

A person with short, curly red hair is seen from behind, wearing a blue jacket with a small white logo on the back. They are looking out over a vast, hazy mountain range under a sky with soft, white clouds. The foreground shows a dry, grassy plain with some small bushes.

*the life
you've always wanted...?*

GRATITUDE, GENEROSITY AND GRACE



Overflow

Ecclesiastes 1

² "Hevel! Hevel!"

says the Teacher.

"Utterly Hevel!

Everything is Hevel."

³ What do people gain from all their labors
at which they toil under the sun?

Ecclesiastes 12

⁸ "Hevel! Hevel!"

says the Teacher.

Everything is Hevel."

HEVEL

written by
Solomon, the
most unlimited
man in history

who gets to test-
drive the deep
desires and
thinking of all
humans

Ecclesiastes 12

8 "Hevel! Hevel!"
says the Teacher.
Everything is **Hevel**."

HEVEL

Literally, smoke or vapor

1. Fleeting or temporary - Psalm 144.4, Job 7.16, Eccl 11.10
2. Futile, because it's illusory and vaporous - Jer 10; Isa 57; Eccl 1.14, 2.1, 2.11, 5.10 and others
3. Paradoxical or incomprehensible because of chance and death

Since chance and death create a life that is *hevel*, don't waste your life on *hevel*

GET THE HEVEL OUT OF HERE

We must say "no" in order to say "yes"

Define *hevel* in our lives - and for our children clearly:

- getting others to like us
- achieving
- making money or living in a certain place
- finding my security in someone else

** pursuing any of these things as a main goal is hevel **

NIH CONFIRM SOLOMON'S WISDOM

"The most affluent youth in this sample reported the least happiness and the those in the lowest socio-economic status reported the most."

- higher rates of depression, anxiety and substance abuse

Factors:

- Achievement treadmill - perfectionism in children, learned from their parents
- "Hedonic (pleasure) treadmill"
- Activity treadmill - "we are losing our kids to overscheduled hyperactivity"
- Literal and emotional isolation from parents because of these factors. Everyone is too busy.

We must get the hevel out of our families

ENJOY THE GIFT OF YOUR LIFE TODAY

If death and chance can easily take away what we have, let's be grateful about what we do have!

Ecclesiastes 9 ⁷ Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do. ⁸ Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. ⁹ Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this hevel life that God has given you under the sun—all your hevel days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun. ¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

ENJOY THE GIFT OF YOUR LIFE TODAY

If death and chance can easily take away what we have, let's be grateful about what we do have!

"Enjoy" (10x in Ecclesiastes) = taking joy *en*

Stay *en* the present

- don't be so caught up in the tomorrow that you can't live *en* today
- don't be so regretful or wounded by yesterday that you can't live *en* today

Enjoy and embrace today

PEOPLE MATTER

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare.

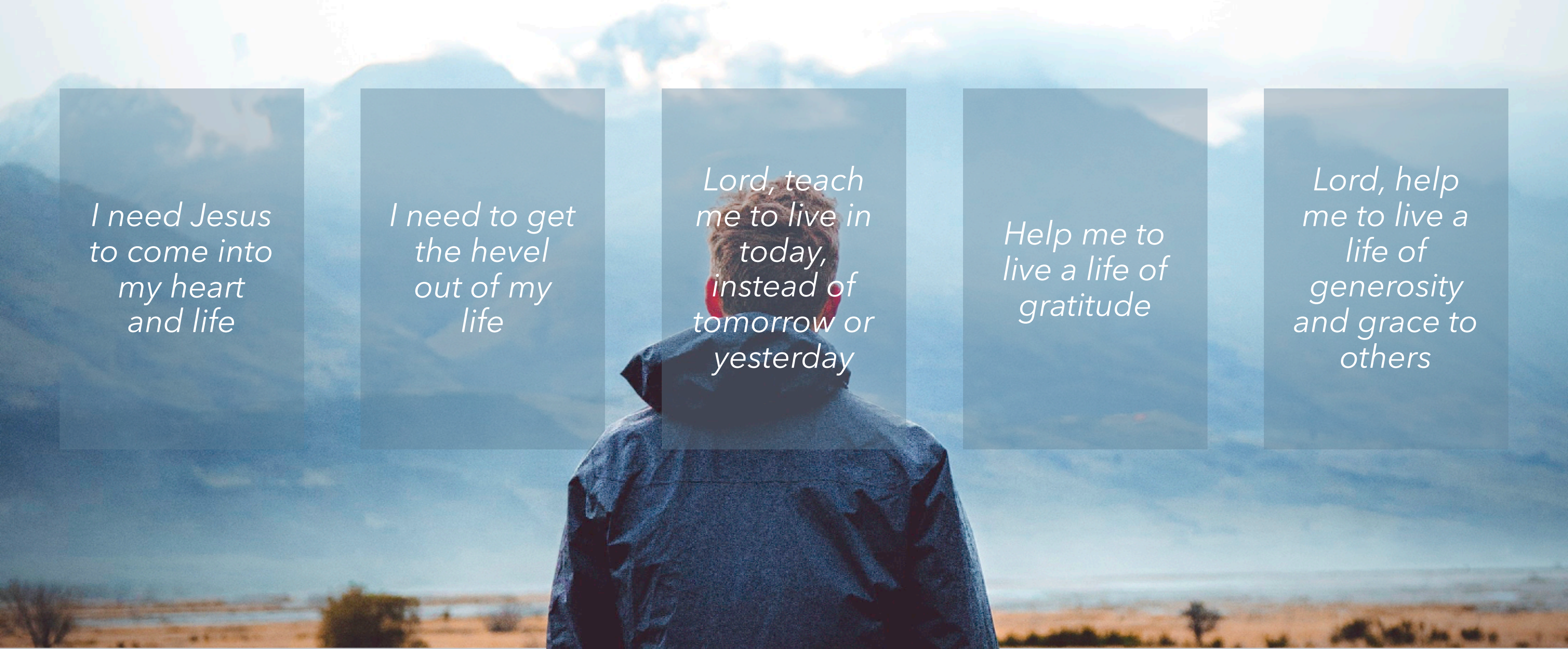
“There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.

This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously - no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption.”

CS Lewis, *Weight of Glory*

Let a life of gratitude will overflow to generosity and grace to others



A person with short brown hair, wearing a blue jacket and red earbuds, is seen from behind, looking out over a vast landscape of rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with light clouds. The scene is overlaid with five semi-transparent rectangular boxes containing white text.

*I need Jesus
to come into
my heart
and life*

*I need to get
the hevel
out of my
life*

*Lord, teach
me to live in
today,
instead of
tomorrow or
yesterday*

*Help me to
live a life of
gratitude*

*Lord, help
me to live a
life of
generosity
and grace to
others*