

FIFTY YEARS OF LABOR

“Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have labored...”

--Ecclesiastes 2:18

On April fool’s day of this year I reached fifty years of age. I was, I’m told, born a fool, into a world of fools, in a nation bent on foolishness. It would appear things have gone downhill ever since.

The book of Ecclesiastes is an overview of the common life of man. It is a lament of the futility of our suffering and the vanity of imagined gain.

“All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled. For what hath the wise more than the fool?... Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?” --Ecc 6

So often men find themselves in the mindset of Solomon. We toil away our lives building, working, preparing, laying up... To what end? We let our imaginations run away with us. Our motives are always magnanimous! Our children will praise us, and their children too! We’ll leave such a legacy, and our gravestone will be visited for generations...

Well, all but the meek among us... Those who understand that we can’t please God *and* man, and who strive for the goal to one day stand before our King and hear those lovely words, “*well done thou good and faithful [servant](#).*”

But the Psalmist also observed, “*Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.*” In the view of all creation, our lives are very short, and our purpose very small. And of all the vast souls born upon the earth, the great “Many” live out their days on the broad road to destruction, seemingly never aware of the consequences thereat... “*Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*” (Matt 7:14).

The Few are left to wander—and wonder why it should be so? Why can’t a man who *believes* in God’s righteousness have the power to *do* right! If there are those who block the Narrow Path, why shouldn’t they be removed? How long must things continue this way? Where is the fruit of our collective labor?

As the saying goes, “It’s good to be king”. From the moment he took the throne, Solomon knew his purpose, and it was to build a literal, physical kingdom—it was to be the most prosperous, peaceful, and, he hoped, the most lasting. Perhaps, he thought, it would have no end. And from the start, he would have no doubt declared it was to be the Kingdom of Yahweh. In [Second Chronicles](#) we can read of his remarkable and beautiful prayer in the beginning of his reign at the dedication of the Temple. His heart then, it would appear, was fully the Lord’s.

But time and circumstance had their way with him—as it does with all men. And alas, in the end, he’d found the kingdom he’d built was but his own. His lament was in discovering the

vanity of that...the utter *futility* of finally realizing the fruits of all his endeavors only really served himself—and his coat-tail riders, and since we all came into the world naked, “*and naked we shall depart,*” we leave all of our personal kingdom to “the man that should be after me”...and sadly, most often it is a fool.

What is the purpose of our labors then? How many of us have truly considered that? What are we doing here, day by day—and why? The answer to that is the reason for your existence. And understanding that purpose can elicit either love or hate. The works of man—his legacy—will be known finally, I believe, in the final days or moments before his death. How many of us will “hate our labors” in that hour?

In our hearts, we know our motivations if we would be honest with ourselves. Whom do we truly want to please? Are we building up ourselves and our mini-empires, or are we *dying daily*? Are we seeking to increase, or must we, as John the Baptist declared, “**decrease**, that *HE may increase*” ...

But, and if, we labor for the Kingdom of God, what should be the reward for our obedience?

In Luke 17, Christ told his disciples a parable:

*“Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come immediately and sit down to eat’? But will he not say to him, ‘Prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink’? He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, ‘**We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.**’”*

We sometimes fail to see that passage for what it is—as an *instruction* to us.

But did you notice that Christ calls us *slaves*? Ah, but some translations render it “servant”, and it seems more innocuous that way. But the word is *doulos*, derived from the Greek root, “to tie, bind, capture”, and it quite literally means *slave*. A ‘servant’ brings to mind a hired butler, an *attendant*—well esteemed, well compensated, and free to leave and hire on with another at his pleasure. But not so with a slave.

This does not sit well with modern churchianity, resulting in the God-ordained hierarchy of families, and ecclesia, and nations being torn down and replaced with ‘*Muh Freedom*’.

The churchmen have fomented a slave revolt. It began long before I was born, but since about 1970, it seems all the remaining citadels began to fall at once. The “old paths” were lost; the ramifications of which were the rapid devolution of our society and the present reality of our modern culture. Christianity’s neglect—nay open rejection of this position under God—has directly led to such evils as feminism, tolerance and universalism, egalitarianism, and the emasculation of men—destroying their natural roles of leadership... and finally to *statism, uber alles*. The last state being cleverly disguised as “We the People-ism.” It is confusion! And it is sin.

But whether or not the “People” consent to government in a secular State has hardly had any relevance...especially of late. Fools will be fools. The true rulers—the *powers*, making it up as they go, merely *declare* what is or isn’t ‘Constitutional,’ or ignore it altogether as they lay down

their diktats as to how—or *whether*—we freely move about, work, or live... And the “People” *do what they’re told*. As always—ever since they’ve rejected the Kingship of Christ, generations ago.

Thus are we witnessing in our day the nascence of *absolute and universal tyranny*. It is our just reward. And we haven’t seen anything yet...

“Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn slave? why is he spoiled?” (Jer 2:14)

Because we’ve despised the benevolent plantation of our King, we’ve thus inherited the malevolent enslavement of our conquerors. We’ve sown the wind...and what now comes?

If we can somehow relate to king Solomon in his final distress of knowing the utter loss of his life’s labors, we can perhaps understand the complete dissolution of a paradigm. As it occurs in a man, it occurs in a society. What have we worked for all these centuries? As Americans? As a nominal ‘Christian society’? As families? As individual believers? What fruits of our labor have we now? Have we really advanced the Kingdom of God, or have we built personal empires? Have we as believing fathers and mothers cloned ourselves in our children? Have we as men disciplined others who will come after us and carry the message of the Kingdom? Will they *live* it? Have we truly come out of the world and are we leading others thereby, or are we compromising with evil, *going along to get along*? If we KNOW the Truth, are we speaking it?

I speak as a fool. All of these I have personally failed at, and I’d venture to say all of us have to some degree as well. But if a good man falls down seven times, he must rise up eight. Our labor is only in vain if we fail to acknowledge our sin—individual and collective—and lack the courage to turn again and DO what Solomon may have given up on. I understand the feeling of wanting to quit and walk away from that responsibility. I know the loss of every bit of worth I once believed I’d earned, or the precise value of *nothing* as I should stand before my Creator and can only say, “I tried”... But a wise old troll in a movie far, far away once said, “there is no *try*... there is only *do, or do not*”.

So what is it we have done, really? And what have we not done? Can we still remedy that? I think we can. I believe Solomon hated his labor because it was ultimately self-serving, but more so, I believe he hated what it is man does collectively to satisfy his God-given drive to take dominion, but without God’s authority... We lead or follow others in false ways because we don’t understand what it means to *serve*, and simultaneously to *RULE* (Rev 5:10).

That fools will come after us is a certainty. But if we consistently follow the path that God has shown us—if we strive to always labor in HIS Words, and not our own, we can be confident that the generations to follow will learn and benefit from our labors, *eventually*. That even when we fall, if we stand again and continue the battle for God’s true Kingdom (knowing that in time it *will prevail*), if we believe that truth, and act on it, no matter the cost, we will forever be a permanent witness to the King’s Dominion, and a landmark to future sojourners, whomever they may be. Yahweh has formed us for such a time as this, and given us each purpose and commandment. Though we can’t know all the whys and the hows, we can *choose* to be faithful to our Master. He will accomplish the rest.

“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” This, Solomon had to learn the hard way. He’d built up a great house, but it was not lasting. We know the sordid story of

those who came after, and the trouble and destruction that followed. The book of Ecclesiastes is likely his attempt at reconciling this—or perhaps it was just his own reflections upon the vain lives of men and the nations they build absent of God’s ways. Here we find ourselves 3,000 years later and in similar circumstances, and yet we have a better example than he—we have a better witness... Jesus answered Solomon’s dilemma in one saying .. ***“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.”***

Had we merely heeded that principle, as a people, how different would our lives be!

As for this foolish nation of ours—this present world we were born into, Yahweh has been patient and merciful unto us, but the time for our persistent and willful ignorance must eventually come to an end. The time has come again to remember Moses’ song in [Deuteronomy 32](#):

“To me belongeth vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste...”

*And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel: And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, **which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.**”*

Though we may have failed as a nation to heed these words, and we may have failed individually, we can’t yet see the good that will come when we *are* faithful once again...

“For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.”

Once more I find myself drifting rearwards in my mind, having spent half a lifetime here muddling along, watching my efforts often fail, and wondering why it is He put us here. And I would despair like Solomon, had I not known the [joy of my salvation](#)... Remembering this: that “the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

...Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God. And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of Yahweh, and my God shall be my strength. (Isaiah 49)

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is **not** in vain in the Lord. (I Cor 15:58)*