

**Shepherding the Wind
Ecclesiastes 2:1-11
Shepherding Pleasure**

- **We must shepherd the gift of joy and pleasure in our lives. (v. 1-2a)**
- **The word for pleasure (*simchah*) is most often translated joy or rejoicing.**
 - **Because God created a good world, we shouldn't be surprised that we would enjoy it.**
 - **However, we must guard against making enjoyment or pleasure an idol (something that is ultimate and gives us meaning/purpose).**
 - **"Happiness is not the sole or main purpose of life, nor is (life) one unending series of joyful happenings with nothing else intervening."**
- **We must use caution and care when we consume. (v. 2b)**
- **The test that Qoheleth took part in was one of full immersion.**
 - **"Thus in Qoheleth's test he is going to explore pleasure as the world defines it and drink its cup to the bottom to see if it does indeed provide meaning in life."**
- **We must guard against the belief that we can build a paradise for ourselves here on earth. (v. 3-10)**
- **There are a number of allusions to Genesis 1 and 2 in these verses (planting, fruit trees of all kinds, gardens).**
 - **The key phrase to see where building earthly paradise is in the repetition of the phrase "for myself."**
 - **"The allusion to Genesis 1 and 2 and thus the depiction of Qoheleth as playing God alert us to this danger – Qoheleth is attempting to recover meaning and even paradise by playing God."**
- **We must understand that making pleasure the ultimate in our lives will only lead to misery and disappointment, but making God the ultimate in our lives will lead to true enjoyment of pleasure. (v. 11)**