



Ecclesiastes: *The Vanity of Life Under the Sun*

Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:11

Overview

- ❖ The Preacher begins his monologue.
- ❖ Chapters 2 through 8 have repeated references to work and wisdom.
- ❖ The Preacher gives his overall conclusions to his investigation.
 - Human effort and activity cannot overcome the curse.
 - Human wisdom and knowledge cannot overcome the curse.
- ❖ Selfish living is futile.

I Applied My Heart to Activity - 1:13-15

- ❖ Heart - The deepest part of a person including mind, will, and emotions
 - *Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4 ESV)*
 - *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7 ESV)*
- ❖ By Wisdom - The Preacher had a plan
- ❖ God - Elohim. Yahweh is not used in Ecclesiastes.
- ❖ Unhappy Business - Refers to the curse of Genesis 3.
- ❖ Striving After Wind - indicates futility
- ❖ Human effort and activity cannot overcome the curse.

I Applied My Heart to Wisdom - 1:16-18

- ❖ I said in my heart - a settled conclusion or resolve
- ❖ Great experience of wisdom and knowledge - heart knowledge not just head knowledge
- ❖ Wisdom and madness and folly - investigates the full range of human thinking
- ❖ Human wisdom and knowledge cannot overcome the curse.

It's Not What, But Why

- ❖ The Preacher is not disparaging enjoying life, being productive, or seeking wisdom and knowledge.
- ❖ All these things apart from an eternal perspective are temporary and futile.
 - *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17 ESV)*
 - *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV)*
 - *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. (Proverbs 9:10 ESV)*



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Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:11

- *And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:9-10 ESV)*

Selfish Living – 2:1-11

- ❖ The Preacher investigates a life of selfish pleasure. Repeated use of I, my, myself.
- ❖ He takes things that are good and makes them an end unto themselves.
 - Unproductive activity
 - Productive activity
 - Money and possessions
 - Human pleasures
- ❖ Pleasure or satisfaction was the reward for all his activity.

Selfless Living

- ❖ There is nothing that lasts under the sun so we must look for what lasts above the sun.
 - *Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. (James 5:1-3 ESV)*
 - *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21 ESV)*
 - *For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. (Romans 14:7-8 ESV)*
 - *So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18 ESV)*