

# FINDING HOLINESS THROUGH HOPE AND JOY

Pastor Lucas Almeida—Central Baptist Church—March 17th, 2024

**ECCLESIASTES 8:10-17**

**(ESV)**

*[10] Then I saw the wicked buried. They used to go in and out of the holy place and were praised in the city where they had done such things. This also is vanity. [11] Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil. [12] Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they fear before him. [13] But it will not be well with the wicked, neither will he prolong his days like a shadow, because he does not fear before God.*

*[14] There is a vanity that takes place on earth, that there are righteous people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity. [15] And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.*

*[16] When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, how neither day nor night do one's eyes see sleep, [17] then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.*

## INTRODUCTION

Sin is not primarily fought with restraint but with pleasure.

### Psalm 16:11

*[11] You make known to me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

## REVIEW

**Ecclesiastes 7:20–[20]** *Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.*

**Ecclesiastes 7:23–24–[23]** *All this I have tested by wisdom. I said, “I will be wise,” but it was far from me. [24] That which has been is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out?*

We can't overcome sin on our own; we need help from outside of ourselves.

## **WE FIND HOLINESS IN HOPE**

We must take great hope in the fact that God will judge the wicked.

There is a great distinction between external religion and internal righteousness.

**Matthew 23:27–28**—[27] *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. [28] So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

External religion can confuse others about the truth of internal righteousness.

We must take great hope in knowing that God will not judge the righteous.

## **WE FIND HOLINESS IN JOY**

Very often we find ourselves in despair because we can't control our circumstances.

### **Proverbs 19:21**

*[21] Many are the plans in the mind of a man,  
but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.*

### **Job 42:2**

*[2] “I know that you can do all things,  
and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.*

**Ephesians 1:11**—[11] *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will...*

How do we obey the commandment to be joyful? By recognizing God as the source of everything that is good in our lives.

Joy in this broken world is really supposed to be a foretaste of heaven.

**Hebrews 12:2**—...*who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*