

Ecclesiastes: Finding Purpose (Part 2)

Jesse Berthold / January 17, 2024

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FINDING PURPOSE

Ecclesiastes 1:12–18 (NLT) ¹² I, the Teacher, was king of Israel, and I lived in Jerusalem. ¹³ I devoted myself to search for understanding and to explore by wisdom everything being done under heaven. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race. ¹⁴ I observed everything going on under the sun, and really, it is all meaningless—like chasing the wind. ¹⁵ What is wrong cannot be made right. What is missing cannot be recovered. ¹⁶ I said to myself, “Look, I am wiser than any of the kings who ruled in Jerusalem before me. I have greater wisdom and knowledge than any of them.” ¹⁷ So I set out to learn everything from wisdom to madness and folly. But I learned firsthand that pursuing all this is like chasing the wind. ¹⁸ The greater my wisdom, the greater my grief. To increase knowledge only increases sorrow.

Verse 13 = I **devoted myself** to search for **understanding** and to **explore by wisdom** everything being done under heaven. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race.

SOLOMON’S CONCLUSION = “I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race”

- **Amplified** = It is a miserable business which God has given to the sons of man with which to busy themselves
- **Message** = And let me tell you, there’s not much to write home about. God hasn’t made it easy for us.

Ecclesiastes 2:1–11 (NLT) ¹ I said to myself, “Come on, let’s try pleasure. Let’s look for the ‘good things’ in life.” But I found that this, too, was meaningless. ² So I said, “Laughter is silly. What good does it do to seek pleasure?” ³ After much thought, I decided to cheer myself with

wine. And while still seeking wisdom, I clutched at foolishness. In this way, I tried to experience the only happiness most people find during their brief life in this world. ⁴ I also tried to find meaning by building huge homes for myself and by planting beautiful vineyards. ⁵ I made gardens and parks, filling them with all kinds of fruit trees. ⁶ I built reservoirs to collect the water to irrigate my many flourishing groves. ⁷ I bought slaves, both men and women, and others were born into my household. I also owned large herds and flocks, more than any of the kings who had lived in Jerusalem before me. ⁸ I collected great sums of silver and gold, the treasure of many kings and provinces. I hired wonderful singers, both men and women, and had many beautiful concubines. I had everything a man could desire! ⁹ So I became greater than all who had lived in Jerusalem before me, and my wisdom never failed me. ¹⁰ Anything I wanted, I would take. I denied myself no pleasure. I even found great pleasure in hard work, a reward for all my labors. ¹¹ But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.

LIFE POINT: All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ.

Colossians 2:1–5 (NLT) ¹ I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. ² I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. ³ **In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.** ⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. ⁵ For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong.

Psalms 119:100 (TPT) You have graced me with more insight than the old sages because I have not failed to walk in the light of your ways.

Colossians 1:15–16 (NLT) Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, ¹⁶ for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.

1 John 4:15 (NLT) All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God.

1 Corinthians 2:10–16 (NLT) ¹⁰ But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets. ¹¹ No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. ¹² And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. ¹³ When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. ¹⁴ But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means. ¹⁵ Those who are spiritual can evaluate all things, but they themselves cannot be evaluated by others. ¹⁶ For, "Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?" But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.

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