

Working wisely in a wicked world

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Preacher: James Ross

[0 : 00] So while boys and girls are heading out to their classes and to Koresh, those of us who are remaining here, we can turn in our Bibles to the New Testament and to Paul's letter, first letter of the Thessalonians.

We're going to read two sections, two things that Paul says to this church. On the subject of their attitude towards work, at least in part.

So 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, the first 12 verses, and let's hear God's word together. As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living.

Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. It is God's will that you should be sanctified, that you should avoid sexual immorality, that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans who do not know God, and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.

The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before, for God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being, but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

[1 : 38] Now about your love for one another, we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia.

Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life. You should mind your own business, and work with your hands just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders, and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

And then 2 Thessalonians chapter 3, Paul writes another letter to them. And at verse 6, we hear some more of his teaching there.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive, and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling, so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

[2 : 52] We did this not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule, the one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.

We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy. They are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus to settle down and earn the food they eat.

And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good. Take special note, if anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter, do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed.

Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them, as you would, a fellow believer. Amen. And we will return to some of those thoughts as we're thinking about Ecclesiastes in a few moments.

But before we get there, we're going to sing. As we're singing through our Psalms, we come to Psalm 13. And when we think of this Psalm, think of how it relates to Jesus, the true King, who knew, like David the Psalmist, the sorrow of separation, who knew trouble and loneliness, who knew the attacks of his enemies, and yet is one who trusted and had joy.

[4 : 11] And as we think of Jesus, think too of his church. I pray for ourselves, but also make it a prayer for God's suffering church in the world. So let's stand and let's sing Psalm 13 together.

How long will you forget me, Lord?

Will you forget always? How long, Lord, will you hide your face?

and turn from me your gaze? How long must I be sat each day in deeper perplexity?

How long will my, Opponents stand in triumph over me?

[5 : 33] O Lord, my God, consider me and give me your reply.

Light up my eyes, Or I will sleep, The sleep of those who die.

Then would my enemy declare, At last I've laid him low, And so my foes would sing for joy, To see my overthrow.

To see my overthrow. But still I trust your constant love, You save and set me free.

With joy I will extol the Lord, Who has been good to me.

[7 : 19] Now let's turn to pray together.

Lord, our God, Our God, as we have sung of David's lament, But also his trust, We thank you that it reminds us of the reality of suffering, So that we would take it to you in prayer.

Lord, once again, We bring before you the nation of Ukraine, With all the suffering that we see continuing to go on.

Lord, once again, We bring before you our prayer for peace, And our prayer for justice. Lord, we remember the civilians who are caught up in the conflict, The huge humanitarian crisis that is growing, The uncertainty even of being able to find those safe corridors to pass through.

Lord, we pray for those who are in the midst of war, And living with fear, And where family are separated from one another. Lord, we pray that you would hear our prayers, And their prayers.

[8 : 52] Lord, we ask that justice would be done, That evil would be stopped. And we pray wisdom for all the leaders of the world, And indeed of businesses, And of the financial world, To know how to respond well, In order to bring this to an end.

Lord, we ask that you would cause many people To be praying, In light of the difficulties, In light of the suffering.

Lord, we pray for your church in the Ukraine, Asking that you would strengthen them in their trust, That you would give them the joy of the Lord Jesus, In the midst of their sorrow.

Enable them to hold out the gospel of the Lord Jesus, As a beacon of light in the midst of darkness. Lord, we know that the church in Ukraine has a strong tradition, It has a strong tradition of sending, And supporting mission and missionaries around the world.

Lord, we pray that the strength of the church, Would enable them to love and to serve,
And to bring help where it is needed, And ultimately to continue bringing the hope, The
eternal hope of the Lord Jesus.

[10 : 21] Lord, we remember that Ukraine is not on its own, In being a place of war and suffering.
We remember friends and those we've heard of in Myanmar, As they continue to suffer.

Lord, again, we ask that you would enable your people, To endure in their faith, To endure
in their desire to love, And to serve one another, And to be a blessing to their
communities, Even when they have so little themselves.

Lord, we also remember your suffering church in South Sudan. We remember some of us,
Patrick Jock, who came to visit a number of years ago.

We remember him and the churches that he is a part of, As they look to serve those who
are the victims of war, And who have so little.

But Lord, we thank you for the gospel, That gives the sure hope of eternal life. That
beyond suffering, There is that eternal weight of glory.

[11 : 31] And we pray that for people who are suffering, And indeed for people in prosperity and
security, As we often find ourselves in, That our hope would be fixed on what is eternal.

Lord, we don't just think of troubled places, We think of troubled people we know. Lord, we
realize that the financial impact Keeps on coming beyond pandemic, And there are many
who are fearful.

Lord, we pray for those whose health is struggling, And who are worried for those who
have ill health. And we pray for those who are dealing with difficult news, And difficult
circumstances.

For those who are anticipating an uncertain future. For those who are struggling to live as
a Christian in the workplace, Because of opposition and challenge.

For those who are finding the going hard spiritually, And growing weaker in their faith.
Lord, we ask that you would draw near, That you would comfort and renew and restore.

[12 : 47] Lord, that you would keep our eyes looking up to Jesus, The author and the perfecter of
our faith. And we pray that you would do that for us, Even in this time that we gather
together to worship.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Now let's turn in our Bibles once again. And we're back in
Ecclesiastes.

And we're going to read chapter 3, Verse 16 down to chapter 4, And to verse number 6.
And let's again hear God's word.

And I saw something else under the sun, In the place of judgment, wickedness was there.
In the place of justice, wickedness was there.

I said to myself, God will bring into judgment both the righteous and the wicked, For there
will be a time for every activity, A time to judge every deed. I also said to myself, As for
humans, God tests them, So that they may see that they are like the animals.

[13 : 56] Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals. The same fate awaits them
both. As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath. Humans have no
advantage over animals.

Everything is meaningless or vanity. All go to the same place. All come from dust, And to
dust all return. Who knows if the human spirit rises upward, And if the spirit of the animal
goes down into the earth.

So I saw that it is nothing better for a person Than to enjoy their work, Because that is
their lot. For who can bring them to see what will happen after them?

Again, I looked and saw all the oppression That was taking place under the sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, And they have no comforter. Power was on the side of their oppressors, And they have no comforter.

And I declared that the dead who had already died Are happier than the living who are still alive, But better than both is the one who has never been born, Who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun.

[15 : 00] And I saw that all toil and all achievement Spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, A chasing after the wind. Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves.

Better one handful with tranquility Than two handfuls with toil And chasing after the wind. Amen.

So our theme this morning Is that of working wisely In a wicked world. Our attitude to work Can be a complicated one.

Some people speak of work as The rat race. And we've probably heard that famous quip The trouble with the rat race is That even if you win, You're still a rat. We speak about work as A dog-eat-dog environment.

Where people are doing whatever it takes To get ahead, Even if it means harming others. We talk about the corporate jungle. Where there's threat from all sides.

[16 : 03] And how do we survive In that context. And so today's question is How should we work wisely Wisely, As we acknowledge that we live In a wicked world.

How do we enjoy the gift of work In a broken world. How as Christians do we live And work well. Now our teacher, If you were here last week, Chapter 3, We were in his famous poem.

Thinking about all the times That God sets for our lives. Now we're considering this set time That we have as people for work. And that work that takes place In the context of, As he tells us, Wickedness, Oppression, Envy, And toil.

And I imagine few of us Can doubt his conclusion. We just need to turn on our televisions. We see what's happening in Ukraine. We see the power grab And the drive for personal glory.

We are seeing civilian suffering And a humanitarian crisis in Europe That we haven't seen since World War II. But we also see it in the world of business In the workplace.

[17 : 12] We talk about destroyer pricing. Where large companies want to drive out of business, Smaller companies. We talk of hostile takeovers.

And we know that many folks Who are doing incredibly valuable jobs Have to do so with very difficult pay and conditions. Think of the care sector struggles at the moment. And then we go around the world And we recognize the reality That still exists of modern day slavery And sweatshop labor.

And against this backdrop, Our relationship to work Can then begin to go wrong. And we can struggle, on the one hand, With our work-life balance.

Sometimes underworking, Sometimes overworking. We can struggle with our attitude towards work. So we can take this negative view, Well, work is a necessary evil That I just need to do in order to pay the bills.

On the other hand, Work can become an all-consuming God. I am because I have this particular job. So again, the question that the teacher in Ecclesiastes Is bringing to us is, What do we do when we recognize And when we feel that the world is broken?

[18 : 29] And here particularly, How do we work When the world is broken? Just as a sidebar, We're going to see that our author says, In light of oppression and injustice, We are to work quietly.

But we know when we read the Bible, That's not all that the Bible has to say About our response to oppression and injustice. Read the Old Testament prophets, Read Jesus, And you discover, Very clearly, God believes that injustice and greed and oppression Should be fought against.

It is right for us to support Organizations that look to bring help And to speak against injustice. It's right for us to support organizations That speak for the suffering church also.

Barnabas Fund, Open Doors, International Justice Mission, It's right and proper. Where possible, The Christian church should work To challenge and to end injustice. We should be a voice for the voiceless.

But that's an important sermon for another day. Today, Our teacher makes a more narrow point To say that because we live In a wicked and broken world, We should work quietly Enjoying that work as a gift from God.

[19 : 48] So let's begin By joining him In considering the reality Of a wicked world. So by now, If you've been with us for a few weeks, You'll know our teacher in Ecclesiastes, He's not a cynic.

But he is a realist. He is someone who is probing The complexities of life deeply. And he is doing it from that perspective Of life under the sun.

Thinking about a world view That by and large ignores God And ignores the reality of eternity. And we have three observations That point to the reality Of a wicked world in our text.

The first thing he observes Is in chapter 3, verse 16, I saw something else Under the sun. In the place of judgment, Wickedness was there. In the place of justice, Wickedness was there.

You have perhaps seen The iconic statue Of Lady Justice On the old Bailey High Court Down in London. Lady Justice With her eyes blindfolded With the scales of justice In her hand With the double-edged sword Of justice in the other hand.

[20 : 56] The imagery there Intended to project the idea That in this court And in the world of justice There should be no favoritism. That there should be True justice for all. That's the ideal.

But sadly, And our teacher is seeing it All too often, Justice turns a blind eye To the needs of the weak And the marginalized. All too often, Those responsible for justice Have their eyes turned, Perhaps because of bribery And corruption, To favor the powerful.

And so injustice continues. And now as people, Because we're made In the image of God And we are made In the image of a God Who is perfectly just, We have that love of justice, That longing for justice, But we understand That injustice continues.

And whether we're thinking About the suffering in Ukraine Or we're thinking about The suffering in the global church, We see wickedness and injustice. That's not all our teacher sees.

Chapter 4, Verse 1 to 3, He also sees oppression And isolation. Again, I looked and saw All the oppression That was taking place Under the sun.

[22 : 13] I saw the tears of the oppressed And they have no comforter. Power was on the side Of their oppressors And they have no comforter. And notice again, He's observing this life Under the sun.

And in this life under the sun, Where we're just thinking About me and the moment And not about eternity, There is that drive For getting everything That we can now. And so power-hungry people Will always have that tendency Towards oppression.

And so we're presented With this sad picture Of the tears Of the oppressed With no one To provide comfort. The powerless Are victimized And they are isolated From any source of help.

Hasn't this been so painful To see and to witness This week Are those pleas For help
Coming out of Ukraine Seeing children's hospitals Having to move underground Seeing
those brutal war tactics Day after day And there is no way To help.

Think about the personal stories That we know in the workplace. Perhaps you have
suffered from Or you know someone Who suffered from Workplace bullying. Perhaps you
have experienced Horrible bosses Or difficult colleagues.

[23 : 32] And you've seen others suffer And so often We recognize the oppression But we are
powerless To bring change. Our teacher has a sliding scale Of happiness In verses 2 and
3 Where he says Because of all the evil That's happening in the world The dead are better
off Than the living Because they're done With having to witness All the oppression But
best off Are the unborn Because they haven't come To discover Just how much
oppression Goes on in the world.

The third observation Third reality of life In a wicked world Chapter 4 verse 4 Envy and toil
I saw that all the toil And all achievement Spring from one person's Envy of another This
too is meaningless A chasing after the wind.

Now not everybody sees this As a negative. There's an economist By the name of
Gregory Rodriguez Who would argue that Envy drives Economic aspiration.

Envy drives Economic activity. So he writes papers Arguing that it's beneficial In a
competitive society That people and businesses Have envy.

We're driven by Well I see the position Of that company And I want my company To get
there So I'm going to work hard To level up. Or I see what my colleague Has achieved
And I see The car that he's bought And the house that he's bought And the success that
he's had So I'm going to work All the harder Driven by envy To get to that position.

[25 : 09] Our teacher Doesn't see it as a positive. The Bible doesn't see Envy as a positive.
Because the natural tendency Isn't for us to level up It's for us to want to tear The other
down.

To step on others To get ahead. Envy will always tend To be self-seeking. It will tend to
compare And compete. Therefore not be content.

Our author says This is not a positive way To live. He says it's vanity. It's a chasing after
the wind.

We can spend all of our time Toiling for the latest toy. But our teacher says That's never
going to satisfy. Working and working and working To try and keep up Or to get ahead Will
not bring Lasting ultimate joy And gain.

Rather It's working For the wind. Keeps pushing us To reflect on Ultimate things. Our work
will not save And satisfy Beyond Death.

[26 : 19] So our teacher Gives us once again A healthy dose of realism. And it's helpful for us
Because Here we are reminded And maybe especially For us in the church We're not
expected To say Everything is okay Because clearly Everything is not okay With our
teacher We are invited To grieve What is lost And what is broken We're invited To reflect
And to see That sometimes The reality of wickedness And injustice In our world Can
become almost Unbearable for us I wonder If With all the Media coverage Of the war You
felt the need To switch off Because it's just Felt too much To distract ourselves Just for a
little Because it's almost Overwhelming us We feel that

As Christians What we should do I guess as Christians Is to If we're going to Turn away We turn away To take it To God In prayer That's our Best response When we feel Overwhelmed Is to take it To the God Who's on the throne But to look At our news To look at Our circumstances And to look at Ecclesiastes Is to be reminded As well The reality That the heart Of the problem Is the problem Of the human heart That's true That's true That's true In our warfare And that's true In our workplaces As well So he presents us With the reality Of a wicked world But he also Speaks to us About how we can Learn to work Wisely In that reality So let's move there Let's think about Learning to work Wisely And again To recognise The time That we find Ourselves in Because these Last two years For the first time In a long time I suppose Have disrupted All of our Normal work Practices Now most of us Will find That we have A new relation

To our office Spaces To our colleagues And to our homes Because of Hybrid working Many of the Places where we Work will be Dealing with Ongoing human Resource issues Because of Pandemic And perhaps These last two Years The effect of that In part has been To change our View of working To change our Understanding of Our role And how to Perform that role Or even Why to bother And then You put on top Of that What we've been Watching in the Last two weeks As we've watched This horror Unfold And it's been Both distressing And distracting Perhaps we find Ourselves just Throwing our hands At what is Happening Why bother With my Little piece of Work In light of What's going On in The world Well Into that Reality Speaks our Teacher And in this Text we can

Identify four Pieces of Wisdom To help us To walk and Work wisely In our Present times For us as Christians to Know how to Work wisely Under God In light of The times we Find ourselves In The first Piece of Wisdom We find in Verse 17 Take heart God is Just What does the Teacher do When he sees Wickedness When there Should be Justice I said To myself God will Bring into Judgment Both the Righteous And the Wicked For there Will be a Time for Every activity A time to Judge Every deed When we Think about War When we Think about Injustice Whether that's On a global Scale or a Personal scale What we Find ourselves Longing for Is a

Strongman Someone who Can come And right Those wrongs Someone who Is going to Come and Deal with The evil And you Know the Bible reminds Us over And over Again this Strongman Is coming And his Name is Jesus Acts 17 Verse 31 For God Has set a Day when he Will judge The world With justice By the Man he Has appointed He has Given proof Of this To everyone By raising Him from The dead Jesus The risen From the Dead Savior Is the Judge Who will Bring Justice To the Earth There is A promise In the Bible That the Judge Of all The Earth Will Do Right Injustice And evil Will give Way And will Be Answered For But That good That justice May not win

[31 : 23] In our Lifetime And that's A hard Reality But it Will win In the End At the Return Of the Lord Jesus And that's The hope That we Need To hold On to Of course That presents A challenge Why is there Not justice Now Why is Justice The justice Of God Not Immediate And the Bible has Some responses To that While obviously There's an Element of Mystery there Also We can think About the Patience Of God The Bible Speaks About God's Patience In holding Back mercy In order To give Us a Chance To repent That God Doesn't judge Sin instantly Is grace For us Because we Too Would Deserve Judgment That we Have an Opportunity To turn And find Salvation Is a Gift Of God That flows From his Mercy And his Patience Another Partial Answer To why

Justice Isn't Now Is God's Providence We can Trust in God's Providence We're Thinking about This Tonight We Trust in A God Who is Able To bring Good From Evil And you Know that's Even been The testimony From the Church in Ukraine That they're Struggling To keep up With the Demand For Bibles The People That Previously Had no Spiritual Interest Are now Asking Lots Of Questions About Jesus And Beginning To Pray And The Church Is Finding Strength And People Are Being Saved Even In A War Zone What Is Evil But God Is Able To Bring Saving Good Where Do We See That Most Clearly We See It Most Clearly At The Cross Wicked Men Nailed Jesus To The Cross But That Was God's Design That We Would Have A Savior Why Doesn't God Bring Justice Now We Need To Trust In God's Perspective Sometimes We Need To Just Have Humility And Understand That God Sets

The Time Including The Time For Justice And We Need To Wait With Hope And Trust But To To To To Work We We Work Wisely We Work Quietly Remembering God Is On His Throne So We Find Trust In The Middle Of Our Fears Next Piece Of Wisdom Take Care Don't Just Be An Animal Verses 18 To 21 Begin As For Humans God Tests Them So That They May See That They Are Like The Animals And The Point There Is About That Shared Destiny That We All Have We Share The Fate Of The Animals Verse 19 Surely The Fate Of Human Beings Is Like The Fate Of Animals As One Dies So Dies The Other All Come From Dust And To Dust All Return

How Do We Live In The Light Of Our Death Sadly Some People Respond By Beastly Activity Think About What We Just Been Talking About Wickedness Oppression Living Rooted Out Of Envy We're Not To Become Beastly In The Way That We Treat One Another We're Not To Forget Even Although We Share The Same Destiny We Shouldn't Forget That As Image Bearers Of God We Are Made To Know God And We Are Made With Eternal Hope The Teacher Asks The Question In Verse 21 Who Knows If The Human Spirit Rises Upward And If The Spirit Of The Animal Goes Down Into The Earth Who Knows Us Living On This Side Of The Resurrection Of Jesus We Know Believers

In The Lord Jesus We Know That We Are Better Off Than The Animals Because We Have Eternal Hope Verse 22 Who Can Bring Them To See What Will Happen After Them That There's That Question What Happens After This We Know Our Perspective Is So Much Clearer Than Our Teacher Here Because We Are Living After The Death And Resurrection Of The Lord Jesus Our Eternity Is Different Why Because Jesus Said To His Followers I'm Going Back To My Father And I'm Preparing A Home For You And I'm Going To Come Back And Take You To Be With Me That You May Be With Me In A World Of Perfect Love Forever How Do We Know That Eternal Future Is Different We Can Think About What Jesus Said To The Thief Down Beside Him On The Cross Who Turned To Put His Trust In Jesus Today You'll Be With Me Not

[36 : 24] In The Dust But In Paradise We Know Because Of The Words Of Jesus And We Know Because Of The Resurrection Of Jesus That If Our Faith Is In Him Our Hope Is Better Our Future Is Better Than Simply Dust To Dust Like The Animals So Wisdom Takes A Long Term View Of God's Justice And Our Eternal Destiny And That Shapes Then Our Approach To Life And To Work There Is Meaning And There Is Purpose To Our Lives But If Those Are The Long Term Pieces Of Advice There's More Immediate Advice In Our Text As Well Chapter 3 Verse 22 Where We're Told Take Joy In The Gift Of Work Now We've Heard This Before But We Need To Hear It Again

So I Saw That There Is Nothing Better For A Person Than To Enjoy Their Work Because That Is Their Lot There Is A Quote You May Have Heard That's Attributed To Martin Luther The Reformer That Goes Like This Even If I Knew That Tomorrow The World Would Go To Pieces I Would Still Plant My Apple Tree Death Is Real So Are Apple Trees So Is The Joy Of Work So Is The Reality Of God's Everyday Grace And Kindness To Us And So Once Again We Hear This Call From Our Teacher To Enjoy Our Work As A Gift From God To Do With Our Time What God Values With Our Time To Enjoy Our Lot In Life As God's Gift To Us Not Trying To Take From Our Work More Than It Was Ever Designed

To Give To Us Not Looking For Ultimate identity And Significance And Purpose In Our Work But Enjoying It As A Today How Do I Have A Chance In My Workplace To Represent God And His Values Today How Has God In His Kindness Allowed Me To Use His Gifts In This Place Among These People It's A Call To Be And To Pursue Thankfulness But To Do That

Within That Context Of Recognizing The Day Of Death Is Always Approaching So That We Don't Start Chasing After Our Ultimate Purpose In Work That Comes To An End Rather We Find Our Hope And Purpose And Identity In The Lord Jesus Last Piece Of Advice Related To Work Verses 5 And 6 Of Chapter 4 Take One Handful Practice Contentment There Are Three Approaches To Work In A Wicked World That Are Laid Out In These Verses The First Is That Of The Fool With The Folded Hands Fools Fold Their Hands And Ruin Themselves It's A Picture Of Laziness It's A Picture Of Opting Out Of Work In Which Case Resources Will Drain Away That's Why Paul Said To The Church In Thessalonica Settle Down And Earn Food To

Eat And So That's One Way To Approach Work In A Wicked World Simply To Opt Out And To Fold Our Hands The Other Is That Of The Cupped Hands Better One Handful With Tranquility Than Two Handfuls With Toil And Chasing After The Wind It's A Picture Of Someone Grabbing For All That They Can Get From Work It's Toil Toil Toil Nothing But Work But It's Shepherding The Wind In The End The Problem Of The Folded Hands The Problem Of The Cupped Hands Looking To Grab Everything Is That Both In Different Ways Are Self Centred God And Others Are Not In View In This Picture So What's The Better Way Verse Six Better One Handful With Tranquility Here Is Work As Quiet

[41 : 25] Contentment Here Is A Picture Of A Person With A Good Work Life Balance Here Is A Person Who Is Accepting Work As God's Gift As Paul Said Again To The Thessalonians As He Was Talking To Them About Loving God And Loving Each Other Make It Your Ambition To Lead A Quiet Life To Mind Your Business And Work With Your Practice Contentment In The Work That We Have Been Given Now We Could Finish There But I Want Us To Do One More Thing In Light Of The Reality Of A Wicked World To Remind Ourselves Once Again To Trust In The Work Of Jesus Here We Are Again The Writer To The Ecclesiastes He's He's Making Us Confront The Reality Of Ongoing Oppression Our

Destiny Of Dust To Dust The Tears That We Experience In Our Toils Why does God have It in The Bible And it's Our Flow Of Redemption Surely It's So We Look To Jesus For Hope Beyond The Son Surely It's That We Would Place Our Hope In The Work Of Jesus What Was The Work Of Jesus His Work Was To Do His Father's Will His Work Was To Bring In The Kingdom Of God The Great Achievement Of His Work Was Bringing Salvation From Judgment Salvation From The Wrath Of God By His Death For Us As A Substitute We Cannot End Wickedness In The World And We Cannot Deal With The Wickedness In Our Own Hearts But Jesus Can And Jesus Did There

On The Cross And We Are Invited To Trust In His Finished Work In Order To Find Forgiveness From Our Sin In Order To Find An End To That Guilt And Condemnation That We Experience And To Know Freedom And Eternal Life We're Invited To Think About Jesus Resurrection As That Guarantee For Us That For The Believer Death Is Not And Will Not Be Emptiness Rather It's A Gateway To Fullness Of Life It's Our Entry To A Life Of Love And Joy For All Eternity We're Invited To Remember That Jesus Work Is Still Not Completed That Jesus Will Return One Day And He Will Deal With Every Injustice

He Will He Will Judge The Living And The Dead And He Will Take His People Home When The Work Of Salvation Is Completed As Much As Some Of Us Enjoy And Love Our Work Ultimately Is It His Work The Work Of Jesus That Provides Our Deep And Abiding Joy Let's Pray Briefly Lord Our God This Ancient Book Pictures For Us Ongoing Realities Of Wickedness And Oppression And Injustice Of Envy Lord We See That Same Brokenness And So Often We Feel Powerless God Of Perfect Justice

That We Be Able To Enjoy Our Work As A Gift And That We Learn To Be Content With What We Have But That We Would Also Have A Great Eternal Hope Because We Are Trusting In The Perfect Completed Work Of Jesus In His Achieving Salvation For Us Through His Death On The Cross May He Be Our Hope And Our Center We Pray In Jesus Name Amen Now We're Going To Sing A Couple Of Songs As We Finish First Of We're Going To Sing A Section Of Psalm 49 Which We'll See Returns Us To Some Of The Theme Of Ecclesiastes 3 And Then We Will Sing The Hymn I Stand Amazed In The Presence To Remind Us Of The Gospel Work

[46 : 30] Of Jesus So Let's Stand Together And Sing