

# Being Good and Working Hard

Ecclesiastes 2:12-26

Watch “Promised Land,” Toby Mac music video at <https://youtu.be/k1DjD2MWe1k>

## I. **BEING GOOD** (12-17)—enlightened, righteous, and prudent

A. **Enlightened Life** (12-14)—*studied, considered, intentional*

B. **Prudent Life**—*smart, careful, practical responsibility*

C. **Righteous Life**—*upright, honorable, moral responsibility*

D. **Mortal Life** (14b-17)—*personal death and cultural amnesia*

1. **Wisdom won't keep you from dying.**

2. **There is no future reward.**

3. **Your wisdom and accomplishments won't last.**

## II. **WORKING HARD** (10b, 18-23)—why we do

A. **The gift of work is a blessing**. (Gen 2).

1. **God works**.

2. **God designed humans to work.**

B. **The frustration of work is a curse**. (Gen 3)

1. **Being unable to work is devastating.**

2. **Working for someone else for something you don't care about can be drudgery.**

3. **Working for yourself toward a goal you believe in is meaningful and exhilarating.**

C. **Death is the ultimate frustration of work**.

1. **You will die**.

2. **You can't take it with you.**

3. **You lose control of your estate.**

4. What you built won't last.

D. We are meant to work for something greater than ourselves.

1. A **King** whose glory is **infinite** (Isa 49:3; 60:2) —His glory seen in us, greater than ours could ever be
2. A **Kingdom** whose nature is **eternal** (Dan 4:3; 7:14, 27; Lk 1:33; Col 15:58, Rev 14:13).

III. **ENJOYING LIFE** (24-26)—it is possible

A. **As Good as It Gets** (24)—managing our expectations

1. **East of Eden** —*this world is broken*
2. **South of Paradise** —*there is a God in heaven*
3. **Under (Generous) Providence** —*God still blesses us here and now*

B. **The Hand of God** (24)—recognizing God's sovereignty

1. **God's Choice**—submission to the Creator
2. **God's Action**—personal involvement
3. **God's Provision** (Mat 6:11)
  - a. **Food**—basic sustenance, what we need to live
  - b. **Enjoyment**
    - **Capacity** to enjoy
    - **Things** to enjoy
    - **Relationship** to enjoy

C. **The Gift of God** (26; Mat 5:6, Col 2:3)—He *gives* what the godless strive for

1. **Wisdom** (Prov 2:6; Jam 1:5) —from heaven; Holy Scripture, Jesus Christ
2. **Knowledge** (Pro 1:7; Lk 1:7)—all we need for life and doctrine
3. **Joy** (Ps 21:6; Mat 25:21)—joy in His presence; we enter into *His* joy
4. **Treasures of This World** (Mat 5:6, Prov 10:22)—gathered by others, given to the blessed

D. **The Pleasure of God** (26;; 1 Cor 2:9; Rom 8:28 )

1. In right **relationship with Him**—His beloved child; in Jesus, He is pleased with you
2. In **gratitude for His gifts**— enjoying them, recognizing Him as the source