we are at home; do we describe it as a curse or a blessing?*

*Occupied with the Gladness of our Hearts*

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

**Introduction:** Life can be hard at times; there are questions we can't answer, problems that we can't solve, and sometimes it's difficult for us to see God's plan and purpose for our life. And all around us those in the world without Christ as looking for answers too, and often finding only emptiness and frustration. Solomon, the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes – or the "teacher" as he called himself – faces these deep problems and questions of life head-on. He doesn't sugar-coat them, nor does he hide his own failings; he goes to the depths of despair and comes back.

But through the dark clouds of this book, God does break through with some light, and Solomon gives us some of that God-given wisdom here.

**The Reality: The World "Under the Sun"** Selected Passages of Ecclesiastes

- Injustice – and other grievous evils
- Futility – the frustrations and obstacles in life
- Emptiness – the seeming meaninglessness of life

**The Recognition:** "a Good and Fitting" thing

**Ecclesiastes 5:18**

- To enjoy God's sustaining of life
- To even enjoy our labors and toils
- To see both as a gift from God

**The Result: The power to receive and rejoice**

**Ecclesiastes 5:19**

**The Reward:** To not even consider the days of our life **Ecclesiastes 5:20**

- To not recall the past with despair
- To not fear the future
- To enjoy all the good things God has given us

***Occupied with the Gladness of our Hearts***

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

**The Reality: The World “Under the Sun”**

Selected passages

Injustice and “grievous evils” are present in the world

Life can be frustrating and difficult

What is the ultimate meaning and purpose of life?

**The Recognition:** “a Good and Fitting” thing

**Ecclesiastes 5:18**

To enjoy God’s sustaining of life

To even enjoy our labors and toils

To see both as a gift from God

**The Result:** The ability to

**Ecclesiastes 5:18**

**Receive what God has given us...**

**To put it to good use**

**To rejoice in the gift of God**

**The Reward:** To not even *consider* the days of our life **Ecclesiastes 5:20**

To not remember the past with despair

To not fear or become anxious about the future

In the present to enjoy:

*The simple blessings of life,*

*The labor or “calling” God has given us,*

*and the good gifts that surround us.*

# Kids Notes

Thinking about the Good Things God has Given us!

## The Questions

Answer the following questions. The answers are on the back.

1. *The work we have to do, such as chores and homework, are:*

- A. Things that grown-ups invented to keep kids busy
- B. A way of getting kids to do work so the parents can relax
- C. God's gift to us to give our life purpose
- D. Stuff we have to do to earn our allowance

2. *When we gather together to have dinner with our family, what does God really care the most about?*

- A. That we show good table manners and don't lick our fingers
- B. That we don't pester our brothers and sisters
- C. That we finish quickly so we can get back to work
- D. That we enjoy the time of being together with our family

3. *As we grow up, what should we think about the most?*

- A. The mistakes we've made in the past
- B. Enjoying the good things God is giving us every day
- C. New computer games that are coming out soon

For Family Discussion: What chores or other things at home could you take responsibility for?

Space to Doodle (*try to draw the job you'd like to do when you grow up*)

## Did You Hear It?

Mark the times you hear these key words:

ENJOY _____	TOTAL: _____
GOD _____	_____
GIFT _____	_____
PORTION _____	_____
LIFE _____	_____
GLADNESS _____	_____

## Word Search

Find the following words in the scramble below. Letters are sometimes used twice, some go backwards, but no words go around corners.

GIFTS, REWARD, LABOR, GLADNESS, UNDER, THE, SUN, WEALTH, REJOICE, CHORES, RICHES, THANKS, HEART, ENJOY, WORK, WEALTH

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N J D E T R O F S N A R T Q U
S H T Y A O T S I Y H C E Z C
T C R C Q M B A O I R A R T H
F R E I N B S J Q A I M D U Y
I U W O R K N O K G C D P R Y
G L A D N E S S Z C H O R E S
O A R R L A T E A I E D A J I
L B D O E T H A N K S G X O N
O O N S D G E R R Z T M O I U
T R T S Y S A M H M I O K C M
A D C L O N R O R C N D F E M
H X E L X A T O I L R G L M O
T N U N D E R T I Z E N J K C
S C U Q M W T H E S U N N I U
E P X E R U T U F W E A L T H
    
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