
As we continue in the Book of Ecclesiastes, you're going to have to prayerfully engage your mind if you would follow along and understand.

If you're a casual listener or a day dreamer; you will be left behind.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words saith Solomon. This is your task this morning; (this is your labor); engage your mind and gather up the Word for the benefit of your never-dying soul!

I believe he was writing to all of humanity in this book; not specifically to Israel. Why do I think this? Because he never referred to God as Jehovah, (LORD); which was God's Name known exclusively to Israel. Solomon only referred to God in Ecclesiastes as Elohiym.

Ecclesiastes 1:8-11: Review:

Last week we learned that Solomon was not only the King of Israel; he was also the Preacher; meaning, he was the gatherer of the people together to hear God's Word which were given to him by God to preach to the people; words designed to awaken/arouse his listeners; words to probe the conscience & discover the heart; words likened to a sharp pointed instrument (like an ox goad or the modern day cattle prod).

Words of truth and soberness

That's what the preacher is called to do in the church today; preach the Word of God with the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit

1 Thessalonians 1:5: For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance

If there is anything that you OUGHT to pray for before Sunday morning services, it's this; that the Spirit of God would accompany the preaching of the Word, and that God would speak to our gathering; but also, pray for your preacher; he needs your prayers as he studies/prepares.

Last week, we learned about Solomon's observations from both the creation and humanity, all of which are full of weariness and labor. We also learned that people in the world are always looking for something new; they are never being satisfied with what they have. (1:8)

The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing

And yet, we labor on, wearying ourselves to get something newer and better, and to get SOMETHING in the world (under the sun/under heaven) that will finally and completely satisfy us; but it never happens!

We pick up in (V12); Solomon was determined to find the value/profit (if there was any) of all of man's labor under the sun. (C1-V12 to C2-V11)

Understand that Solomon is looking back on his life to all that he discovered in his seeking and searching of all of

man's labors; (of things done under the sun), and in all of his labors, investigations, & experience; and in what he discovered from all of it.

I believe that Solomon, as he is writing is NOT the same man who determined to find out/investigate all things that are done under the sun; now, he was wiser.

In the Book of Ecclesiastes, understand that Solomon is crying out to all of humanity, and teaching us about life; our time in this world is spent laboring and wearying ourselves, (literally killing ourselves) for things under the sun; which he likens to chasing after the wind; for things that will never satisfy our souls.

I've done it all, saith Solomon, and I've had it all; and when it's all said and done, all that I had never satisfied my soul!

Look at Solomon's determination to find out the meaning of life:

What do we know about Solomon's heart? 1 Kings 4:29:

God gave him: Wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that us on the sea shore.

As we see from (V13 & 17); Solomon was not idle with the wisdom that God gave him, (neither should we be); but he multiplied it by learning more and reading many books; and by studying everything that he could get on the creation and humanity. He gave his heart to learn and know and understand more and more! He was a learning machine!

Solomon wisely and carefully and methodically sought to KNOW the profit of all of man's works and labors done under heaven. He called this a sore travail or a grievous task!

What was this sore travail? This grievous task?

Studying, searching, & laboring for answers to life in this world (without God)!

After Solomon applied his heart (by wisdom); searching for answers to the meaning of life in this world; but he came up with nothing. (V14 & 17-18)

Let me remind you that Solomon is NOT saying that all of your work and labors in this world are worthless and futile; there is profit in all labor!

What is worthless and futile; (and like chasing after the wind) is trying to figure out the meaning and purpose of your life in this world without God; and endlessly searching for answers to your life without God! And by continually trying to be satisfied in this life (under the sun) without acknowledging and honoring God as the Sovereign Creator of the heavens and the earth!

ONLY God can bring satisfaction to the soul and give TRUE meaning to your life in this world.

Solomon ends chapter 1 by teaching us that it doesn't matter how educated you become in this world; it doesn't matter how much natural wisdom or knowledge you amass; continued learning without God will never bring true happiness to the soul. In fact, more learning, more wisdom, and more knowledge without

God will only bring more grief & more sorrow.
(V18): Learn what Solomon learned; turn your attention to
KNOWING the true and living God and His Son Jesus Christ!
Proverbs 3:5-7, 13-18

In Chapter 2, Solomon records what he discovered by experience in
all of his searching and seeking for happiness and fulfillment in
this life. (V1-11)

Here are the results of his experiment! Solomon sought to
know (by wisdom) THE PURPOSE of laughter, pleasure,
foolishness, wine, music and riches; what was the purpose of
these things? Did they answer life's questions? Could they
bring lasting happiness and fulfillment to our lives?
I believe Solomon listed ALL these things first, because these
are the things that are MOST appealing to MOST people in this
life! This is what people WANT in this life! We want to be
happy all the time; we don't want any hard times; we want no
difficulties!

Solomon begins this test: Ecclesiastes 2:1-3 (Read ~
Explain)

Then I built great things in the world, like houses, orchards
of every kind of fruit trees, parks with great trees of all
kinds, and pools of water. He had a multitude of servants and
singers and instruments of music! Solomon built his own
little world (in the world) to see if he might (by wisdom)
find satisfaction in any of it.

(V9): So I was great, and increased more than all that
were before me in Jerusalem: also, my wisdom remained
with me

And there was no restraint:

(V10): And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from
them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart
rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all
my labour

And what was his conclusion? After NOT holding back or restraining
himself from any worldly pleasure. (V11)

At the end of the day, NOTHING in this world (under heaven)
could bring true happiness and lasting satisfaction to
Solomon's soul.

Allow me to make one final application to you and me:

Solomon gave his heart and himself (by wisdom) to search and
to find out the profit of living life in this world to the
full (without restraint) and without God.

He is teaching us: Don't give your heart to the pleasures of
this world; God allowed Solomon, who was wisest of all mortal
men to do partake of these things to teach us that they can
never bring eternal happiness to the soul.

Don't be a lover of worldly pleasures! Be a lover of
God! ONLY THEN will you KNOW TRUE happiness and real and
lasting pleasures!

GIVE your heart to search and seek TO KNOW the true and living
God! In HIS presence is FULLNESS of joy and unceasing

pleasures.

Psalm 16:11, 36:5-8, Hebrews 11:24-27; Psalm 119:10