

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. (Ecclesiastes 4:9)*

### I. Live a Balanced Life

- a. In life Solomon observed 4 types of people: the industrious (v.4); the idle (v.5); the integrated (v.6); and the independent (vv.7-8).
- b. The industrious: Solomon saw that the envy of others motivated people to work harder. Competition is not sinful of itself, but when being first is more important than being honest, there is trouble.
- c. The idle: Solomon had no sympathy for lazy people who sat with folded hands. (Pro 18:9,19:15) (2 Thess. 3:10) The idle think doing nothing will give them peace, but it will destroy them, slowly.
- d. The integrated: The "balanced person" understands the necessity of both work and rest. They are productive at work, but careful to take time for quietness.
- e. The independent: these people never ask the questions, *Who am I doing all this for? Why am I depriving myself from enjoying life?*
- f. *What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* (Mark 8:36-37)
- g. Someone once said, that people spend more time working to get what is temporary rather than working to get what is permanent. Do you agree?
- h. God wants us to labor, but labor in the right spirit and for the right reasons. (Psalm 128:1-2)

### II. Two Are Better (vv.9-12)

- a. If this chapter teaches us anything, it is that we need one another because "two are better than one".
- b. There are some advantages to an independent life, but there are also advantages, and we discover them painfully as we get older.
- c. In working, two are better than one, because two workers can get more done.
  1. They can encourage one another in difficult tasks.
  2. Even when they divide the profits, they will have a better return than if they worked alone.
- d. In walking, two are better. Palestine roads and paths were uneven and there were many rocks in the paths and fields. It was common for experienced travelers to stumble, fall and break bones.
  1. A friend walking with you could help you up and out of *physical* falls.
  2. In our *spiritual walk* we can also stumble, therefore, we need Christian friends to walk with us in restoration. We also need Christian friends to help us walk a righteous path.
- e. The warmth of a friend is comforting. Palestinian nights were known to be cold.
  1. The only way to be "warm alone" is to carry extra blankets which would add to your load.
- f. In watchcare, two are better. In Solomon's day, it was dangerous for anyone to travel alone.
  1. Bandits roamed the roads. One may be overpowered, but two can defend themselves.
- g. If two travelers are better than one, then three would be even better.
- h. One (v.8), two (v. 9), three (v. 12). Solomon had more than numbers in mind, he emphasized the importance of unity in a life of uncertainty. Proverbs 11:14, 15:22;
- i. The Word of God reminds us repeatedly that Christians are not supposed to go through this life alone. We are to be with God and His people. (Colossians 3:16; Philemon 1:6-7; James 5:16)
- j. Image of the Shepherd and the lamb (flock).

### III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. God did not give you life to live alone. If you isolate yourself, you will never know how much you are needed and valued. True value must be discovered.