



Eccl 1:1-26 Finding your Bliss? Notes

In Eccl. 1 the teacher tried to find significance in his **Intellectualism**. In Eccl. 2 he is trying to find it in **hedonism and materialism**. John sums up all sins in: *the Lust of the eyes, the Lust of the flesh and the pride of life*. It's the same old cycle...

Abraham and Lot's story (Gen 12). It's a metaphor that we are wanderers not yet home and *looking forward to a city whose builder and maker is God* (Heb.11:10). In contrast, Nephew Lot chose to put down roots in Sodom in a land that *looked good*. **Problem: Hedonism and Materialism deceive us into thinking that our greatest treasure is here and now** (instead of storing up *treasures in heaven*).

Conclusions:

1. **V.14-23; Embrace Death (to live life)**. Why? YOLO. If we ignore death or see this life as all there is, we will try to "gain" to get the most out of life. 1 Cor. 15 if *there is no resurrection: eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die*.
2. **V.24-26 Embrace Life (as a gift from God)**. Only when we see the inevitableness of death and the futility of gaining meaning in our activity as the sole source of happiness are we able to enjoy the mundane cycles of life.
3. **V.24-26 Embrace Now (stop striving after your bliss)**. Death prevents us from expecting too much from life, exposes our limitations, and helps us to see the good things around us for what they are. Gifts. Be satisfied could be the summary. *Life is meant to be enjoyed, not mastered*.

Solomon's observation was simply: stop pretending that life will be better "if only" this were different and instead of looking forward to the destination, enjoy the journey. **The preacher said that there is no gain in chasing the wind, now he's insisting that there is no need for the chase at all (v.24-26)!**

Grow Group Questions:

1. Read 2:2-8 Are there any pursuits that stand out to you right now? Why? Have you tried to find "gain" rather than a gift in these pursuits?
2. What steps can I take to enjoy life as a gift by being more mindful in the present moments? And how would that change my life?
3. What is your motivation for getting up each morning?
4. What do you think about the idea that in understanding death, we gain the perspective to live life?
5. Solomon isn't saying that we can't have stuff, but rather that stuff shouldn't have us. Could it be that easy that God wants us to simply start "smelling the roses" a bit more?

Announcements 2/26

- Romans Play – TONIGHT! (02/26) Doors open at 5:30pm
- Family Camp – March 17th through 19th. Last day to register is Today! (02/26)
- Freedom Bazaar – 02/28 in Fellowship Hall from 4:00pm to 8:30pm
- Ed and Jewels Warren Wedding Vow Renewal – March 11th from 5:00pm to 8:00pm
 - Potluck – Last Names A-F: Drinks, G-L: Meat, M-P: Veggies, Q-Z: Fruit or Dessert