

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 25: June 24th, 2018

Topic: Vanity of vanity– Part 1

Bible Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:1-14

Vanity is anything that is worthless or useless. It can also be described as futility. Vanity is something that is meaningless or pointless, but mankind is pursuing vanities of this world as if “it is going out of fashion.” Today people everywhere in the world are practicing vanities in numerous and extreme ways instead of zealously doing the work of God.

Introduction

Hear this, all peoples; Listen carefully all inhabitants of the world, pay attention both low and high, rich and poor alike **Psalm 49:1-2**. “Vanity of vanities,” says the preacher; “vanity of vanities, all is vanity” **Ecclesiastes 1:2**. Whatever that is done without God’s guidance is a wisp of smoke. It is like a vapour that vanishes and it is like chasing the wind. Therefore, it is time to seek God so that your works will be fruitful and profitable, and you will be also rewarded in heaven.

Many people in the world prefer emptiness and vainglory instead of seeking the Lord God their Creator because Satan has blindfolded them spiritually. They have forgotten that “The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein” **Psalm 24:1**. Though, Satan is the ruler of this world and the whole world is under the sway of the wicked one **1 John 5:19**. But if you resist the influence and the control that the devil has over the inhabitants of the world, then he will depart from you according to the Bible passage which stated that “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you **James 4:7**. Henceforth, stop running after the vanities of this world and submit totally to God.

Most people in the world are pursuing vanities thereby having no time to pay attention to the commandments of the Lord or focus on the heavenly things that are beneficial to them. Are you among those who are displeasing God by

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

chasing the emptiness of this world? Are you so embroil in pursuing the futility of this world to the detriment of your gaining/inheriting the kingdom of God? Make amends today because you cannot serve two masters. says the scripture, you cannot serve God and vanities/mammon **Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:13**. We pray that today will be the turning point when you will terminate all the burning desires to chase meaningless things.

Though the vanities of this world may be lawful in your community, they may not be against the law of your country of residence, and they may be permitted in your society, but they may not be profitable or beneficial to your existence. The fact that the vanities are legitimate in your community does not mean that they are acceptable to the Lord or they can edify your Christianity faith **1 Corinthians 10:23**. Therefore, do away with lawful vanities that cannot help your spiritual life and growth. Do not forget that if the vanities are lawful and permissible in your area, you must neither be enslaved by them nor allow them to control your life. You must not give the lawful vanity the opportunity to bring you under its power or be addicted to it, else, you will miss the kingdom of God **1 Corinthians 6:12**. Therefore, make sure you are not influence or control by the vanities of this world that are not acceptable in the presence of God.

The people who count the glitterings of this world as precious things and hold the pleasures together with the lustful things as dear to their hearts must realize that **all the activities and everything that is going on under the Sun are vanity, except working or winning souls for the Lord. They are meaningless before God, and they are like chasing the wind, says the scripture Ecclesiastes 1:14**. Therefore, do not love the world of sin that opposes God and His precepts or cherish the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasures, a craving for everything we see and pride in our achievements and possessions**. All that is in the world are: the lust of the flesh and craving for sensual gratification. The lust of the eyes and greedy longings of the mind. The pride of life, assurance in one's resources and confidence in the stability of our earthly possessions, these do not come from Father but are from the world **1 John 2:15-16**. So, as sojourners and pilgrims in this world, abstain from the sensual urges, the passions of the flesh,

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

the evil and dishonourable desires that wage war against the soul **1 Peter 2:11**. Do not forget that the world is passing away with its lusts and the shameful pursuits (vanities). Whether we like or not this world will pass away along with its forbidden cravings and ungodly longings, but anyone who does the will of God and carries out His purposes in his/her life will abide forever **1 John 2:17**. If you want to live eternally, forsake the vanities of this world and start doing what pleases God.

The Glorious Garment

In the beginning God created Adam and Eve, the scripture says “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” **Genesis 2:25**. They were not ashamed because they were clothed with invisible glorious garments, whenever they look at themselves they will see the garments on their bodies until when they disobeyed the Lord which prompted the glorious garments to vanish from their bodies. “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings” **Genesis 3:7**. Countless people in the world today are naked spiritually and they have lost their invisible spiritual garments. These people still think that they are on the righteous path whereas they are on the spiritual path of destruction. Satan has blindfolded them, so their eyes were not opened to see that they are spiritually naked due to:

- Disobedience **Colossians 3:6**.
- Worshipping and serving the creatures rather than the Creator **Romans 1:25**.
- Rebellion and stubbornness **1 Samuel 15:23**.

It is when the above-mentioned people are obedient and they are content with what God has done for them, that their spiritual garments will be restored. It is then that such people will neither have the urge to “get rich quickly” or “dance to the tunes” of the devil. They will pursue less of the vanities of this world because the vanities will be meaningless to them, but the work of God will be paramount in their hearts.

It is for this reason that Jesus Christ said “Behold I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

see his shame” **Revelation 16:15**. If you don’t want to be caught off guard, be awake, be alert and be watchful for the Lord’s return. If you don’t want your nakedness to be exposed, but you want to reign with Christ, stop pursuing vanities and do what pleases the Lord.

You cannot take anything out of this world

Mankind came into this world physically naked, which means that at the end of our lives/journeys, we will depart this world as naked and empty-handed just like the day we were born. We cannot take our riches with us. As it is written “As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, to go as he came: and he shall take nothing from his labour which he may carry away in his hand.” **Ecclesiastes 5:15**. Job also attested to this fact by saying “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” **Job 1:21**. Since we came into this world naked, why not cease pursuing vanities, and seek God since it is confirmed that you cannot take anything out of this world?

The Bible stated that “godliness and contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out” **1 Timothy 6:7-8**. Since you know that you cannot take the vanities out of this world, why not stop all the vanity activities? Why not take everything easy and calmly? Why not repent and reconcile with your Creator today before it is too late? Therefore, you must neither misuse the things of this world nor become attached to them because this world will soon pass away **1 Corinthians 7:31**. Henceforth, do not overuse the pleasures of this life and you must not be engrossed with worldly affairs, but find time for the Lord’s work. Never be preoccupied with worldly things and fail to remember your creator but live as if you are not using the things of this world.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 26: July 1st, 2018

Topic: Vanity of vanity– Part 2

Bible Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:1-14

We shall continue our discussion by mentioning how our toil in this world is vanity and our struggle and aspirations are futility because we shall die one day and return to dust.

Human being will return to dust

We must first realize that this world is filled with vanities; and inasmuch as we are in this world, we need them to survive, but we must neither love them nor depend on them. We must not allow vanities to control or rule our lives, else we will stray from the righteous path. Though, some vanities are necessary for our existence in this world, however, we must not be addicted to them and we must neither overuse nor misuse them.

Do not love vanities: Though human wants are unlimited, but we believers must be cautious and do everything moderately. We must not be greedy or love the vanities of this world according to the Bible passage which stated that “He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver. Nor he who loves abundance with increase. This also is vanity” **Ecclesiastes 5:10.** Do not forget, it is vanity to love money, wealth or abundance with its gain because all these things cannot give you joy; anyone who is not content with what he/she has, will never have rest. Furthermore, people are destined to die once, and then comes the judgment **Hebrews 9:27.**

The beginning of death is when God cursed mankind by saying, “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return” **Genesis 3:19.** Do not be influenced or controlled by vanity and stop committing or performing the nauseating vanities but be contented with what God has done for you.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Humans have brief period in this world: No human being can live forever, therefore use your short time in this world judiciously by serving and doing the will of the Lord. This world is a “touch and go” place, so why is it that humans are pursuing vanities as if they will live in this sinful world forever? As it is written that “Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble” **Job 14:1**. Since you know that humanity is frail, with a short lifespan which is filled with turmoil, why not seek God instead of running after the meaningless things called vanities? Job corroborated this fact by saying “Are not my days few? Cease! Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort” **Job 10:20**. It is your duty to seek comfort in the Lord instead of seeking the comfort of the vanities, because God alone can prolong your life and make you to realize your ambitions/aspirations with ease.

Dust to dust: Whether we believe it or not, either we like it or not, all life would cease and humanity would turn to dust. “All flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust” says the Bible” **Job 34:15**. Then what is your gain of chasing the vanities of this world if all creatures go to the same place? Since we came from the dust and all of us will certainly return to the dust **Ecclesiastes 3:20**. Why not remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed? Do what is right before the golden bowl is broken, never neglect the work of God before the pitcher shattered at the fountain; and reconcile with the Lord before the wheel is broken at the well. When “the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” **Ecclesiastes 12:6-7**. Therefore, seek God instead of vanities.

God alone prolongs life

Vanities of this world cannot give you long life. Only God can prolong your life and give you longevity. Moses advised the people of Israel to love God, obey Him and remain faithful to Him because He is their life-line and He will prolong their days as they live in the land which He swore to give to their ancestors **Deuteronomy 30:20**. Likewise I am imploring you to stop wasting your time and energy pursuing the vanities, but be focused on the heavenly things that are eternal. Children of God, do not forget His law, but let your heart keep His commands; for length of days and long life with peace they will add to you **Proverbs 3:1-2**. If you want length of days and years of life that is

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

worth living, together with tranquility and prosperity, love God more than the vanities. Anyone that God endowed with wisdom, knowledge and understanding will also possess long life, riches and honour, in addition to the spiritual gifts **Proverbs 3:13**. For this reason, do what pleases the Lord so that He can satisfy you with longevity and manifest His eternal salvation in your life **Psalms 91:16**. Henceforth, pay attention to the Lord instead of vanities and do not ignore His work so that He can reward you with long life.

Be faithful to God; let His work and not vanities be paramount in your heart, so that His promise will come to pass in your life according to the Bible passage which stated that no longer shall there be in your community/land an infant who lives only a few days, or an old man who does not finish (live out) his days. Anyone who dies at a hundred years old will be mourned as a young man and anyone who dies at less than a hundred years will be considered cursed **Isaiah 65:20**. If you do not want to die prematurely, start doing what pleases the Lord. If you want this promise to be fulfilled in your life, forsake Satan and the vanities.

Cease wickedness now!

Nowadays, oppression and affliction of people are widespread throughout the world. Do not be surprised if the poor of your country are abused, and injustice takes the place of justice. After all, the lower officials must do what the higher ones' order/ordered them to do. If you see the oppression of the poor and the denial of justice in your State/Nation, do not marvel at the matter because corruption is prevalent in the world, but these activities are vanity of gain and honour. The people at the top who supposed to protect and enforce the law are the ones breaking the law at top speed. This is a wake-up call for believers to intervene on behalf of the poor people that are being oppressed by the powerful officials/nobles who are miscarrying justice throughout the world. They must stop the matters of justice getting lost in the red tape and bureaucracy **Ecclesiastes 5:8**. Therefore, I consider all the acts of oppression that are taking place under the Sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power and their victims are helpless; this is vanity and it is inhumanity. I observed and saw people being mistreated everywhere on earth. They were crying for assistance, but no one was there to

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

comfort them and the hypocrites who mistreated them were very powerful **Ecclesiastes 4:1**. So judgement is coming to those who drag wickedness with cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes towing their own punishment. The powerful hypocrites are in trouble! The lies they tell are like ropes by which they drag along sin and wickedness **Isaiah 5:18**. The evil doers must stop drawing iniquity with cords of vanity else the judgment of God will come upon them.

We must remember the scripture which stated that “**He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who honours Him have mercy on the needy**” **Proverbs 14:31**. Therefore, desist from this vanity act because if you oppress the poor to enrich yourself or you or shower gifts on the rich, you will end in poverty. Do not oppress or exploit the poor to make profit or increase your riches, and never give to the rich to gain influence and favour, else you will end up in penury **Proverbs 22:16**. Harken to the word of the Lord, abstain from every act of vanity that can sever or negatively affect your relationship with God.

God will comfort you

The vanity of this world can neither comfort you nor give you joy, so do not put your hope in them or rely on them. Whatever you are passing through, seek God and have the confidence that He will comfort you. You must neither fear the disgrace and the taunting of people nor be distressed at their reviling and mockery. It is written that “Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, you people in whose heart is My law: Do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults” **Isaiah 51:7**. “I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and the son of a man who will be made like grass?” says the Lord **Isaiah 51:12**. Believe in the Lord and not in vanity, then you will be comforted in every aspect of your life.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 27: July 8th, 2018

Topic: Vanity of vanity– Part 3

Bible Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:1-14

We shall continue with our discussions by mentioning the reasons why human beings continue to pursue vanities. Though there are various reasons and to some people, the reason might be personal but we will mention some of the most common reasons.

The reasons for chasing vanity

Though, the list of the reasons is very long, and it varies from one person to another. Also, the reasons are not limited to what will be mentioned in our discussions. The most common reasons are the following:

- Riches and wealth
- Trusting in humans or uncertain possessions
- Honour and fame
- Basic necessities of life
- Fear of death
- Fear of unknown
- Love of money

The Christians are not immune to the aforementioned acts of vanity, so we must be watchful and prayerful.

Shouldn't believers behave in manners that will give glory to the Lord? To the Christians who are still actively engage in one or more of the aforementioned acts of vanity, I say this "What they are doing is not right, should they not walk in the fear of our God and not invite the reproach of the gentiles?" Do not disgrace Jesus Christ publicly or nail Him to the Cross again, so accept that what you are doing is not good and your action can make the name of the Lord to be mocked **Nehemiah 5:9**. If you don't want the name of the Lord to be blasphemed through you, then stop chasing the vanities. Henceforth, let your character and moral disposition be free from the love of money, control your lust and craving for earthly possessions, and be content with what you have; since God has said "I will never leave you or forsake you" **Hebrews 13:5**. Refrain from every act of greediness and be satisfied with what you have so that God will neither fail you in any way nor give you up. If you don't want

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

God to abandon you but continue to support you, then abstain from every act of vanity that displeases God.

Riches and wealth: Riches and wealth belongs to God. He is the only One who can make you to acquire them with ease. It is written “The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine” says the Lord of hosts **Haggai 2:8**. The Bible also stated that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above; It comes down from the Father of lights our Creator; the sustainer of the heavens and earth; in whose character there is no change at all because He is perfect **James 1:17**. Since you know that everything you own is from Him, then you must remember, the Lord your God who gives you the power to gain wealth, in order to confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is today. God alone made all your achievements possible. Do not forget that it is God who gives you good health and sound mind to accomplish your ambitions and attain your position in the society **Deuteronomy 8:18**. The best way to acknowledge His contributions to your success is to cease chasing the vanities and adhere/cling to Him.

God is the source of wealth and honour, and He rule over everything in this world and heaven. In His hand are strength and might, and it is in His power to magnify and strengthen people. Whether you believe or not, wealth and honour comes from God alone because He rule over all. Power and strength are in His hand, and at His discretion people are made great and given strength **1 Chronicles 29:12**. It is time for you to admit that God alone can make you to be great and not the meaningless activities called vanities. Only God can exalt you in your community and take you to the next level or high places in the world. It is for this reason that the scripture stated that “Riches and honour are with me, enduring riches and righteousness” **Proverbs 8:18**. If you want long-lasting wealth and prosperity, submit totally to God and resist the vanities. Remember that it is through humility and the fear of God that you can gain riches, and honour together with long life. When you fear the Lord and humble yourself before Him, then you will be rewarded with wealth and honour together with eternal life **Proverbs 22:4**. Corruption, exploitation and embezzlement of the State/Company funds cannot give you long lasting wealth, so, do not be proud, but humble yourself and fear God to get enduring riches.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

First, you must realize that any wealth obtain through dishonest and unjust ways will certainly dwindle but the ones earn through the right way and hard labour will increase **Proverbs 13:11**. If you want your wealth to grow and last, **do not amass riches through fraudulent means, else you will never enter the kingdom of God according to the Bible passage which says**, “And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” **Matthew 19:24**. This passage only applies to the people who obtain their wealth through dishonest ways because it is the wealth that will be regulating and directing their lives instead of controlling the wealth and using it for God. For what is the gain or advantage of such people if they own the whole world, but destroy themselves by wasting their lives? As it is written “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?” **Luke 9:25**. There is no benefit in your wealth, unless it is obtained in a just way through God.

Harken to the voice of the Lord; do not destroy yourself or forfeit your life by amassing wealth through corruption, oppression, exploitation and embezzlement because God have good promises for your that was written in the Book of Isaiah which says “Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” **Isaiah 41:10**. Heed warning so that this promise will come to pass in your life.

Trusting in humans or possessions: Many people in this world did not put their trust in God but they put their trust in human beings like themselves. Furthermore, they also put their hope and confidence in their uncertain earthly possessions and expertise. The scripture stated that “Thus says the Lord ‘cursed is the man who trusts in man and make flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord’” **Jeremiah 17:5**. If you don’t want to become accursed, you must trust God alone and not humans or your earthly possessions.

The people who trust in their wealth and brag about their great riches can neither prevent disaster from happening to them nor save their lives from untimely death. None of them can redeem either himself/herself or any relative from death by paying a ransom to God because wealth cannot save a single life and it cannot pay a life’s ransom-price to God **Psalms 49:6-7**.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Since you cannot buy back your life with your wealth or pay off God with it, **then do not rely on your wealth because it is vanity, so put your trust in God.** If the founding fathers of United States of America, a leading country in the world can make “**In God we trust**” their Motto/Logo, then learn how to **trust God instead of vanities.**

Those who trust their wealth usually enjoy their brief days on earth in prosperity and die prematurely. These people are usually successful in their chosen career, they generally live without a worry, until the day they die prematurely **Job 21:13**. If you don't want to die prematurely, learn from the parable of the rich fool in the Bible. Take note of how the rich man died prematurely because he relied on his wealth and not God **Luke 12:16-21**. So, do not trust your wealth or riches which are vanities.

Fear of death: Many people are afraid of death, but believers must realize that the Spirit of God which dwells in us is superior to the darkness and the satanic spirit that are roaming in the world. We belong to God, therefore, we have already defeated and overcome the agents of the antichrist because He who lives in us is greater and more powerful than the devil who is the ruler of this world **1 John 4:4**. Since we know that the Spirit of God who lives in us is greater than the contrary spirits who live in the world, then we must not be afraid because Jesus Christ will deliver and completely set free all those who through the fear of death were held in bondage throughout the whole course of their lives. Be assured that the Messiah will liberate those who were held in spiritual slavery all their entire lives by the fear of death **Hebrews 2:15**. Therefore, do not consult or seek the assistance of the idols, the demons and the mediums like the unbelievers. Remember the Bible passage which stated that “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” **Matthew 10:28**. For this reason, do not fear death or the evil doers who can kill the body alone, instead fear the Lord your God.

Do not entertain any fear during the course of your journey in the land of the living because the angels of the Lord that are protecting you are more than the agents of the darkness that are seeking your life: As it is written Elisha replied “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them”

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

2 Kings 6:16. So do not fear where there is no fear because the guardian angels that are with you outnumbered the evil spirits that are with antichrist.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 28: July 15th, 2018

Topic: Vanity of vanity– Part 4

Bible Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:1-14

We shall continue with our discussions by making people to realize that the love of money is vanity which can make anyone to stray from the righteous path.

Love of money: Majority of the people in the world today love money and there is nothing that they cannot do to get money. Nowadays, many people are willing to perform immoral and abominable things because of money while countless people are ready to commit various crimes just to get money.

We need to enlighten the people who see money as a means of defense according to the passage which stated that “For wisdom is a defense as money is a defense, but the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who have it” **Ecclesiastes 7:12.** This passage is just elaborating the efficacy of wisdom which means that money can get you physical protection but only wisdom can save your life and give you physical and spiritual security. Many people also believe that money is the answer to everything and money can give you everything **Ecclesiastes 10:19.** These groups of people are wrong, **money can only give you physical things and not spiritual things since it is vanity.** Money can neither buy you the gifts of God nor make you to enter the kingdom of heaven according to the event which happened when Simeon the sorcerer intended to purchase the gifts of the Holy Spirit **Acts 8:18-20.**

Jesus Christ cautioned the twelve disciples about money, when He sent them out to win souls by saying that “Take nothing for the journey neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor **money**; and do not have two tunics a piece” **Luke 9:3.** Jesus cautioned the apostles so that they will stay focused on evangelism and soul winning activities rather than the vanities of this world most especially **money.** Our Saviour also warned the seventy disciples concerning **money Luke10:4.** Jesus Christ sounded the alarm because “the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from faith in their greediness and

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

pierced themselves through with many sorrows” **1 Timothy 6:10**. Since the love of money is vanity and is the root of all evil, purge yourself of the greedy desire for it and the willingness to gain it unethically. Stop the craving that can make you to wander from the Christianity faith.

Whether we believe it or not, either we like it or not the word of God will come to pass as it is written that “in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, **lovers of money**, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful and unholy” **2 Timothy 3:1-2**. We are at the end-time, beware so that you will not be among the people that this passages/words will come to pass in their lives. **Do not forget that you cannot love money (vanity) and at the same time love God. Though we need money to survive in this world, but you must not love money.** Since “no servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” **Luke 16:13**. **Do not deceive yourself, you cannot love both God and money. No one can love God and be enslaved to money.**

It is time that people must realize that **love of money can neither make you to be rich nor exalt you in life according to the Bible passage which stated that “The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up” 1 Samuel 2:7**. Henceforth, let it be clear to you that God alone can put you in high position and not love of money. It is for this reason that the scripture says “The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it” **Proverbs 10:22**. If you want to be rich with no trouble added; love God and not the vanity called money. If you want wealth that will not lead you astray, serve God and not the material things of this world.

Basic necessities of life: Many people in this world are neglecting the work of God while pursuing the basic necessities of life. Numerous people are ignoring their Creator because of their job/work. Though we need basic necessities of life to survive in this sinful world, but you must not allow the chasing of these necessities to be paramount in your heart because they are vanities. The Bible says, “Therefore I say to you, **do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food and the body is more than clothing**” says the Lord Jesus Christ **Luke 12:22-23**. If

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

the Lord can feed the ravens that neither sow nor reap, be assured that He will feed you. If God can clothe the lilies that neither toil nor spin, then have confidence that He will clothe you because you are of much value than the ravens and the lilies. **“And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things”** Luke 12:24-30. Henceforth, **stop chasing vanities of this world, but seek the kingdom of God, and all the basic necessities of life shall be added to you** Luke 12:31. Seek the kingdom of God first and He will add whatever that you need to survive in this world to your journey.

If you have enough food to feed your household, with clothing and shelter/home, please be happy and be satisfied with them. As it is written that **“And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content”** 1 Timothy 6:8. **Not that we must not be ambitious, but the manners of realizing our necessities must neither be against the commandments/statutes of the Lord nor interfere with the work of God.** Remember that you must neither destroy the work of God for the sake of food nor miss the heavenly kingdom because of the vanities of this world.

For this reason, do not allow the vanities to separate you from the love and the work of Christ according to the Bible passage which stated that **“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”** Nothing must separate you from the love of Christ or allow your love for your Creator to wax cold Romans 8:35. **Do not allow the vanity to separate you from the love of Christ.**

Honour and Fame: It is the duty of human beings to give thanks to the Lord and praise Him on daily basis because He is worthy to be praised. **We must also acknowledge that salvation, honour and majesty belong to God and He alone can honour humans because all powers belong to Him, since He has power and dominion over everything in this world.** The Bible attested to this fact by saying **“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God’”** Revelation 19:1. Since you know that splendor, honour,

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

and authority belong to God, cease chasing the vanity, seek Him with zeal so that he will honour you. If you want to be among the people who will shout Alleluia before the throne of God, do not seek the honour of humans but the honour of God. It is for this reason that the living creatures ceaselessly give glory and honour and thanksgiving to Almighty God who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever **Revelation 4:9**. The living creatures are honouring God, so that He can honour them among the heavenly beings as it is written **“For those who honour Me I will honour, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed” 1 Samuel 2:30**. Do not ignore God if you want Him to honour you. Give priority to His work rather than vanities, so that He will crown you with success in the presence of the heavens.

Glory and honour can only be found in the presence of God while strength and joy can be found in His sanctuary/church **1 Chronicles 16:27**. Therefore, do what is right and let your heart be in the presence of God so that He will honour you and make your fame to be worldwide. Always go to His house/church instead of pursuing the vanity in order to have lasting joy. If you have time for God and you do not neglect His work, then you will have a double portion instead of your former shame; and instead of humiliation, your household will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore, you will possess twofold of what you have forfeited and everlasting joy will be yours **Isaiah 61:7**. Stop chasing the vanity and do the will of God. If you want to be recompensed with double honour instead of your former shame and reproach.

Emulate our Lord Jesus Christ who said “I do not receive honour from men” **John 5:41**. Therefore, do not seek glory of men or seek glory through the vanities, instead zealously seek the glory of God which is eternal. Never forget that Almighty God will give glory and honour and peace to everyone who habitually do good **Romans 2:10**. If you want glory and honour and peace from God, cease running after the vanity and form the habit of doing good at all times.

Fear of the future and the unknown: Anyone that is chasing the meaningless things of this world lacks knowledge and those who have become addicted to the vanity because of the fear of the unknown or the future, lack understanding.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

What is giving you concern and making you to continue to chase the vanity? Is it your enemies or trouble? Is it your future? Whatever that is pressurizing and making you to ceaselessly pursue the vanities will come to an end today in Jesus name.

If it is your future that is giving you concern, remember the word of God which says “Therefore, **do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.** Sufficient for the day is its own trouble **Matthew 6:34.** Just do what is right and leave your future to God and He will take care of it. If it is the fear of the unknown that is given you concern, do not forget the Bible passage which stated that **who was it or what is it that you dreaded and feared to the extent that you lied and did not remember your Creator or take it to heart? Is it because God closed His eyes to your atrocities and kept silent concerning your attitudes that makes you not to fear Him anymore? Isaiah 57:11.** It is time for you to wake up from your spiritual slumbering if you don't want the wrath of the Lord to come upon you.

If it is the idols, the deities, the mediums, the terrestrial powers of this world that are bothering or troubling you, the fire of God shall destroy them before you according to the scripture which says “Also I said to you ‘I am the Lord your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell’, “But you have not obeyed Me” **Judges 6:10.** This passage is absolutely correct since many people in the world today are supporting, encouraging, financing and getting involved in worshipping and serving the idols, the deities and the demons because of the fear of spiritual attack or casting of spell on them. Countless people in the world today are members of various secret cults, while numerous people are consulting and seeking the assistance of the herbalists, the sorcerers and the mediums to get spiritual fortification.

All these activities confirmed the word of God which says “To this day, they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the Lord, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and the commandment which the Lord had commanded the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel” **2 Kings 17:34.** Therefore, reconcile with God and retrace your steps. You must never forget the covenant that God made with

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

you, and you must neither worship nor fear other gods 2 Kings 17:38.

Never allow anything or anybody in this world to influence you or pressurize you to love the vanities or do what is wrong in the presence of God. Learn from the mistake of King Saul who is afraid of the people and committed a great sin by rejecting the word of God. Saul said to Samuel “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voices” **1 Samuel 15:24**. **Do not allow your parents, spouse, children, relatives, friends and neighbours to force or encourage you to continue running after the futility of this world.**

Do not fear what you are presently passing through or what you are about to suffer, but be faithful until death, then you will receive a crown of life **Revelation 2:10**. If you want to receive the crown of life, do not allow the fear of your troubles to make you to join the club of those who are chasing the futility, but be faithful to the Lord throughout your lifetime. Take note that whoever harkens to God and listens to wisdom will live securely and be undisturbed by the dread of danger; such people will be safe and secure without the fear of disaster **Proverbs 1:33**. **If you want to dwell safely without the dread of harm or fear of misfortune, seek God and His wisdom rather than vanity.**

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 29: July 22nd, 2018

Topic: Vanity of vanity– Part 5

Bible Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:1-14

We shall continue our discussion by mentioning the passages in the Bible to clarify that the meaningless things of this world cannot give you divine joy or genuine happiness.

No worldly thing can give you joy

The joy of the Lord is divine and it is pure, when you are joyful, you will have a feeling of great pleasure and untold happiness with peace from the Lord.

Vanities of this world cannot give you joy; what they can give you is brief satisfaction and not genuine happiness.

Since physical things cannot give you spiritual things, then your worldly possessions and your post/position cannot give you joy, but pleasure/enjoyment. Even your parents, children, relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues cannot give you joy. **God alone is capable and abundantly able to give you joy.**

It is God alone who can give you joy, if you are worthy in His presence. Be aware that only the people that merit the joy that will receive it because God is not partial or bias. Cease chasing the futility of this world so that God will bring you more joy than a rich harvest of grain and grapes. If you want God to give you greater joy than those who have abundant harvests or grain and new wine, earnestly seek Him and be obedient to His commandments **Psalm 4:7.** God will fill your heart with joy if you abstain from pursuing the meaningless things of this world and zealously work for Him. You must set the Lord always before you, so that you will not be shaken neither by the enemies nor by your problems but He will fill your heart with gladness. Make your glory to rejoice and your body to rest in safety/security **Psalm 16:8-9.** It is then that God will give you gladness in proportion to your former misery; He will replace your evil years with good. Almighty God will make you to be happy and your joy

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

will last as long as the time He made you to suffer because of your iniquity and disobedience. Your joy will last for as many years as you had experienced trouble **Psalm 90:15**. If you want God to make you to rejoice for as many days as you have been afflicted, and you have seen adversity, you must seek God, cling to Him and stop giving attention to vanities. Because those who seek Him will be glad and rejoice exceedingly according to the Bible passage which stated that “Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You, let such as love Your salvation say continually, ‘The Lord be magnified!’” **Psalm 40:16**. Do not seek the vanity but seek the Lord so that you will celebrate and rejoice in God.

The various vanities under the sky

There are various vanities which the devil is using to deceive the world and make them to stray from the righteous path. Satan will also present some vanities as inevitable to humans in order to make them to miss the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, be cautious, do not fall for the craftiness of the old serpent, but heed the warning from the Lord.

Futility of human thoughts and customs: People must realize that we cannot deceive God because He searches all hearts and understands every intent and inclination of the thoughts. God also can search your mind and understands the motive behind your thoughts **1 Chronicles 28:9**. **You cannot deceive God because He knew that the thoughts of humans are vanity. God knows that our thoughts are futile, He understands that our reasons for doing things is for egoism and selfish purposes Psalm 94:11**. Since God knew that your plans are worthless, it is time for you to stop the vanity activities and turn to Him. As it is written “And again, ‘The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile’” **1 Corinthians 3:20**. If the thoughts of the wise people are futility then you can imagine how meaningless the thoughts of an average person or a fool.

At this point, **humans must realize that our customs are vanity, the traditions of the people are worthless, even if it has nothing to do with idolatry because they came into existence through the earthly smartness and plans of humans instead of the wisdom of God Jeremiah 10:3**.

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Therefore, do not deceive yourself by trusting in vanity, else you will be led astray and rewarded with worthless things. Do not fool yourself by trusting in empty riches, for emptiness will be your only reward **Job 15:31**. Never deceive yourself trusting in vanity because you will err and not be established but change and turn to God in your thoughts.

Vanity of the dawn of life and old age: The scriptures say, remove the lusts that end in sorrow and vexation from your heart, put away evil from your body, for the youth and dawn of life are vanity. **It is your duty to remove anxiety from your mind; do not defile your body which is the temple of God because adolescence and prime of life are meaningless Ecclesiastes 11:10**. Since you know that childhood and youth have no lasting value or last for a very short time, do not worry but you must neither surrender your body to the devil nor allow your body to lead you into sin.

When people live to be very old, let them rejoice. But let them also remember that there will be many dark days when everything still to come will be meaningless. As it is written “But if a man lives many years and rejoices in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. All that is coming is vanity” **Ecclesiastes 11:8**. We can now deduce that childhood, and youthful together with old age are vanity.

Vanity of jealousy and dissatisfaction: The scripture says that there are many things that increases vanity, what then is the advantage for humans? Or how is mankind the better? **Ecclesiastes 6:11**. Prominent among those things that increases vanity are jealousy and dissatisfaction. Therefore, it is better to be content and enjoy what you have than to have insatiable appetite or desiring what you don't have because this also is vanity and grasping for the wind. It is better to be content with what your eyes see than for your soul to constantly crave for more. This also is vanity and chasing wind **Ecclesiastes 6:9**. **I observed that most people are motivated to success because they envy their neighbours. But this too, is vanity. It is like chasing the wind. I saw that all labor and skillful work is due to one person's jealousy of another. I realized that all great efforts and achievements stem from man's rivalry with his neighbor Ecclesiastes 4:4. People work so hard because they are jealous, and they don't want other people to have more**

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

than they have. This is senseless (vanity). It is like chasing the wind.

There is no profit under the sun: There is no enduring profit under the sun, so why is it that humans are pursuing the vanity? **Since there is no everlasting profit under the sky, then people must learn to seek God instead of chasing the vanity.** If you make your heart to experience mirth and gratification, you will realize that this is meaningless. **If you are having fun and enjoying yourself, you will discover that it is futility, and if you are having a good time and enjoying good things of life, you will know that it is vanity** according to the Bible passage which says “I said in my heart, ‘come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure’; but surely, this also was vanity” **Ecclesiastes 2:1.** **If you examine all that your hands had done and the toil that you had expended in doing it, you will realize that all was vanity. When you consider all that you had accomplished and how you labored to achieve them, you will find out that everything is futility and pursuit of wind.** It is written “Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labour which I had toiled; and indeed, all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun” **Ecclesiastes 2:11.** **Since you know that all your toils, together with the wealth that you had acquired is vanity and there is no gain under the sun, then it is time to forsake the vanity and embrace God.**

You must realize that whatever that happen to the foolish people will certainly happen to you; most especially death, because no one has immunity against death. Of what use it is then for you to be extremely wise? This phenomenon is vanity **Ecclesiastes 2:15.** Since you will end up the same as the fool, what’s the value of all your wisdom? This fact is also meaningless.

Countless people in the world are disgusted with the fact that they must leave the fruits of all their hard work to others. When people realize that their successor would someday get everything which they had worked for so hard, then they started hating it all. And who can tell whether your successors will be wise or foolish? Yet they will control and have dominion over everything which you have gained by your skill and hard work under the sun. How meaningless! **Ecclesiastes 2:18-19.** Who knows if those people will be sensible or stupid? Yet they will control and own everything that you have earned by hard work

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

and wisdom. It doesn't make sense.

Do not worry about who will inherit your possessions but seek the kingdom of heaven where you will be rewarded eternally. It is for this reason that people who work wisely with knowledge and skill realize that they must leave the fruit of their efforts to someone who hasn't work for it. They know that it is vanity and a great tragedy **Ecclesiastes 2:21**. **Though it is inevitable that you will leave your legacy and possession to someone who didn't work for it. But your consolation is to keep the commandments of the Lord and enter the glorious home.**

Many people hate life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing; For everything is futile and a pursuit of the wind **Ecclesiastes 2:17**. **Do not hate life because the work which is done under the sun caused you great sorrow, but worship God in truth and in spirit so that you will receive eternal life and glory.**

The irony of life: The irony of life is that several good people may die for doing the right thing while the criminals may live to a ripe old age. Nowadays, countless righteous people are perishing everywhere in the world in spite of their righteousness and the wicked people are living a long life in spite of their wickedness **Ecclesiastes 7:15**. There is a meaningless and futile thing which is going on in the world, good people are often treated as though they are wicked or like criminals, while the wicked people are honoured and treated as if they are good. It is rampant in the world for the righteous people to get what the wicked deserve, while the wicked people get what the righteous deserve. This also is vanity. It is for this reason that the Bible attested to this fact by saying "There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. It said that this is vanity" **Ecclesiastes 8:14**. **If you are among the righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked, continue to endure and the Lord will resolve your situation when you least expect.**

What is the gain of humans? What do we really gain from all of our hand

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

work? Vanity. What do people get in this life for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labour under the sun? Their days of labour are filled with pain and grief; even at night, their mind cannot rest. It is all meaningless and vanity **Ecclesiastes 2:22-23**. **What do people get for all their toil and struggling/anxiety here on earth under the sun? Nothing.**

Another example of something meaningless under the sun: It is a case of a man who is all alone, without a child or a brother, yet he works hard to gain as much wealth as he can. But then he asks himself, “Who am I working for? Why am I giving up so much pleasure now?” This too is meaningless and depressing **Ecclesiastes 4:7-8**.

A common case is the people that God gives great wealth and honour together with everything they could ever want, but then He doesn't give them the chance to enjoy these things. They die, and someone else, even a stranger, ends up enjoying their wealth! This is meaningless/vanity and a sickening tragedy **Ecclesiastes 6:2**.

A man might have several children and live to be very old. But if he finds no satisfaction in life and doesn't even get a decent burial, it would have been better for him to be born dead. Which means you may live a long time and have many children, but a child born dead is better than you unless you enjoy life and have a decent burial. This also is vanity **Ecclesiastes 6:3-4**.

Finally, though the lives of the mortals are fleeting, and the existence of humans is empty and futile, **but God will satisfy us with good things and make our lives meaningful. He will give us good health and sound mind to enjoy the fruit of our labour during our lifetime Psalm 89:47**.

The Seal: Ecclesiastes 12:8: “Vanity of vanities” says the preacher, “All is vanity”.