

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

LESSON 02

What Profit Hath a Man

1. Ecclesiastes 1:1-2 – Introduction

- a. A look at life, death, vanity teaches us to apply our hearts wisely – Ps 39:4-5, 90:12
- b. Warning: beware of Solomon’s sins; beware of his perspective; beware of heresies
- c. *“Preacher”* – Solomon not as king, judge, father, but a man with a message-12:12
 - i. No one wants to be preached at now, and apparently neither did his son
- d. *“all is vanity”* – vanity shows up 37x; vexation of spirit (9x); vanity of vanities...
 - i. Vanity ~def. Job 35:13; Ps 62:9; 94:11; 144:4; Prov 13:11; Isa 40:17/23; 41:29; Jer 2:5; 16:19; 51:18; Jam 4:14 → Eph 4:17-18
- e. *“what profit hath a man of all his labour”* – travail/work (>29x)
 - i. *“under the sun”* (29x) – the perspective is not considering God’s truth
- f. Structure - Williams – What is the chief good? 1-6 what it is not; 7-12 what it is
 - i. (1) is introduction; (2-11) search for the answer; (12) is conclusion
 - ii. Turning points in Ecc 7:11, 7:29; 8:15-9:1;
 - iii. Eat, drink, and “live joyfully” – 2:24; 3:12; 5:18; 8:15; 9:7; 9:9; 11:9
 - iv. Ecclesiastes shows emptiness that needs filled with the rest of scripture

2. Ecclesiastes 1:4-7 – All things continue, never finished

- a. First, get a big picture perspective.
- b. “generations” come and go - All flesh is grass – Ps 103:15-16; Isa 40:6
- c. Earth, sun, wind, rivers – four types of substance under the sun.
- d. “earth abideth forever” – position of the world until science caught up to the Bible
- e. The earth remains: we will die before the world ends – PS 78:69; Ps 104:5, 148:6
- f. *“sun ariseth...”* – true then, true now. The days continue longer than us.
 - i. E.g The stars come out, wind blows, fire crackled, four corners of the earth
- g. *“wind returns”* – like the earth and sun, it continues and never stops.
- h. *“rivers return again”* – why don’t they run out? Everything continues, why?

3. Ecclesiastes 1:8-11 – Nothing new, nothing remembered

- a. *“All things are full of labour”* – the world keeps working, we can’t explain it all.
- b. Hell and destruction are never full - Prov 27:20
- c. *“eye is not satisfied”* – Nothing describes Youtube better than this.
- d. The past describes the present, the present describes the future.
- e. *“no new thing under the sun”* – People are the same, sins are the same, problems are the same, the world is the same.
- f. *“no remembrance”* - Info, tech, experience, progress, wisdom has all been lost.
- g. The new things in the Bible come from above – new creature, new heavens, etc.