



# Peace At Last Ministries (PALM)

Sharing God's comfort with the terminally-ill, their loved ones and caregivers.

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## *Futility Feelers – Navigating life “under the sun.”*

Going into 2023, I confess to a heightened awareness of the futility of life.

Allow me to put this in bug terms. An important biological feature of many insects is their long sensory organs known as antennae or feelers. This multi-segmented apparatus helps navigate their short lives by ‘sniffing out’ their surroundings.

If I sported such a pair of antennae (now there’s a picture for you), I’m certain they would have grown longer and become more sensitive in 2022. I say this because the futility of life and living ‘bug’ me more than in the past. 😊



Okay, it’s a weird analogy. Humor me for a moment.

The scriptures make extensive reference to futility. In the King James Bible for example, the word ‘*futility*’ isn’t used, but its equivalent, ‘*vanity*’ occurs 82 times. The word carries the idea of emptiness or that which is unsatisfactory. In the book of Ecclesiastes, for example, a very wise King Solomon observes vanity (or futility) when he examines life “*under the sun.*” He concludes,

*“Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.” Ecclesiastes 12:8*

To use my bug analogy, Solomon’s antennae, or feelers, had grown extra-long, super sensitive. He had a heightened awareness of all the empty, unsatisfactory realities around him. His conclusion? Life is pointless, meaningless—“*all is vanity.*” In today’s vernacular, Solomon might say, “*Life stinks!*”

For myself, I think my day-to-day ministry experiences have caused my futility feelers to work overtime. I rub shoulders with those facing end-of-life challenges. I witness last breaths, watch sobbing family members and attend many open graves. This is my hospice chaplaincy world and the reason for Peace At Last Ministries.

Additionally, I see the nightly news and observe political turmoil, injustice, lies, deceit, hatred and moral depravity at unimaginable levels. Human viewpoint with its pagan philosophies looms larger every day. Inflation is rampant. Investments and retirement savings are diminishing. Strength is waning. All this to say, my 'futility feelers,' are working overtime. To put it bluntly, I have to agree with Solomon, life "under the sun" is empty, unsatisfactory! Life stinks! And maybe you agree.

Those who are honest enough to acknowledge this sad reality will often try to anesthetize themselves from it. They 'check out' from life *under the sun* because it's pointless; it truly stinks. An acquaintance of mine, a Bible teacher, once said, "Smart people do drugs." But this brings up a question. How is the believer in Jesus Christ to navigate an empty, unsatisfactory world?

As I ponder my own heart's reaction to the futile world around me, I'm also aware of other realities. This is because when I attune my spiritual antennae to God and His attributes, to all that is true from His divine viewpoint, they reverberate in a very different way. Pondering God's attributes not only brings clarity to my surroundings, they enable me to navigate life "under the sun" fully, with purpose and with joy.

In contrast to futility—to the empty and unsatisfactory world in which we live, my antennae resonate with King David's prayers,

*You will make known to me the way of life; **In Your presence is fullness of joy**; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Ps 16:11*

*As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; **I shall be satisfied with Your likeness** when I awake. Ps 17:15*

Dear one, if your futility feelers are working overtime these days, take time to point your antennae to God's precious word. Allow Him to *fill* your heart and *satisfy* your soul with the realities of His attributes. As you attune your spiritual antennae to who He is and to His divine viewpoint, it will truly help navigate life "under the sun."

Wishing you and yours a full and satisfying 2023,

Peace At Last Ministries (PALM)



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