

Ecclesiastes

*& the Quest for Elusive Happiness:
Why Everything is Never Enough*

Second Story Living: Enjoying Life as a Gift

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26

Rev. Dr. Jason Carter, Lead Pastor

There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵ for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶ For to the one who pleases him

God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26



Top Story:

FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDS

Second Story:

RECEIVE ALL OF LIFE AS A GIFT

Ground Floor:

**EVERYTHING IS NEVER ENOUGH.
LIFE UNDER THE SUN NEVER SATISFIES.**

ECCLESIASTES



*It is an unhappy
business that God
has given to the
children of man to
be busy with.*

Ecclesiastes 1:13



There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God.

Ecclesiastes 2:24

FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDS

"Fear God and keep the commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

RECEIVE ALL OF LIFE AS A GIFT



"He should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also I saw is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy."

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26

EVERYTHING IS NEVER ENOUGH. LIFE UNDER THE SUN NEVER SATISFIES.



WISDOM

PLEASURE



WEALTH & POWER



DUTY AND ALTRUISM



TIME

"Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity."

Ecclesiastes 1:2

ECCLESIASTES 3:12-13

ECCLESIASTES 3:22

ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20

ECCLESIASTES 8:15

ECCLESIASTES 9:7-10

ECCLESIASTES 11:7-10

Boil the complexities of life down to this ultimate meaning and purpose.

Find Joy despite the toil in this fallen world.

Observe life "under the sun."

ECCLESIASTES

Creational Blessings – Gifts of God

- Eating, drinking, finding enjoyment in your toil this is from the hand of God. (Ecc. 2:24)
- God has given – wisdom, knowledge, joy. (2:26)
- “Everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil – this is God’s gift to man. (3:13)
- “...eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil...that God has given him...” (5:18)
- “...God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil – this is the gift of God.” (5:20)



Receive all of life as a gift from God!



My primary goal as a pastor is that people would increasingly find their joy and delight in Christ alone.



The Danger of “Jesus + Plus” Kind of Faith

“Jesus + A Perfect Family” | “Jesus + A Successful Life”

“Jesus + Financial Well-Being”



**Delight yourself in the Lord. And he
will give you the desires of your heart.**

Psalms 37:4



You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is *fullness of joy;*
at your right hand are *pleasures forevermore.*
Psalms 16:11



**These things I have spoken to you, that my joy
may be in you, and that *your joy may be full.***

John 15:11

Second Story Living:

Do not neglect the secondary or smaller joys of life that all come from the hand of a Good Creator God!



**Do not forget your theology of the Creator God.
Do not neglect your theology of the goodness of creation.**



#1: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?
You honor the Gift Giver by *delighting* in the gift!

*“Help me, O Lord, to be the
kind of believer who finds
delight and joy in the smallest
tokens of your grace!”*



*“Help me, O Lord, to be the
kind of believer who finds
delight and joy in the smallest
tokens of your grace!”*

*“Every good and perfect gift
is from above, coming down
from the Father of lights...”
James 1:17*





#2: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?
You recognize the Gifted-ness of all of Life!

“What do you have that you did not receive?”
1 Corinthians 4:7



“What do you have that you did not receive?”

1 Corinthians 4:7

*Everything I got, someone signed the
check for me to buy it.*

*Everything I know, someone taught
me that lesson.*

*Everything I can do, someone gave me the
chance to do it.*



The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of swirling, liquid-like patterns in shades of blue, green, yellow, orange, and magenta. There are several splashes and droplets of color, particularly in the upper left and lower left areas, adding a sense of movement and energy to the scene.

#3: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?
Be Present to the *NOW* of Life.



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Be Present to the *NOW* of Life.

“Enjoyment is only a *present experience*, not an item you can stockpile for future use.”

Bobby Jamieson

Recognize that “*hebel*” (vapor/transitoriness)
extends into enjoyment’s territory.



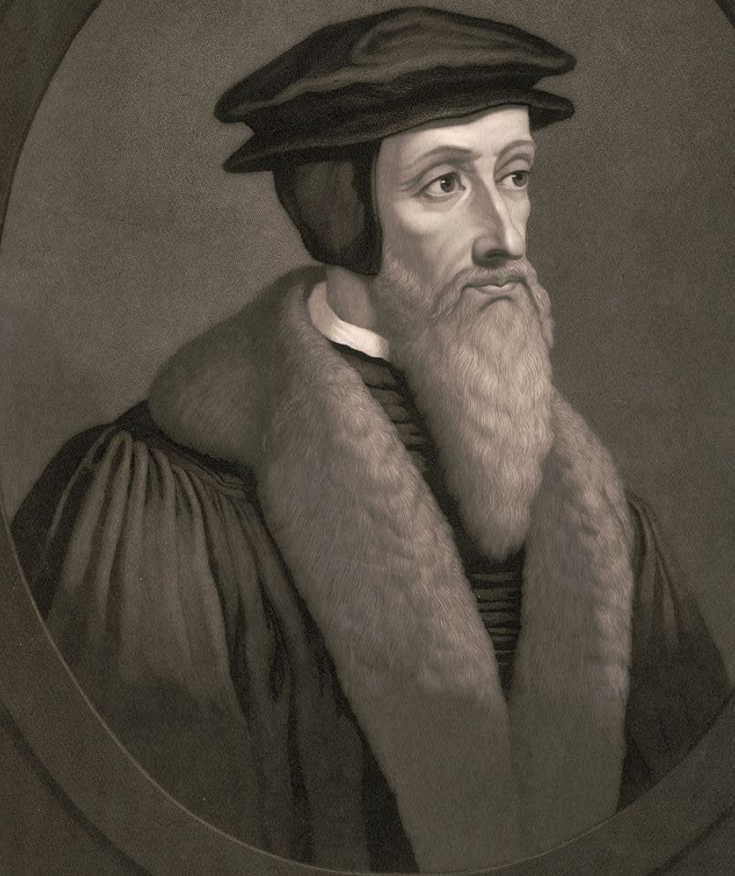
*The creational gifts of God are fleeting.
Enjoyment doesn't last forever.*

Recognize that “*hebel*” (vapor/transitoriness)
extends into enjoyment's territory.





#4: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?
Embrace your Embodied Existence –
Eat & Drink with Delight.

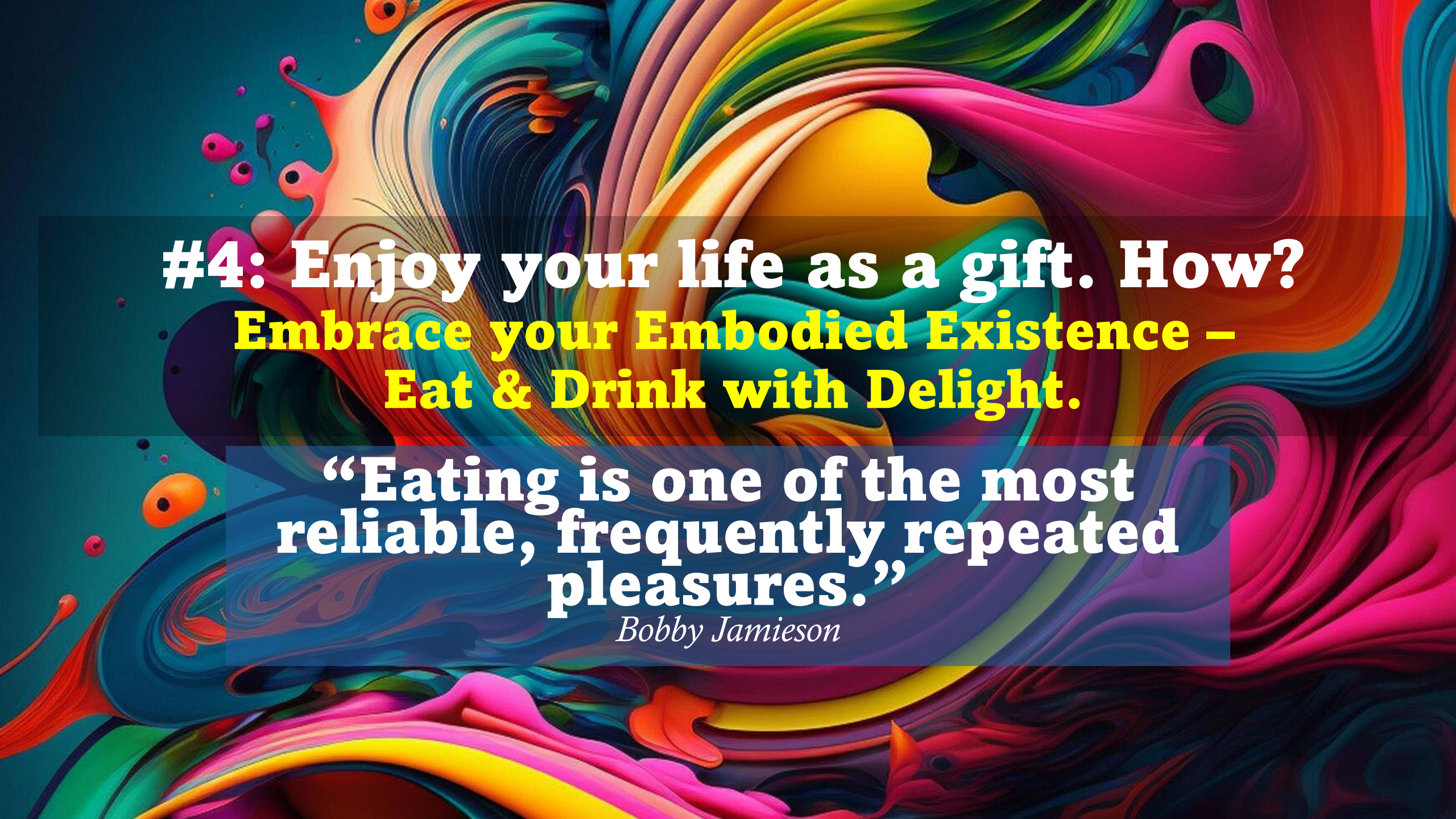


JOHN CALVIN

**Our heart is an
idol factory.**
- John Calvin



#4: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?
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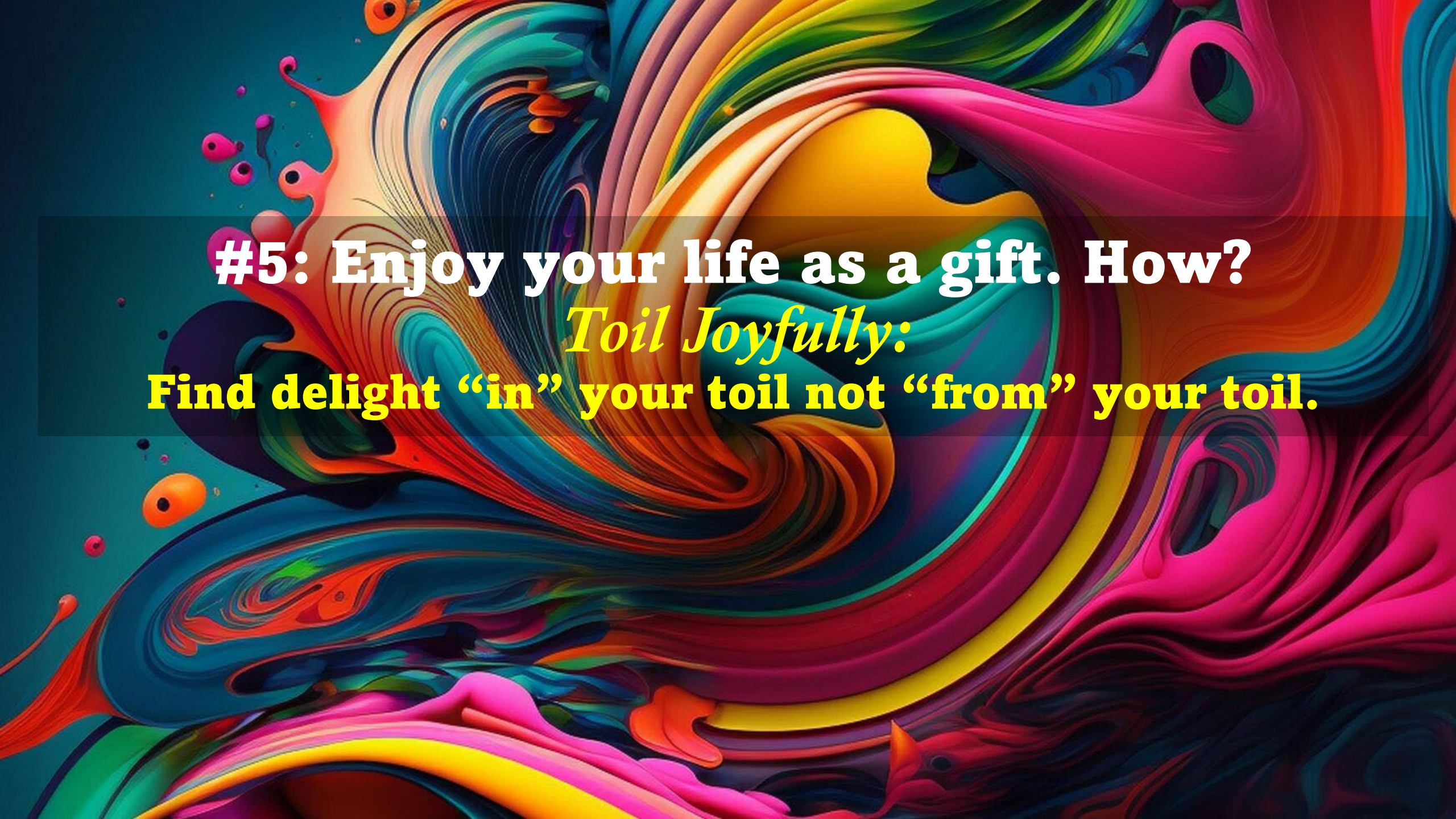
**“Eating is one of the most
reliable, frequently repeated
pleasures.”**

Bobby Jamieson



A group of diverse people are gathered around a dining table, celebrating. A woman in the center is laughing heartily. A man to her left is also laughing. A woman to her right is smiling. A man on the far right is clapping. The table is set with plates, glasses, and lit candles. The background is dark with some festive decorations.

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever
you do, do all to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31



#5: Enjoy your life as a gift. How?

Toil Joyfully:

Find delight “in” your toil not “from” your toil.



“There is nothing better for a person than...find enjoyment in his toil.”

Ecclesiastes 2:24

“...there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work.”

Ecclesiastes 3:22

**“Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is Rejoice in his
toil – this is the gift of God.”**

Ecclesiastes 5:18-19



“Everyone must give an account before God of all good things one saw in life and did not enjoy.”

- Talmud