

Gathering, Collecting, Striving After Wind

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[0 : 00] Well, you'll find today's scripture beginning in Ecclesiastes chapter 1, verse 12. Now, if you're using a Bible that one of our ushers handed to you, if you don't have a Bible, we'd be happy to provide one for you.

Does anyone here not have a Bible? If you don't, raise your hand right now, please. And we've got a thing. Jerry in the back will be happy to help provide you with a Bible. If you're using one of those Bibles that we've handed to you, Ecclesiastes chapter 1, verse 12 is on page 553.

And today's scripture is going to begin with the words of a man who says in verse 12, I, the preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. He refers to himself as what the English Standard Version translates as the preacher.

And Jonathan explained briefly last week, it's really difficult to know exactly how to translate that into English. Some translations use the word teacher. The Hebrew word is Kohelet. And that simply means one who assembles people together.

And so I was thinking this week, you know, how do we describe this person? How do we describe this person in our North American culture in the 21st century? How can we use a word that makes sense to us?

[1 : 16] Because I don't want to have to constantly refer to the guy as one who assembles people together over and over and over again throughout the sermon. So it occurred to me that there is actually sort of a modern parallel to this individual who refers to himself as Kohelet.

Basically, the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, in this book, the speaker is really delivering what we might today refer to as a TED talk. A TED talk.

If you're on the internet very much, you've probably seen a TED talk at some point. If not, if you haven't seen one, that's okay. It's something that's pretty straightforward. All it is, it's professional speech that lasts 18 minutes or less.

It's usually delivered with a slideshow, some other visual aid. And the speaker of this TED talk uses a personal story, uses anecdotes, uses really polished rhetorical techniques to communicate to you and to me, to communicate to his or her audience some sort of innovative idea, some sort of breakthrough.

The tagline for TED talks is ideas worth spreading. Ideas worth spreading. And I realized this week that Ecclesiastes is basically that. It's a TED talk.

[2 : 30] But it's a really surprising twist on a TED talk. Because most of these are about ideas, they're about technology, they're about these things, these advances that hold the promise of changing your attitude, of improving your life, of transforming the world that we live in.

So for example, I went to the TED website on Friday and I was like, well, let's see what the latest TED talks are all about. And so the newest talks right now are titled, How Better Tech Could Protect Us From Distraction.

I find that a little bit hard to believe, but apparently this presenter thinks so. Second, the birth of virtual reality as an art form. Well, that sounds really creative and interesting.

Maybe someday we can all be sitting here and looking at our VR goggles, and I'll just look out at everybody looking at their VR goggles, and that'll be really great. You don't even have to look at me directly. Three reasons why we can win the fight against poverty.

Well, that sounds encouraging. That sounds inspiring. The secret to effective non-violent resistance. Well, I would like to know what that secret is. Everyone wants to know the secret. And then my personal favorite.

[3 : 39] This scientist makes ears out of apples. Now, imagine that you're at a TED conference. I know they've held them in Vancouver.

I think they held one in Whistler recently. And you've got all these talks by all these dynamic and interesting speakers. And each one of these speakers is promising that their idea can bring real, lasting transformation, real, lasting progress to you and to all of humanity.

And so by the end of the day, you've listened to all this, and man, you're excited. This was a really great experience. You're filled with hope. You signed yourself up for like 500 mailing lists. You know, you're looking forward to all the emails you're getting about how all these human organs can be manufactured from supermarket produce.

And you're sitting in this packed auditorium, and you're looking on the schedule, and you see there's one final speaker. And this speaker's name is simply listed as Son of David, King in Jerusalem.

And so this speaker gets up on stage, and he begins by reciting a poem. That's his sort of introduction. And it's a beautiful poem, but it's actually very depressing. It's the one we heard last week from Ecclesiastes 1, verse 11.

[4 : 51] It's this poem about the weariness of life, how we're trapped in a world in which, contrary to what all the other speakers have said, progress is not possible.

There is no lasting gain from all of our hard work, all of our toil. And now the audience, at this point, starts to grow quiet, starts to grow a little bit nervous. And they're waiting for the speaker to bring us the twist, to offer his solution, to reaffirm, you know, all this excitement, all this energy that these speakers before have offered.

They're waiting for this speaker's promise and hope. And so you can follow along in your Bible to see what the speaker does next. In Ecclesiastes 1, verse 12, he continues, I, the preacher, have been king over Israel and Jerusalem.

And I applied my heart to seek out and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.

I have seen everything that is done under the sun and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. What is crooked cannot be made straight and what is lacking cannot be counted.

[6 : 10] And it's at this point in the talk that you realize there is not going to be a twist. There are no easy solutions. There are no grand ideas. There are no marvelous innovations that the speaker is here to promote.

Instead, the speaker is only going to assure his audience, he's only going to assure you and me, that everything that is done under the sun, and by that he means all of human activity, all of human effort, all of human progress, everything that is done under the sun is vanity and a striving after wind.

It is literally a vapor, a mist, something that seems to have substance. But in fact, cannot be grasped, cannot be preserved, is fated to evaporate without a trace, and only serves to block our view of the world.

All human activity, all human effort, all human progress, is striving after wind. It is a futile chase after something that you can't even hold on to.

Something that you cannot catch, even if you could catch it, will simply elude your grasp.

Something that is going to inevitably to be taken away from you. And the speaker tells you and me in verse 13, it is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.

[7 : 36] In other words, the reason that all that we love, the reason that all that we work for is fleeting and is futile is because God has set it up to be this way. God has actually set it up to be this way.

Now, if you're familiar with the Bible, if you spent a number of years studying the Bible, your mind might recall the words that God spoke to the first man, Adam, in Genesis chapter 3.

Because when Adam rejected God's wisdom about what is good and right for a human being to do, when Adam chose to usurp God's wise authority over him, God told this first man, cursed is the ground because of you.

In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you. And you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground.

For out of it you were taken. For you are dust. And to dust you shall return. So that now something that was good, the act of work that Adam had to do in the Garden of Eden, this work of simply mere survival takes an enormous amount of effort.

[8 : 51] What was once a good and productive task is now painful and unproductive. All human efforts will fail to recover the good life that we had in the Garden of Eden.

And everything is going to be nullified in the end by decay and death. And you and I will inevitably return to the ground to rot away in the dust.

And so the speaker warns his audience in verse 15 with a soundbite, with a proverb that what is crooked cannot be made straight.

The world we live in is not what it should be. It is corrupted. It is warped under the curse that God has given. In the book of Romans in chapter 8, the Apostle Paul is going to describe the creation as subjected to futility, in bondage to corruption.

The world is crooked. And so are its would-be saviors. So are you and me and all of the TED speakers who came before this man.

[9 : 57] And the speaker adds in verse 15 that what is lacking cannot be counted. The fall from grace, this loss of what we once had is beyond measure.

We do not have the resources, we do not have the ability to even comprehend what was lost, let alone to recover it. No amount of fundraising, no amount of willpower, no amount of education is going to be able to fix this world of ours in any lasting way.

We might be able to patch up a few things, but the patches wear off and fall away. And as you're listening to this talk, you realize, first of all, this is really discouraging, but second of all, this is the first speaker of the evening who is being truly honest.

This is the first speaker of the evening who is truly exposing the bedrock of despair on which our civilization is founded. The lives of all the people that you meet out there are founded on despair. They may not feel despairing, despairing. But if you dig down, if you drill down beneath all of their activity, all of their thinking, all their thoughts and ideas, at the very base of it all is despair.

[11 : 16] We are a busy people frantically casting about in search of the good life. And in the words of the speaker in chapter 2, verse 3, we are in search of what is good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life.

We're in search for that good life. And so the speaker is about to demonstrate through his own experience that the good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight. The good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight.

He continues in chapter 1, verse 16. I said in my heart, I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind, for in much wisdom is much vexation.

And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow. Now in the ancient Near East, we have to remember it was a very different world from our own.

[12 : 25] The common man, the common person, was really not in a position to do a lot of profound thinking. Only the royalty, only the people with the education, with the resources, with the time to explore those kinds of questions, they were the only ones who could do this kind of thinking.

Now in our culture, we're all basically rich. We are the 1% of the world. We have the time. We have the energy to ask, to explore these kinds of questions. And so the speaker is telling us that of all the people who can explore these questions, he has the credentials to do it.

He is the one most qualified to deliver this TED Talk. He has the ability, the resources, and he has made the effort necessary to arrive at his ideas worth spreading.

So, what he does is he tells his audience a story. And he tells them a story of a grand experiment that he conducted. An experiment that crossed many years of work.

This is a three-part experiment that's meant to explore every possible way of living. To experience the breadth of human potential. To experience all that a human being, every type of experience a human being could have.

[13 : 36] And so he tells us in verse 17, I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. He's the man wise enough to do this. And he tells us up front how he benefited from it.

This also is but a striving after wind. So in other words, this experiment gained him nothing at all. I mean, this is starting to shape up almost to be the worst TED Talk ever.

He said, I went and explored and studied this carefully and my result is I gained nothing at all from this. Just so you know. There is nothing to be gained from all this gathering and collecting of this

data.

The good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight. And he explains why this is by giving us this second soundbite proverb in verse 18. For in much wisdom is much vexation and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

So in other words, he did gain insight into the world. But all this insight did was make him more frustrated than ever.

[14 : 45] He went to a great deal of effort with no grand ideas, no innovations to show for it in the end. He only saw more clearly than ever the enigma, the futility of life under the sun.

And what this tells us is that our secularized culture in order to maintain a semblance of life, in order to bury the despair, our secularized culture demands that we not dig too deeply.

That we not examine the foundations of our hopes and our dreams and our loves and efforts.

Because if what we do is we dig down to the foundation, if we drill down deep, we're only going to encounter frustration, we're only going to encounter despair, we're only going to encounter sorrow at the very bottom.

And so we actually train one another and we train our children not to think too deeply about life. I was talking with our youth this week about the experience of high school graduation, how every high school graduation ceremony ceremony I've been to, they're all the same.

All the speeches sound very much the same. We tell our children that anything is possible if they believe in themselves. We tell our children that they will do great things if they can dream big dreams.

[16 : 12] We tell our children that the world is their oyster. We promise them the good life. We encourage them to continue gathering, collecting, striving after wind. And everyone, and here's the thing, everyone in the high school auditorium plays along.

We pretend that we don't see the elephant in the room. And we all know deep down that all of these cotton candy cliches won't be able to endure even ten seconds of serious thought.

They won't even be able to endure ten words of scrutiny from our speaker because he is about to tell us the results of his threefold experiment. He's going to examine whether the good life can be gained by human effort or insight.

And he tells us about his first experiment in chapter 2, verse 1. So this first experiment is an experiment in wealth. And what the speaker does is he amasses a wealth, two kinds of wealth. He amasses a wealth of pleasure and he amasses a wealth of possessions. And he's going to do this to see if this is the good life. To see if this is going to bring any lasting good.

[17 : 23] And he tells us this in chapter 2, verse 1. I said in my heart, come now, I will test you with pleasure, enjoy yourself. But behold, this also was vanity.

I said of laughter, it is mad, and of pleasure, what use is it? I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine, my heart still guiding me with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life.

I made great works, I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. I made myself gardens and parks and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. I made myself pools from which to water the forests of growing trees.

I bought male and female slaves and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces.

I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the children of man. So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem.

[18 : 33] Also, my wisdom remained with me. And whatever my eyes desired, I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it. And behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

So our speaker began his experiment with this wealth of pleasure. He almost immediately, right off the bat, shoots down one possible form of pleasure.

He dismisses the potential, the lasting gain, from being a joker or a comedian in verse 2. He says, it is mad. You know, most of us know at least one person who is always trying to be the clown, always trying to be funny.

Forever choosing to take nothing at all seriously. People like that are exasperating, aren't they? It's just exasperating. You're like, okay, that was funny, but come on, can we get serious now?

[19 : 47] Like, this is a serious deal. Our speaker tells us that people like that who only know how to live a life of clownish comedy, they're delusional.

look no further than the mental health of prominent comedians. How many prominent comedians have suffered from depression, have committed suicide?

They can't sustain their life of levity. And neither does the pleasure seeker, neither does the pleasure seeker have anything good to show for all his pleasure. The speaker talks about pleasure in verse 3.

What use is it? What does it accomplish other than itself? If the speaker were to live in Squamish, he would watch the activities of the people in Squamish.

He would watch all the mountain bikers, all the kiteboarders, all the rock climbers, all the trail runners, and he would watch them as they're seeking, running from one thrill to the next. And he would say, what is all of that accomplishing?

[20 : 56] Why are you living your life dedicated to those pursuits, the self-absorption of a life that lives for nothing more than the adrenaline rush?

You would see junkies craving just one more, sinking enormous amounts of money into their pleasures, with nothing to show for it in the end but rusting equipment, endless surgeries, and insufferable tales about the good old days when they were younger and in the prime of their life and they could do all this stuff.

That's the future that awaits you if that is your life, if you think that's what the good life is. There is no lasting gain, and it accomplishes nothing in the end.

In verse 3, the speaker tries out wine and folly. So basically, he tries out the party life, throws wild parties, living the life of a rock star.

And he has to remind us through this all, first of all, my heart was still guiding me with wisdom. So in other words, he hasn't just completely lost it. He hasn't gone out of control. He hasn't drowned himself in these pleasures.

[22 : 06] This is all part of his experiment. And he continues his rock star life by acquiring not only experiences, not only pleasure, but also possessions. Beginning in verse 4, he builds beautiful houses and landscapes.

He plants a garden paradise, much like the Garden of Eden. He's filling it with fruit trees irrigated by pools of water, amassing animals and gold. He's filling his Eden with people that he has acquired who can please him with the pleasures of songs and sex.

And so having experienced this wealth of pleasures and this wealth of possessions in this paradise of his own that he's constructed, having acquired all the experiences and all the stuff he could ever want, the speaker tells us the result of his first experiment in verse 11.

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it. And behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

Because the stuff had been real, the pleasure had been genuine, but in the end there was nothing to show for it. It was vanity. It evaporated away. All of his efforts were striving after wind.

[23 : 24] There was no lasting significance to any of it. There was nothing to be gained under the sun. Verse 12, the speaker tells his audience, what can the man do who comes after the king?

Only what has already been done. And so the idea there is his first experiment has covered the full spectrum of wealth. It has covered the wealth of pleasure. It has covered the wealth of possessions and it has found them lacking.

No stone has been left unturned and no one can do more than he has done to explore this wealth. And so he's going to move on. He's going to continue his threefold experiment by moving on to experiment number two.

And the second experiment is wisdom. Beginning in verse 12, the speaker tells us, So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly.

For what can the man do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done. Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness.

[24 : 28] The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet, I perceived that the same event happens to all of them.

Then I said in my heart, What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise? And I said in my heart that this also is vanity.

For of the wise, as of the fool, there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool.

So I hated life. Because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind. The second experiment, it looks promising initially, because our speaker, he sees that wisdom has its advantages.

Just as pleasure has its advantages and possessions have their advantages, so does wisdom. Clear thinking, healthy living, wise decision making, they often do lead us down a better path.

[25 : 38] They do. They help us avoid painful obstacles. They often help us avoid dangerous paths in life. They help us to avoid suffering. As the speaker's proverb says in verse 14, the wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness.

So wisdom's a good thing. But, there are no guarantees. In verse 15, the speaker reminds his audience of the real world.

The reality is that every one of us, everyone in this room, has observed something that we wish we hadn't.

I perceive that the same event happens to all of them. We've seen situations where wisdom didn't really work out for people. One man smokes a pack a day and lives to be 90 years old.

Another man never touches a cigarette and dies of lung cancer in his 50s. One woman eats nothing but kale salads and quinoa, all organic and locally grown, and she still suffers from weight gain and bowel diseases.

[26 : 48] Another woman eats nothing but pizza and Pringles, and she preserves her Barbie doll-like figure. She's a picture of intestinal health. I don't want to take a picture of intestinal health, by the way.

You know, you have one family who's budgeting and planning their finances carefully, but due to unforeseen circumstances, due to emergencies that they could not possibly have predicted, they still fall into debt and to bankruptcy.

Another family just happens to be at the right place at the right time, even though they've got very poor money management. They still manage to score a windfall of wealth.

They happen to have their stocks in the right place. They happen to have a house and property that shot up in value that they could sell. Our speaker's reminding us that life is a little bit like a board game in this way.

It's like a game of Monopoly. It's like Risk, like Settlers of Catan. It's to your advantage to have a wise strategy to start out with. That's a good thing. All the good players have that, but the reality is the role of the dice determines so much.

[27 : 59] The role of the dice is probably going to undo all of your plans. Life can be, it can be like this incredibly infuriating video game in which you've got two players.

One of them has studied and played the game and has developed their reflexes and they know all the strategies and the other guy just mashes the buttons on the controllers and that guy wins. I've played games like that.

They're infuriating. And in the end, the game ends and everything is lost. You can't save anything. Death undoes all of the gain.

Death erases all of the glory so there is no enduring remembrance. Death is the one final event that happens to all of them. Death is the great equalizer that neutralizes and negates all wise living.

So the speaker tells us in verse 17, I hated life. I like his honesty. There has to be room in our church to listen to people who are so frustrated with life that they can actually say, I hated life and we listen to them and say, tell me more.

[29 : 12] What's frustrating you? What's frustrating the speaker is his experiment and wisdom is only exposing the futility of wisdom. It's only exposing the fleeting value of human effort.

It's only exposing the hopelessness of striving after wind. And it remains the case that the good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight.

So the speaker's three-fold experiment has exposed the vanity of wealth and the vanity of wisdom, the futility of it all, the fleeting nature of it all. And so he's got one more experiment left.

For his third and final experiment, he's going to turn to work, to the achievements of a fulfilling career. Verse 18, he tells us this, I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must

leave it to the man who will come after me.

And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity.

[30 : 19] So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun. Because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it.

This also is vanity and a great evil. What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow and his work is a vexation.

Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity. So first of all the speaker warns his audience against thinking well I've got this job and I've got this career and I'm raising money and gathering possessions so that I can leave all this to my kids and my grandkids.

I'm going to set them up for a great future. Because he laments in verse 18. I must leave it to the man who will come after me and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool.

Now his audience is going to immediately think of Solomon. Solomon. King of Israel. In 1 Kings chapter 12 and chapter 14 if you'd like to do a little extra reading this afternoon read 1 Kings chapters 12 and 14 because what you're going to find is that all of Solomon's wealth and all of his empire were squandered by his foolish son Rehoboam.

[31 : 39] Solomon's death even though Solomon was the greatest the most glorious of Israelite kings his death nullified the value. His death nullified all of the validation he could have received from his hard work and his wisdom.

Rehoboam was the classic spoiled rich kid. He felt entitled to his unearned advantage. In verse 21 the speaker says sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it.

This also is vanity and a great evil. sometimes you've got a hard working mother or father who experiences nothing good from their wisdom or work.

They're just killing themselves at their job. They've had to scrap for every penny. They're trying to set their children up for a better future and they do but their children take it all for granted.

they enjoy the advantage that they were born into that they have from no doing of their own. And all they do is contribute to injustice by looking down their nose at their peers who are less privileged by failing to show a sensitivity to the poor and to those who were not born into their circumstances.

[33 : 02] And so for the hard worker the speaker tells us this his days are full of sorrow and his work is a vexation even in the night his heart does not rest.

He experiences sorrow and frustration during the day the stress is overwhelming the pressure is too much. He lies awake at night his mind is racing with plans and fears and failure.

And in the end all of his work and all of his effort evaporates away. the world moves on without him. And as with wealth and with wisdom so it is with work the good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight.

And so our speaker is wrapping up his threefold experiment and so in verse 24 he tells the audience his conclusion. 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 for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment 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.

[34 : 18] This also is vanity and a striving after wind. And so the speaker here confirms that the good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

There is no further to be no further gain to be had from wealth wisdom and work. There is nothing to show for it in the end. So instead he tells us the good life is received from the hand of God.

The good life is received from the hand of God. It is God who gives wisdom and knowledge and joy. Ian Proven who wrote a commentary on Ecclesiastes he explains this.

The good life consists in viewing food, drink and work as gifts from God and receiving them as such with God the giver at the center of things and the striving self displaced moved out of the center.

There is now the possibility not only of wisdom and knowledge but also of joy. What is the good life? The good life is to experience in some small way the world that is lost.

[35 : 27] To remember the life that we've had in Eden. To embrace what God originally gave us to do. In Genesis chapter 2 we would read this. The Lord God took the man took Adam and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.

And the Lord God commanded the man saying you may surely eat of every tree of the garden. This working and eating. This simple act of dependence eating and drinking trusting God to provide for us enjoying what he has given us not expecting it not expecting the good things we have to offer us any lasting value.

What this does is this draws us closer to the man that the speaker calls the one who pleases God. The one whom God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy. the one whom all things are given. Maybe this is why Jesus of Nazareth used the language of eating and drinking when he invited us to the good life. Jesus of Nazareth has invited us to a good life to a life of dependence on him. He says in John chapter 6 whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day. for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.

[36 : 47] Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him. As the living father sent me and I live because of the father so whoever feeds on me he also will live because of me.

and that is the good life. To the rest of human civilization to all of the kingdoms of this world to all of the people who have turned away from God into our living gathering, collecting, striving after wind God has given the business of gathering and collecting in order that Jesus Christ his dearly loved son who pleases him in order that Jesus is going to get it all in the end.

He will receive all things. God the father created this world as a gift to his son. As his inheritance Jesus is the man who receives the good life from the father and Jesus invites us to believe in him to trust him to trust all that he has done for us so that we too can share this inheritance so that we too can receive the good life from the hand of God.

The good life cannot be gained from any human effort or insight. The good life is received from the hand of God through his son our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's give thanks to God for the life he's given us our God and our Father.