



COMING UP ... **MAR 8** 1 Kings 9–11 **MAR 15** 1 Kings 12–16 **MAR 22** 1 Kin 17—2 Kin 2 **MAR 29** Kin 3–8 **APR 5** Kin 9–15

ECCLESIASTES SUMMARIZED in a word or phrase: "Perspective"

THE BASICS

Who: probably Solomon in later years **When:** Solomon's time (970-930; 200 B.C.) **Where:** unknown, probably Jerusalem
Why: Though the world and our walk "under the sun" are often subject to frustration, man can still accept his circumstances—even rejoice in them—and find strength in God to take life as it comes with a smile on his face.

ECCLESIASTES

Solomon: a sage looking back over his life
 Had it all, tried it all, denied himself nothing
 But he's not a warped, bitter old man
 He's watched God's "unseen hand" work in ways he can't understand, predict or control
 And so he gives his people a godly perspective (attitude) regarding status, significance, meaning and joy for life here "under the sun"

LESSON THEME: Enjoy life with wisdom and responsibility

Life Without God (chs. 1-2)

Though life is a grind, man still relentlessly searches for meaning "under the sun" (1:1-11)
 Knowledge can't provide meaning – intellectualism (1:12-18)
 Pleasure can't provide meaning – hedonism (2:1-3)
 Possessions can't provide meaning – materialism (2:4-11)
 Only vanity awaits those who never enthrone God ... or dethrone Him and push Him aside from the center of their lives (2:12-17)
 A life built on or for itself inevitably results in depression and despair (2:18-23)
 Only a life built and centered around God can provide meaning, peace, satisfaction and joy "under the sun" (2:24-26)

Life With God (chs. 3-12)

Enjoy life with *wisdom* ...
 God is sovereign and you aren't (3:1-15)
 He decrees times of pain as well as times of pleasure; what's done eventually gets undone
 He is sovereign (vv. 14-15)
 You can't nudge the arm of Providence
 So enjoy life and the good gifts God has given you today (3:12-13)
 Life isn't fair so fear God (3:16-5:7)
 Inequality and oppression remain (3:16-4:3)
 Materialism still drives people (4:4-6)
 Relationships, however, are good (4:7-12)
 Remember popularity is only temporary (4:13-16)
 Remember God may call us to account now for our hasty promises to Him (5:1-7)
 Prosperity isn't always good (5:8-6:12)
 Enjoy life (5:18-20; 6:9)
 Adversity isn't always bad (7:1-14)
 Humility is essential (7:15-29)
 And so is courage (8:1-11:10)
 To do right ... though there are no guarantees it'll "pay off" (8:1-10:20; see 8:15 and 9:7-8)
 To make wise decisions ... while knowing you're not in control of the outcome (11:1-6)
 Right and wrong vs. left and right decisions
 To enjoy life ... though death is coming (11:7-10)

Life With God (ch. 12)

Enjoy life with *wisdom* ... and *responsibility*

Be wise enough to remember God ... always take Him into account *first* in every situation (12:1-7)

Be responsible in the way you live ... in light of your accountability to Him at death (12:8-14)

Enjoy life with a reverential awe and respect of Him ("fear") ... and obey His Word

Application: Enjoy life with wisdom and responsibility

Solomon's Offer

Perspective/Attitude:

With the right perspective or attitude on life we can enjoy it, being content in every circumstance

Though the world and our walk "under the sun" are often subject to frustration beyond our avoiding, controlling or correcting, we can still accept our circumstances, even rejoice in them, and find strength in God to take life as it comes with a smile on our face

Solomon's Prescription

Enjoy life ...

Within the boundaries of wisdom

Be wise enough to remember God ... always take Him into account *first* in every situation

And responsibility

Be responsible in the way you live ... in light of your accountability to God at death

"Out Of Bounds" Attempts

But sometimes we try to find security (control), significance (self-worth), meaning (purpose) and joy in life elsewhere ...

In our marriage

If our emotional self-worth is based in our spouse

Then likely there's high dependence, control; little trust

In our children or family

If our security or self-worth comes from our family, traditions, their reputation or their reflection on us

Then likely there's high control on behavior; not heart

In our acceptance by others

If our self-worth and/or security depends on belonging to or being accepted by one or more peer groups

Then – depending on how we're feeling about those relationships at the time – there can be mood swings, an inordinate focus on their injustices toward us or a depressed sense of self-worth; we become dependent on our perception of how they see us; "social mirror"

In our net worth

If our security or self-worth depends on our net worth

Then whatever threatens that net worth creates anxiety, protectiveness and defensiveness

In our work

If our self-worth, purpose, identity center on work

Then whatever threatens it must be overcome

The Joyful Christ-Centered Life

Where could there be more **SECURITY** than in God's wise, loving, good & sovereign control?

Where could there be more **SIGNIFICANCE** than being known as a child of the true King?

Where could there be more **MEANING** for life than in His service? (Eph 2:8-10)

Where could there be more **JOY** in life than walking in His will and His ways? (Heb 12)

Enjoy Life!

Are you enjoying life? (Yes/No)

What do you need to take to the Lord and ask Him to empower you to *stop doing*?

"Out of bounds" joy-stealing attitudes or attempts

What do you need to take to the Lord and ask Him to empower you to *start doing*?

Remember Him, rest in His sovereignty, thank Him and live responsibly in light of your future accountability to Him

FOR NEXT TIME: _____

ECCLESIASTES

Declaration of Vanity		Demonstration of Vanity				Deliverance from Vanity				
thesis		proof				counsel				
“All is vanity!” The inability of any human endeavor to provide ultimate value or purpose		Support from nature	Support from personal experience & observation	Support from universal observation	The limits of human wisdom	Live life in the fear of God and enjoy it as much as you can, remembering that one day your life will be judged	Rejoice in life, but remember God and live in recognition of Him, otherwise “All is vanity!”	Fear God and obey His commandments		
1:1	1:2	1:3 1:11	1:12 2:17	2:18 6:9	6:10 11:6	11:7 12:7	12:8 12:12	12:13	12:14	12:14



King Solomon (artist unknown)

Big Ideas in ECCLESIASTES

Wisdom and pleasure alone have no lasting significance

Earthly achievements are ultimately futile

Enjoy the life God has given you

The wicked may seem to thrive while good people suffer, but God will balance the scales one day

God's wisdom is beyond human understanding

Life is meaningless without God; fear God and keep his commandments



AUDIO & HANDOUTS ON OUR WEBSITE:
www.cbcfamily.org/sermons/old-testament-survey

AUDIO PODCASTS (no handouts) ON iTUNES:
 search “Christ Chapel Bible Church Old Testament 2018”

Key Words in Ecclesiastes

The number of times these words appear in this book

Wise/Wisdom

49

Meaningless

35

Better

25

Heart/Hearts

24

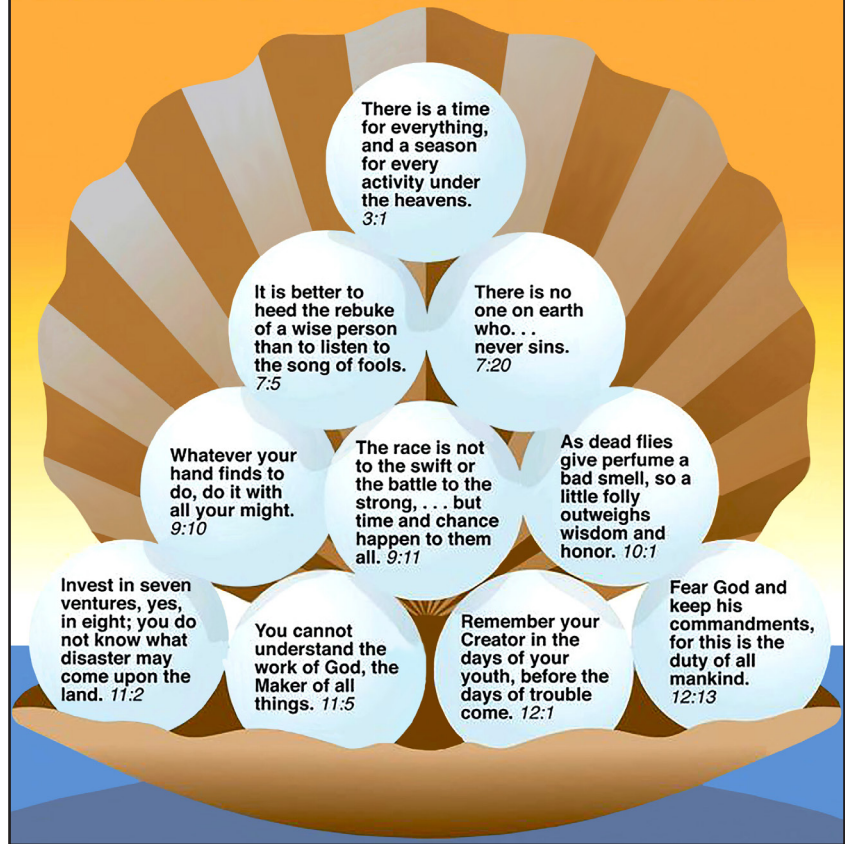
Toil(s)/Toiled/Toilsome

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The NIV Quickview Bible

Pearls of Wisdom

Ecclesiastes has great one-liners that offer memorable wisdom



The NIV Quickview Bible

ECCLESIASTES

	Introduction	Investigation and Discoveries		Admonition	Conclusion	
	<p><u>Writer</u></p> <p><u>Theme</u></p> <p><u>Questions and illustrations</u></p> <p>CHAPTER 1:1-11</p>	<p><i>I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom. (1:13)</i></p> <p>PERSONAL PURSUITS</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <p>Amusements</p> <p>Possessions</p> <p>Madness and folly</p> <p>Labor</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>Riches</p> <p>CHAPTERS 1:12-6:12</p>		<p>CONCLUSIONS</p> <p>Without God's help: Humans cannot discover what is good for them to do.</p> <p>Without God's revelation: Humans do not know what will come after them.</p> <p>CHAPTERS 7:1-11:6</p>	<p>A warning to the young</p> <p>A picture of old age</p> <p>A final admission</p> <p>CHAPTERS 11:7-12:8</p>	<p>THE END OF THE SEARCH</p> <p>Fear God!</p> <p>Obey Him!</p> <p>Someday you will face Him!</p> <p>CHAPTERS 12:9-14</p>
Search	Nature	Philosophy	Materialism Fatalism Relationships	Theology		
Style	Proverbial	Personal		Poetical		
Theme	The meaninglessness of life apart from God					
Key Verses	2:11; 12:13-14					
Christ in Ecclesiastes	The "one Shepherd" (12:11) who offers abundant life					