



30 September 2020
Midweek Encouragement

Dear Friends of BMC,

As I was pondering and asking God what message he wanted to deliver to us through this encouragement letter, I came across this piece in my daily devotion by Selwyn Hughes, who was a Welsh Christian minister.

I thought that it was so timely and appropriate to me, as well as to us as a whole, in this current situation that we are in.

Allow me to share it with you.

The scripture passage is taken from Ecclesiastes 2:24-26:

²⁴ There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵ for apart from him, who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶ For to the one who pleases him, God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Selwyn Hughes writes:

Oswald Chambers said: "No Christian makes much progress in the Christian life until he realizes that life is more chaotic and tragic than orderly."

In other words, life in a fallen world can be tough! The sooner we face that fact and allow it to silence us, the fewer expectations we will have of the world, and the more eagerly we will turn to God.

The passage begins with what might appear to be a contradiction: "There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God," (v. 24).

The point he is making is this: if life's ultimate meaning can't be found in activities like eating, drinking, and working, it is not to be found in rejecting them either.

Things in themselves are not bad; what makes them bad is the wrong values we attach to them. As soon as God is brought into Solomon's musings, notice the change. Enjoyment, he says, is God's personal gift (v. 25). Satisfaction in things is found only when they are seen as being behind God and not in front of Him.

When God is not first, then everything around which we wrap our affections is an idol. We can choose either to find life in God and enjoy the provision of His hands; or to find life in things, and turn our back on God. The latter is "meaningless," says Solomon, "a chasing after the wind."

Unquote.

Friends, in everything we do, let us put God first. As we love him and love others, putting God and others before ourselves, we will find great contentment and peace.

May God grant you his favour in His time.

**Blessings,
David Gwee**