

Ecclesiastes V
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
August 4, 2007

During this past week, we have each one faced challenges and situations we have never faced before in our lives. That is the way of each and every week – of each and every day. We have never lived this day before – with this particular set of challenges – with this particular set of memories – with this particular state of mind.

But – we survived it all. God saw us safely through yet another week.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, God, through Solomon, has given us many “life lessons” that can never be repeated too often. Over the past 4 weeks, we looked at the first 9 chapters of Ecclesiastes, and today we will start with Chapter 10.

But first, let’s look at what was really conveyed in the first 3 chapters.

1. Vanity = 1892 = hebel = vain, emptiness, transitory, unsatisfactory or unsatisfying
 - a. NIV = meaningless
 - b. Best meaning is “unsatisfying”
 - c. None of these “things” satisfy man’s need for a purpose in life; they satisfy a particular need for a short time
2. “Been there; Done that”
3. Solomon did not say his experiences with wealth and material things was sinful
4. Solomon simply said they did not fulfill life’s meaning; they did not accomplish anything except the satisfaction of material, human, fleshly desires
 - a. He enjoyed the gardens
 - b. He enjoyed the mansions
 - c. He enjoyed the creation of “things”
 - d. He enjoyed his popularity
 - e. Yet he learned that there is a proper time and place for everything
 - i. **Ecclesiastes 3**
 1. 11a He has made everything beautiful in its time.
 - f. And he realized that man’s true desire is for eternity and learning how God thinks and works – but he is incapable of learning it all during this life.
 - i. **Ecclesiastes 3**
 1. 11b Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.
 - g. He considered them to be gifts from God meant to be enjoyed
 - i. **Ecclesiastes 3:**
 1. 12 I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives,
 2. 13 and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor-it is the gift of God.

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VI. Proverbs (10.1-20)

Ecclesiastes 10:

- 1 ¶ Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment, And cause it to give off a foul odor; So does a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honor.
- 2 A wise man's heart is at his right hand, But a fool's heart at his left.
- 3 Even when a fool walks along the way, He lacks wisdom, And he shows everyone that he is a fool.
- 4 ¶ If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, Do not leave your post; For conciliation pacifies great offenses.
- 5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, As an error proceeding from the ruler:
- 6 Folly is set in great dignity, While the rich sit in a lowly place.
- 7 I have seen servants on horses, While princes walk on the ground like servants.
 - **Wise Relationships**
 - 10.1-7
 - 10.5-7
 - ... the man at the top is not always right.
- 8 He who digs a pit will fall into it, And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.
- 9 He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, And he who splits wood may be endangered by it.
- 10 **If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge,** Then he must use more strength; But wisdom brings success.
 - The Sabbath is intended to keep the mind sharp
 - If you don't keep the mind sharp by continuous study, you will continue to struggle
- 11 A serpent may bite when it is not charmed; The babbler is no different.
 - **2. Wise Planning**
 - 10.8-11
 - 10.8-10
 - Despite difficulties and risks, you cannot sit back to avoid facing them in the daily round of life.
- 12 ¶ The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious, But the lips of a fool shall swallow him up;
- 13 The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, And the end of his talk is raving madness.
- 14 A fool also multiplies words. No man knows what is to be; Who can tell him what will be after him?
- 15 The labor of fools wearies them, For they do not even know how to go to the city!
- 16 ¶ Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, And your princes feast in the morning!

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- 17 Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles, And your princes feast at the proper time-For strength and not for drunkenness!
- 18 Because of laziness the building decays, And through idleness of hands the house leaks.
- 19 A feast is made for laughter, And wine makes merry; But money answers everything.
- 20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought; Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; For a bird of the air may carry your voice, And a bird in flight may tell the matter.
 - **3. Wise Speech and Thought**
 - 10.12-20
 - 10.20
 - ... the average citizen must retain some respect for authority.

VII. Wisdom for the Future and the Present (11.1-10)

Ecclesiastes 11:

- 1 ¶ Cast your bread upon the waters, For you will find it after many days.
- 2 Give a serving to seven, and also to eight, For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.
- 3 If the clouds are full of rain, They empty themselves upon the earth; And if a tree falls to the south or the north, In the place where the tree falls, there it shall lie.
- 4 He who observes the wind will not sow, And he who regards the clouds will not reap.
- 5 As you do not know what is the way of the wind, Or how the bones grow in the womb of her who is with child, So you do not know the works of God who makes everything.
- 6 In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.
 - **The Uncertain Future and Present Behavior**
 - 11.1-6
 - ... The climax of his book. We cannot see God's whole plan, and there is nothing in this world that we can build on so as to find satisfaction or the key to the meaning of things. Yet we are to fulfill God's purpose by accepting our daily lot in life as from him and by thus pleasing him make each day a good day.
- 7 ¶ Truly the light is sweet, And it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun;
- 8 But if a man lives many years And rejoices in them all, Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming is vanity.
- 9 Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But

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- know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.
- 10 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.
 - **2. The Certain Future and Present Behavior**
 - 11.7-10
 - 11.9
 - Rab, a Jewish teacher of the third century A.D., commented, “Man will have to give account for all that he saw and did not enjoy.”

VIII. The Frustration of Old Age

Ecclesiastes 12:

- 1 ¶ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them":
- 2 While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;
- 3 In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;
- 4 When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low;
- 5 Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.
- 6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well.
- 7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.
- 8 ¶ "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity."
- 9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs.
- 10 The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright-words of truth.
- 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.
- 12 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.
 - **IX. Epilogue (12.9-14)**
 - **The Credibility of the Author**
 - 12.9-12
 - 12.9-10
 - It is possible to be a miser in accumulating knowledge instead of using it for

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- the benefit of mankind, but this was not the way of this Teacher (v.9).
- 12.12
- ... a warning against the vast amount of literature that is a waste of time for the reader who is really concerned to find the truth.
- 13 ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.
- 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.
 - **2. The Conclusion of the Matter**
 - 12.13-14
 - ... Although he would like to know more of the total plan of God, man knows enough to be held responsible for what he does or fails to do.

As we live our lives day to day, there are frustrations, challenges, successes, failures, positive emotions that lift us up and negative emotions that can drag us down. Solomon, in this book, has recognized all of those situations. There is a time for everything. There is a time to be joyful. There is a time to be sad. There is nothing wrong with those emotions. They are natural. We need to respond with the appropriate God-like spirit in every situation that confronts us.