



TRINITY GRACE CHURCH

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 II Learning How to Live II Walt Alexander

“Why does the Lord bring his people together in affliction, except to bring them together in affection? Metals will unite in a furnace. If ever Christians unite, it should be in the furnace of affliction.”

Thomas Watson (143-144)

1. Death is better than birth. (v. 1-2)

Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them, So shall your offspring be. -
Genesis 15:5

“The day of death is better than the day of birth—not because death is better than life, but because a coffin preaches better sermons than a crib.” **David Gibson**

2. Sorrow is better than laughter. (v. 3-6)

Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it. **Psalms 141:5**

3. The end is better than the beginning. (v. 8-10)

“[In suffering] as nowhere else is the supreme challenge to suspend judgment.” **Os Guinness**

“There is always the urge to oversimplify, to weigh in at once with interpretations that cannot possibly cover all the data or stand up to close inspection. We know, for example, that time and time again in the history of the Christian church, the blood of martyrs has been its seed. So we are tempted to assume a simple equation here. Five men died. This will mean x-number of Waodani Christians.

“Perhaps so. Perhaps not. Cause and effect are in God's hands. Is it not the part of faith simply to let them rest there? God is God.

“For us widows the question as to why the men who had trusted God to be both shield and defender should be allowed to be speared to death was not one that could be smoothly or finally answered in 1956, nor yet silenced [later]. I believe with all my heart that God's Story has a happy ending. But not yet, not necessarily yet. It takes faith to hold on to that in the face of the great burden of experience, which seems to prove otherwise.” **Elizabeth Elliot**

4. Wisdom is best of all. (v. 11-14)