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| **A Cheerful Heart Is a Gift of God**  *Promise: in Christ we can have peace and joy in our hearts* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Eccles 5:10-20; Ps 119:9-16; Hebrews 4:1-13; Mark 10:23-31 (22nd Sunday after Pentecost, Pr. 24), 10/20/24)  *[Everyone who accepts his lot] and rejoice[s] in his toil—this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.* – v. 19-20  **Lead In –** Does anyone here really believe that the rich and the famous live happier lives than all the rest? Have you looked at some of their lives? Indeed, the wealthy can chase after every worldly pleasure. They can afford every bodily comfort. They can travel to exotic places. They can showcase and be ostentatious with all their possessions. And they sure look happy when they are interviewed or captured in photos. But not everyone who is rich and famous is happy. I think you know that. And you can run into some surprisingly happy people that are impoverished, face lots of hardships, and have been ignored by polite company. But that the rich and famous aren’t necessarily happy, don’t take my word for it. Take it from the testimony of one of the wealthiest and best-known men of his day…   1. **King Solomon and Emptiness of Life Apart from God**    1. A summary of Ecclesiastes, a most unusual Book…    2. Wealth not the only diversion, but it is most common…    3. It is a gift to be able enjoy things, and to sleep… 2. **False Assumption that Wealth Is a Sign of God’s Favor**    1. Job’s friends aren’t the only ones with this assumption…    2. Jesus’ shocking statement about camels and needles…    3. The assortment in Faith’s Hall of Fame (He 11)… 3. **At Least Three Things Involved in Cheerful Heart**    1. To know your sins are forgiven and wiped away…    2. To be assured of your inheritance and blessed rest…    3. To know your life has a purpose and has meaning…   **Final Word –** When Jesus says, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom,” He did not thereby imply that entering the kingdom is a cinch for everyone else, especially for the poor. No, He knew salvation was impossible for all men! But it is not impossible for Him. In fact, by our Lord’s atoning death on the Cross our salvation has been made possible. And when Peter says to Jesus “We have left everything and followed You,” we are not to assume the Apostles thereby earned their salvation. Instead, we are to understand that no matter our lot. as long as we are in Christ, we have peace with God and a blessed destiny. By His presence in our lives we can be sustained with joy in our hearts in the midst of thick and thin, and come good times or hard times. For this joy is a gift of God to his beloved.  **Ec** **1:1-2** The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. (Meaningless! Meaningless! Utter meaninglessness!)  **Ec 12:8** Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.  **1Ti 6:9-10** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. | **Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 ESV**  *The Vanity of Wealth and Honor*  10He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. 11When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? 12Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.  13There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, 14and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. 15As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. 16This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? 17Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.  18Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. 19Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. 20For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.  **Mt 6:19** Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.  **1Ti 6:6** But godliness with contentment is great gain.  **Ph 4:11** I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.  **Mk 10:25** It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.  **Mt 6:24** No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.  **Ro 5:1** Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.  **Jn 6:33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.  **Ph 4:6-7** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. |