REALITY CHECK

SEPT 11
WEEK 6

Discovering life's meaning in the book of Ecclesiastes

Worship, Wealth, & Worry

"Where God builds a church, the devil builds a chapel.
In such sort is the devil always God's ape."
- Martin Luther, *Colloquia Mensalia* (1566)

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 *Less Is More*

1 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen
rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do
wrong. 2 Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to
utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let
your words be few. 3 A dream comes when there are many cares, and many
words mark the speech of a fool. 4 When you make a vow to God, do not
delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. 5 It is better
not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. 6 Do not let your
mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My
vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and
destroy the work of your hands? 7 Much dreaming and many words are
meaningless. Therefore fear God.

When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this *trampling* in my courts? Stop bringing *meaningless* offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations – I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Isaiah 1:12-13

These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely humans rules they have been taught. Isaiah 29:13

Ecclesiastes 5:8-17 *Unquenchable Greed*

8 If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights
denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a
higher one, and over them both are others higher still. 9 The increase from
the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields.

10 Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is
never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless.
11 As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what
benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them?
12 The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether they eat little or much,
but as for the rich, their abundance permits them no sleep.

13 I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm
of its owners, 14 or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when
they have children there is nothing left for them to inherit. 15 Everyone
comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone comes, so they
depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their
hands. 16 This too is a grievous evil: As everyone comes, so they depart,
and what do they gain, since they toil for the wind? 17 All their days they
eat in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.

No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. - **Jesus** *(Matthew 6:24)*

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 *Our Lot > A lot*

18 This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for a
person to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor
under the sun during the few days of life God has given them—for this is
their lot. 19 Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and possessions,
and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their
toil—this is a gift of God. 20 They seldom reflect on the days of their life,
because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart.

"Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."
- **Jesus** *(John 4:21-24)*