

Ecclesiastes: Learning to Find Meaning in Life

“Ecclesiastes, Job, and Proverbs are generally classified as Old Testament _____.”

One thought dominates the book: “_____!”

What is the book’s _____? Ecclesiastes was written “to spare future generations the bitterness of learning through their own experience that life is meaningless apart from God. Solomon was looking back on his life, much of which was lived apart from God.”

Solomon was known as the _____ on earth. Kings and leaders from other nations sought to have an audience with him. What led to Solomon’s downward spiral? He failed to heed his own _____.

How can the book of Ecclesiastes be outlined?

- Solomon’s personal _____ (1:1-2:26)
- Solomon’s general _____ (3:1-5:20)
- Solomon’s practical _____ (6:1-8:17)
- Solomon’s final _____ (9:1-12:14)

Three unmistakable themes permeate the book of Ecclesiastes.

- _____ - “The person who fears God recognizes that He gives meaning to every area of life and that no area of life has meaning apart from Him.”
- _____ - “Life certainly does have meaning. God created life and uses it to accomplish His purposes. The challenge is not to find meaning in things that are here today and gone tomorrow. Jesus called His followers to lay up treasures in Heaven, not on earth (Mt. 6:19-20).”
- _____ - “Ecclesiastes reveals all the ways of life apart from God is futile while implying the opposite: that satisfaction is found only in Him.”

1. It’s imperative to see work as a _____, not just a means to a _____.

Ecclesiastes 1:3 – *What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?*

2. It’s vital to lay up treasures in _____, not accumulate stuff on _____.

Ecclesiastes 2:16-17 – *For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool! So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.*

3. It's important to see that all seasons of life shall _____, not remain _____.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 – *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.*

4. It's necessary in life to understand the value of _____, not live life in _____.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – *Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

5. It's better to draw near to God and _____, not make insincere _____.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 – *Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.*

6. It's wise to protect a good _____, not chase after material _____.

Ecclesiastes 7:1 – *A good name is better than precious ointment.*

7. It's prudent to ponder _____, not to ignore _____.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 – *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.*

8. It's healthy to enjoy the dawn of a new _____, not take another morning for _____.

Ecclesiastes 11:7 – *Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.*

9. It's time to love God with a surrendered _____, not live with a casual _____.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 – *The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.*

Ecclesiastes: Learning to Find Meaning in Life

“Ecclesiastes, Job, and Proverbs are generally classified as Old Testament **wisdom books**.”

One thought dominates the book: “**All is vanity!**”

What is the book’s **purpose**? Ecclesiastes was written “to spare future generations the bitterness of learning through their own experience that life is meaningless apart from God. Solomon was looking back on his life, much of which was lived apart from God.”

Solomon was known as the **wisest man** on earth. Kings and leaders from other nations sought to have an audience with him. What led to Solomon’s downward spiral? He failed to heed his own **advice**.

How can the book of Ecclesiastes be outlined?

- Solomon’s personal **experience** (1:1-2:26)
- Solomon’s general **observations** (3:1-5:20)
- Solomon’s practical **counsel** (6:1-8:17)
- Solomon’s final **conclusion** (9:1-12:14)

Three unmistakable themes permeate the book of Ecclesiastes.

- **Fear of God** – “The person who fears God recognizes that He gives meaning to every area of life and that no area of life has meaning apart from Him.”
- **Meaning in Life** – “Life certainly does have meaning. God created life and uses it to accomplish His purposes. The challenge is not to find meaning in things that are here today and gone tomorrow. Jesus called His followers to lay up treasures in Heaven, not on earth (Mt. 6:19-20).”
- **The Fall of Man** – “Ecclesiastes reveals all the ways of life apart from God is futile while implying the opposite: that satisfaction is found only in Him.”

1. It’s imperative to see work as a **ministry**, not just a means to a **paycheck**.

Ecclesiastes 1:3 – *What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?*

2. It’s vital to lay up treasures in **Heaven**, not accumulate stuff on **earth**.

Ecclesiastes 2:16-17 – *For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool! So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.*

3. It's important to see that all seasons of life shall **pass**, not remain **constant**.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 – *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.*

4. It's necessary in life to understand the value of **relationships**, not live life in **isolation**.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – *Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

5. It's better to draw near to God and **listen**, not make insincere **promises**.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 – *Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.*

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