

# *DRAWING NEAR TO GOD*

## *What Is Better?*

BY WARREN BERKLEY

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the heart of fools. Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?" For it is not from wisdom that you ask this. (Ecclesiastes 7:8-10 ESV)

In this section of Ecclesiastes there are proverbs, but with some expansion beyond just a brief statement. And, there is an overriding theme: "**What Is Better**". Navigating life under the sun requires mature attention to values. Reality is, some courses of action are better than others. Some attitudes lead us in better directions; some emotions are better than others for us and for those with us.

"Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit." Solomon is teaching us patience. His approach is, to get us to think about how the end of a thing is better than

the beginning. He wants us to remember that. At the beginning of some crisis, trial or time of adversity, there is a tendency to be absorbed in those first moments of shock and to be overwhelmed and impatient. Solomon point us to the end, the conclusion. It will be over! Going into surgery, focus on the anticipated end and good outcome. Entering into a meeting with people where tension and conflicts is expected, think of the desired outcome of peace or resolution. Finding yourself at the beginning of a powerful temptation, put your eye on the victory of resisting and being refreshed by your courage. Don't let that common desire for immediate gratification foster hopeless impatience. Wait for the satisfaction of the end of a thing, for "the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit."

"Do not be quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools." Once again, it is that quick impulse and desire for immediate gratification that gets us into trouble.

## TWIN CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

810 Southwest Parkway East  
College Station, TX 77840  
(979) 693-1758

### Meeting Times

Sunday Bible Class | Online  
Sunday Worship | 10am or 5pm  
Wednesday Bible Class | 7pm

### Elders

Rodney Bane (281) 682-7912  
Dana Degarmo (979) 777-0321  
Jim Henson (936) 825-6682  
Mike McCasland (979) 255-4135

### Evangelist

Curtis Pope (281) 655-7558

### Sunday Bible Class

Online: *The Holy Spirit*

### Wednesday Bible Class

Auditorium: *Christian Evidences*

[www.twincitychurchofchrist.org](http://www.twincitychurchofchrist.org)

## WEEKLY MEDITATION

*"Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness. The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness."*

ECCLESIASTES  
2:13-14 (ESV)

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### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Prayer Groups  
Monthly | Sunday PM  
*See group leader*

Ladies' Bible Study  
Wednesdays | 10:00 AM  
*At the building*

College Ladies' Devo  
Thursdays | 7:00 PM  
*At the building*

College Men's Devo  
Thursdays | 7:00 PM  
*At the building*

College Students' Devo  
Fridays | 7:00 PM  
*At the building*

*"At the beginning of some crisis, trial or time of adversity, there is a tendency to be absorbed in those first moments of shock and to be overwhelmed and impatient. Solomon point us to the end, the conclusion. It will be over!"*

Better to face the reality of the present, gather up your courage and experience and apply your best wisdom to today.

"The Bible does not commonly assess the present in terms of the past, but much more typically does so in terms of the future, with all its potential for change. Those who insist on harking back to the past often impose burdens on those who live in the present, from which they cannot escape. But to set the present in the context of the future is to set a path before someone else that allows the past to be left behind and a new way of being to be embraced," (Iain Provan, NIV Application Commentary, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs; publisher: Zondervan). And please consider, in 25 years, these will be the good ole' days. Focus on what is better now!

In a world where we can almost have anything instantly, we can't be warned enough about impatience and anger. {Most Expository Files readers know the experience of getting upset, because your computer took 15 extra seconds to boot; or the Internet was down yesterday from 3:00 pm until 3:04. We have been cultivated to expect everything to happen almost instantly. And that cultural technological expectation can lead to rather immature frustration.} Learning to calm down and wait is better. Patience and self-control contributes to good health, good relationships with people – and most of all, this state of heart and life is pleasing to God. Beware of anger that lodges or finds a home within you. Evict bitterness.

"Say not, 'Why were the former days better than these?' For it is not from wisdom that you ask this." Solomon is not teaching against a knowledge of history, nostalgia, or speaking of the past. He is addressing the spirit of attitude that complains – claiming that if we could go back to a former time, everything would be better. First, such talk is futile since it longs for the impossible. We cannot go back. It's not 1950 anymore! But further, think with care – was everything smooth, pain-free and easy back in the "good ole' days?" Could it be, we remember some of the good times but repress the bad?