

Date: 21 Sep 25

Text: Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

Message: Ted Rastatter

Questions: Jason Finke

In this week's passage, Solomon writes that everything done under the sun (without the remembrance and fear of God) is meaningless. He observes how generations come and go (people die) while Earth's processes (the sun, the wind, the water cycle, etc.) continue, seemingly forever. He also notes that regardless of how much a person acquires, he is still never satisfied. Solomon also states that all of mankind's work is meaningless because it will not be remembered. In this passage, Solomon also describes how he sought much wisdom, but even that was meaningless and ultimately caused grief.

Main Point: Life is vanity unless we live for Jesus

Discussion

1. In the sermon, Ted discussed how a life lived for ourselves (as opposed to for Jesus) is ultimately vanity. He noted three facts that render our lives meaningless – death, dissatisfaction, and that we and our work will be forgotten.
 - **Death:** Why does death make a life not lived for Jesus meaningless? **Read Psalm 144:4.** How does this passage describe a person's life? Do you at times fail to appreciate the shortness of life? How does a failure to recognize the shortness of life affect the way we live?
 - **Dissatisfaction:** How does mankind's never being satisfied demonstrate the vanity of a life lived apart from Christ? What are some reasons that we are never satisfied? Do you find yourself frequently struggling with dissatisfaction? Why?
 - **Forgotten:** Ted gave the example of Hadrian's wall in England as an example of how our works will be forgotten. The wall was originally constructed by the Romans to keep the Scottish barbarians from invading but within a couple centuries the residents there had used the stones to construct houses instead. How does the fact that accomplishments aren't remembered demonstrate the meaninglessness of a life apart from Jesus? Do you find your identity in the work you do? Can you think of something you accomplished at work that was later forgotten by those it was accomplished for? Why are our accomplishments so easily forgotten?
2. In contrast to the vanity of a life lived for ourselves, Ted noted how a life lived for Jesus is meaningful. He juxtaposed the following aspects of those lives.
 - **Death vs. Life – Read John 11:25-26**
 - **Dissatisfaction vs. Satisfaction – Read John 4:13-14**
 - **Forgotten vs. Remembered – Read 1 Peter 1:3-5**

How do these passages demonstrate that living for Jesus is the only way to live a truly meaningful life? Can you think of other verses that point to the meaningfulness of a life lived for Christ? In what practical ways can you live for Christ?