

**Ecclesiastes Series – Part Three**  
**Good Advice for Life**  
**Pastor Lester Zimmerman**

Today we wrap up our study on the book of Ecclesiastes. **King Solomon is the author** of this book as well as the book of Proverbs, Song of Solomon and two of the Psalms.

He was a man of great wisdom but sadly he didn't listen to his own advice and he **didn't finish well**.

Solomon's many wives pulled his heart away from the Lord and after their pagan gods. At the end of his life it seems he came back to God, but by then his kingdom was in disarray and he has lost the favor of his people. A civil war broke out soon after his death and divided the kingdom into the northern and southern kingdoms.

**Today in chapters 7-12 Solomon shares a lot of little sayings.** Little nuggets of truth to make us stop and think. Often for sermons we like to take a portion of scripture and focus on a certain theme. But in these chapters, he covers a lot of different themes and ideas and puts them in to these short statements. They are like **gold nuggets** he lays out for us to grab a hold of.

**From time to time I like to watch some of the shows about people who dig for gold in Alaska.** It is amazing all the work and expense they go through to find these nuggets and sprinkles of gold. When Erma and I went to Alaska several years ago with several couples from Petra we visited this place where they let you pan for gold. We actually found a few sprinkles. **(PICTURE) – Kulps and Sauders**

**Let's do some panning for gold in these chapters this morning.** There are some rich gold nuggets of wisdom that Solomon gives us. I will mention just a few of them. **The first thing he shares in chapter 7 is ....**

**1. A good name is better than fine perfume. Eccl 7:1**

Fine perfume is very expensive. It was a sign of your wealth. Like wearing a Rolex watch. – Solomon is saying a good name is worth more than expensive perfume or great wealth.

He is saying it's important that we care about **our reputation** in our community.

- Are you known as a person who keeps your word?
- A person who is kind with your words and how you treat people?
- Are you known as a person who is generous and fair instead of one who must always get the better end of the deal?
- Are you known as a boastful proud person or one who is humble.

**What do people think when they hear your name? He is.....She is ...**

The Apostle Paul says a good reputation is a requirement for ministry.

**1 Tim 3:7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.**

Your reputation is the most precious thing you have. Protect it.

**Prov.22:1 A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.**

## **2. A quick temper will trip you up.**

We usually focus on the dangers of greed, lust and addictions that get us in trouble, but the bible has a lot to say about the issue of anger in our lives.

Solomon states it this way; **Eccl 7:9 Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.**

Anger is a normal human emotion. Even God gets angry. The problem is when anger begins to control us and we are easily provoked. A short fuse.

Paul states in **Eph 4:26 NLT Don't sin by letting anger control you.**

When I become self-centered, I then become easily angered. Life becomes all about me. My needs, my feelings, my agenda, my rights, me me me. When you get in the way of what I want or what I think I get angry. Anger is a me problem.

**James 1:19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.**

Probably most of us have certain things that trigger us more than others. For me it is when someone pulls out in front of me, causing me to brake and then goes real slow below the speed limit. .... I am doing better. Guy thing.

**Anger and rage are really high in our country right now.** People are super sensitive and quickly angered about everything.

As Jesus followers we are called to be **peacemakers**, so let's watch what we say. Don't say everything you think or feel. Let's help bring calm and God's presence.

**Eccl 10:12 Words from the mouth of the wise are gracious**

**Prov5:1 A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.**

### **3. God is good and faithful in both the good and bad times.**

He has promised to never leave us or forsake. He said he will work all things together for our good and turn what the enemy meant for evil into his purposes.

**Eccl 7:14 When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other.**

In other words, he is working out his purposes in both. No matter what you are facing right now you can find peace in knowing that God is at work behind the scenes on your behalf. He is working out his plan for your life.

This means we should be able to sing praises and worship God no matter what is happening in the moment because we know God is for us and not against us.

**Romans 8:31-37 NLT If God is for us, who can ever be against us? .... Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? .... No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.**

In other words, you and I are secure in God's love no matter what happens.

### **4. We all desperately need God in our lives.**

Solomon tried many different things to find happiness and fill the empty void in his life. After all the searching he came to the realization that he desperately needed God.

Only a relationship with God would satisfy. Only God could forgive his sins and make him whole again.

**Eccl.7:20 Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins.**

We all need God equally. We are all sinners. We are all equally lost. The cross is level at the foot of the cross.

**Romans 3:22-24 NLT We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.**

At the end of the service you will have the opportunity to receive Christ into your life and receive His forgiveness for your sins and the promise of eternal life.

### **5. Sin doesn't let go easily once we have given in to it.**

The deception of sin is that you can play around with it and not get hurt. This is not just true of drugs. All sin is toxic. All sin has a price tag connected to it. You will eventually pay for it. It will not release you from its due.

**Ecc 8:8b As no one is discharged in time of war, so wickedness will not release those who practice it.**

You see these products and cars advertised as no payment for 24 months. Free to use for 2 years. Buy now pay later. What a deal. But in 24 months the bills will start coming and won't stop. The pleasure gives way to pain.

Sin is that way. Promising a free ride of pleasure and the consequences may be delayed but they will come.

**Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.**

**But there is hope.** Jesus has come to pay the price of our sin. Yes, there may still be consequences, but he forgives and removes the guilt and the shame.

**Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**6. When wrong is not quickly punished people become emboldened in their evil ways.**

We see this in our country. People deserve a fair trial, but postponing punishment encourages the behavior to continue.

**Ecc 8:11 When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, people's hearts are filled with schemes to do wrong.**

This is human nature and is true for children and adults.

**7. It is wise to diversify your investments.**

Solomon may well be the wealthiest man who ever lived. He knew something about money and investments which is still true for today.

**Ecc 11:2 Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight; you do not know what disaster may come upon the land.**

In other words, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Spread out your investments and don't put it all in high risk ventures.

**8. Don't wait until you are older to get serious about serving God.**

First you have no promise of tomorrow. You could die tonight. Then it is too late.

**Ecc 12:1 Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.**

Don't waste your youth. Now is the time to sell out to God when you have the flexibility and energy to do so. He reminds the youth that what they do in their youth is not hidden from God and they will need to give an account for it.

He says serve God before your grinders, or teeth, stop working, your eyes begin to fail, and you are stooped over, for then you are left only with regrets if you didn't serve God in your youth.

**Solomon ends his book by saying everything I learned in all my research and study and effort to find the secret to the meaning of life boils down to two things.**

## **9. The meaning of life is found in fearing God and obeying Him.**

He summarizes the whole book of Ecclesiastes into two sentences.

- **Live with a reverent fear of God** and ...
- **Obey his Word**

**Eccl 12:13-14 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.**

Fear God and do what he tells you! Then you will discover the meaning of life. Then you will discover God's purpose for your life and have a joyful blessed life.

Jesus states it this way:

**Matt 22:37 37 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”**

### **Conclusion:**

Are you living a meaningful God blessed life or are you chasing the wind and still searching for meaning?

Are you giving God the best years of your life? There is a whole generation of young people rising up with a deep passion for God. Unashamedly standing up for truth. I hope you are in that number.

Solomon said God has placed eternity in all of our hearts. You and I will not be satisfied until we discover the eternal one who created us and loves us. His name is Jesus.

Come back next week as we begin a new series called DARING FAITH.