

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (August 4, 2024)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

This morning we conclude our four-week summer sermon series focused on the difficult truths found in the book of Ecclesiastes. Chapter 5 reminds us to “guard our steps,” and “let our words be few,” and remember that, “he who loves money will not be satisfied.” That’s easy for Solomon to say. He was the wealthiest person of his day. As if Mr. Musk were to call and tell you, “don’t worry ... money isn’t everything ... it will all be fine.” Not helpful Mr. “\$32,000 a minute” man! Surprisingly, I find Solomon’s words very helpful. He had it all ... and found it a vapor. His great wealth brought great sorrow. Honestly, I have so much. Most of us do. Solomon’s words and warnings are a gift ... if we listen. Loving things and money, has NEVER been enough. Loving God grows “Joy” in our hearts.

Summer Series Ecclesiastes: Our Stuff is Vapor (Ecclesiastes 5:1-20) ESV

¹Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. ²Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. ³For a dream comes with much business, and a fool’s voice with many words.

⁴When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. ⁵It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. ⁶Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷***For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.***

⁸If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. ⁹But this is gain for a land in every way: a king committed to cultivated fields.

¹⁰***He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.*** ¹¹When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? ¹²Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

¹³There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴and those riches were lost in a bad

venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵***As he came from his mother’s womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand.*** ¹⁶This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind?¹⁷ Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

¹⁸Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹

Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil — this is the gift of God. ²⁰For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.”

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. How should a person approach God? vv.1-7
2. How should those in positions of power operate? vv. 8-9
3. Where does all that a person possesses come from? v.19

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

4. What does, “Let not your mouth lead you into sin” mean?
5. What does, “he who loves money will not be satisfied” mean?
6. What does, “as he came ... he shall go again” mean?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

7. Share two promises made by politicians or products that you knew would not be kept? Why was the promise made?
8. Have you ever made a rash promise and then regretted it?
9. Are you rich? How do you define being rich? Who is rich?
10. What would you do if you were given \$100,000,000 (tax-free)?
11. Why are so many of us tempted to “fall in love with” money?
12. Why is verse 15 important to keep in mind?
13. Why does God provide us in the USA with so much stuff?
14. How are you attempting to honor God with your money/stuff?
15. What will you do this week to remind yourself of verses 10-20?

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be a natural part of your day. Prayer is a conversation: talking to God and listening to God. Ask God to give you a healthy view of money and things. Ask God to help you use what He’s given you in healthy ways. Ask Him to help you love Him and others more than money and things. He will ... because He loves you.