

THE END IS BETTER THAN THE BEGINNING

Introduction

1) **Ecclesiastes 7:8 – *The end of a thing is better than its beginning***

- a) A general statement of divine wisdom that is true in most instances
- 2) One of the six “better” things in this context (vv. 1-8)
- 3) There is a time to begin and a time to end (Eccl. 3:2), but here we are told that the end of a thing is generally better – why is this true and how does it apply to me?

I) **What Makes the End of a Thing Better Than Its Beginning?**

- A) The wisdom that comes with time, age, and experience (Job 12:12)
 - 1) Avoid the mistakes of youth and inexperience (Phil. 4:11-13)
 - 2) Become a source of wisdom and experience to help others (2 Tim. 3:10-11)
- B) The reaping of a good harvest of a planted crop (Ex. 23:16)
 - 1) True in physical harvests (Gen. 26:12-13)
 - 2) True in spiritual harvests (Prov. 11:18; Gal. 6:8)
- C) The completion of a job or task (Jn. 19:30; Lk. 2:49; Jn. 6:38; 17:4)
 - 1) Relief and reflection on what has been accomplished (Lk. 24:46-47)
 - 2) It is better to be patient and humble in finishing a work (Eccl. 7:8b; 1 Kgs. 20:11)

II) **A Faithful End of Life is Better than Its Beginning**

- A) The beginning of life is promising, but uncertain – roads to travel, choices to make, obstacles to contend with, mistakes to recover from
 - 1) A good start is helpful to having a good end (Prov. 22:6; Eccl. 12:1)
 - 2) A bad start can be turned into a good end (Heb. 11:31, 32)
- B) To arrive at the close of one’s life faithful to the Creator’s calling is a victorious end (Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10)
- C) Paul reflected on his faithful life as it neared its end (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
 - 1) *Fought the good fight* – confirming and defending the gospel (Phil. 1:7; 1 Tim. 1:18)
 - 2) *Ran the race* – enduring and pressing toward the goal (1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:14)
 - 3) *Kept the faith* – living and applying the truth (2 Tim. 1:13; 2:5, 15)
- D) Must avoid compromising or falling away from the truth before the end (2 Pet. 2:20-21)
 - 1) Becoming “again entangled” in sin makes for a worse end in eternity

III) **To Have a Better End to What I Have Begun, I should...**

- A) Not worry about the passing of time, but use my time with wisdom (Eph. 5:15-17)
- B) Not let grudges drag me down, but seek to be kind and forgiving (Eph. 4:32)
- C) Not give in to temptation, but be strong in the Lord and His might (Eph. 6:10)
- D) Not let the past hinder me, but press on toward the goal of Christ (Phil. 3:13-14)
- E) Not complain about things I cannot control, but be content in God (Heb. 13:5)
- F) Not be lost in worldly sorrows, but joyfully live in the hope of heaven (Rev. 21:4)

Conclusion

Will The End be Better Than the Beginning for You?

*Will the end of this year bring growth, wisdom, and greater spirituality in your life?

*Will your life have made a difference for good to those around you?

*Will you live as a faithful Christian prepared for eternal life?

Start that better end by obeying Christ today – hear, believe, repent of sin, confess Christ, be baptized for the remission of your sins, and then live faithful looking for Christ’s coming!