

II. The Messages

A. Be Whole-Hearted for the Work God Gives

Ecclesiastes 9, key verse 9:1

1. Introductory note

"Whatever the Lord puts before your hand, do it," is my understanding of the key verse. It is to be done now because there is no opportunity to do it after we die...what is done for the Lord by us in the realm where we now live, is done while we live and not after. The concept of "whole-heartedness" is seen in Colossians 3 and many places in the Old and New Testament beside. But it is a concept that misses a lot of us for we are busy and easily sidetracked by a lot of things. The challenge is not for a lot of fleshly effort but for a commitment that gives ourselves wholly to what God puts before us.

2. Analyzing the Text

a. vss 1-3...the emphasis is on the fact that no matter who we are or what we do there is a limit to the scope of life...it ends. The thrust is much like Psalm 90...don't assume you are going to live in this world forever...learn to live like those who are serving here and will soon go to be with the Lord.

b. vss 4-6...an illustration to show that while one is living one may achieve something but this is the world of performance. That the "dead know not any thing (v. 5)" is not a denial of their place in heaven but that they are not participatory in this life. The term "know" is used in the same sense as when the Scripture speaks of a man as "knowing" his wife.

c. vss 7-10...show us that God has given us much and we should live in the light of His gifts. Appreciation for the Lord involves a commitment to what He has given.

d. vss 11-12...remind us of the unpredictability of life and the failure of "favorites" to always achieve their goals. The uncertainty should make us increasingly dependent on the Lord.