

Sermon Series Title: "Ecclesiastes"

Sermon Series Summary: Everything is vanity without God. But with God, everything matters. This is only possible through the redemption of Christ who lived the perfectly wise life but died the vain death to give us meaning, joy, life, and eternity.

"We are in our "Ecclesiastes" sermon series, and through this series, we see that all is meaning-less without God. But with God in Christ, all is meaning-ful."

Call: Psalm 105:3

Text: Ecclesiastes 4

Title: "Wisdom and Vanity"

Next Week's Call: Psalm 105:4

Next Week's Text: Ecclesiastes 5-6

Next Week's Title: "Wisdom and Vanity, Part Two"

Future Calls: Psalm 105:5-6, 7, 8; 106:1, 2-3, 4-5, 44, 45, 47, 48

Future Titles: "Wisdom and Folly" (Ecclesiastes 7), "Wisdom and Submission" (Ecclesiastes 8), "Wisdom and Death" (Ecclesiastes 9:1-10), "Wisdom and Folly, Part Two" (Ecclesiastes 9:11-10:20), "The Life of Wisdom" (Ecclesiastes 11), "The Heart of Wisdom" (Ecclesiastes 12)

Fallen Condition Focus: Envy and greed lead to vanity and loneliness.

Christ redeeming FCF: Solomon calls us to live in contentment, consider others, and be friends with one another. This points us to Jesus who took on the opposite of contentment to give us peace, considered us when we did not consider Him, and died as an enemy of God alone to become friends with us. He is the One who had nothing in His earthly life and ministry, but became the greatest king this world has ever known.

**Central Truth:** Wisdom works. Wisdom rests. Wisdom befriends. Wisdom listens. This wisdom is through Jesus.

Summary: This chapter covers a lot of different topics. It touches on the values of life, work, generosity, friendship, and counsel. Jesus is the One who received all the vanity in our passage, in order to bring us into the better and wise life with Him. And through His death and resurrection, He is the Wisdom and King we all need.

## Reflective Questions:

1. What does Solomon mean in vv. 1-3? How do you feel about that?
2. Which proverb from this chapter sticks out to you the most? Why or why not?
3. How does this chapter point us to Christ?

### I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

### II. The Broken Life (vv. 1-8)

- A. Chapter 3 ended with how there was wickedness in the places of justice and righteousness. It also talked about how there was death for both man and beast.
- B. Solomon starts this chapter by talking about the oppressions under the sun.
- C. No one is there to comfort the oppressed. No one was there to comfort the powerful oppressors. So, oppressors will continue to oppress (no satisfaction), while the oppressed will never be restored (no salvation).
- D. Better to be dead than to be living. Better to not ever have been than to have been.
  1. Pretty depressing. Reminders of Elijah, Job, Jonah, and Jeremiah. But we must understand that whenever we see suicide in the Bible, God is for life. Even here, better than those who are yet to be alive than those who are dead.
- E. Toil and work motivated by envy (desiring others' status, wealth, possessions, looks, etc. and hoping for others' downfall) are vanity. It is miserable. We will never get it. There will always be people with more and better. And even if we did, these things do not satisfy.
- F. The fool is lazy and eats his own flesh. He consumes himself.
- G. Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil. Quietness-contentment and rest with only one hand working instead of sacrificing everything to obtain something with two hands.
- H. No end to the toil of the one who has cut off all relationships (even the closest in brother or son) to obtain riches that will never satisfy.

### III. The Better Life (vv. 9-16)

- A. The Better Life includes friendship. What is better than to sacrifice everything for selfish gain is to consider others in friendship. Phil 2.

1. First time in the Bible where see something was not good (contrary to Genesis 1)- man being alone
  2. Do more with two people together than two individuals combined.
  3. Pick each other up and keep each other warm. Not be broken.
  4. Reference to business and travel with friends. Can be applied to community of the church as well- CG, Men's Group, Women's Group, etc.
  5. Not specifically a marriage illustration
- B. The Better Life includes wise counsel. Rags to riches story of a king- maybe David or Job. Better than the old and foolish king who no longer took advice. The poor and wise youth became a great king with an endless amount of people he ruled.
1. But even this great king will not be remembered. Being this great king will be vanity.

#### IV. The Beautiful Life-Giver

- A. Solomon calls us to live in contentment, consider others, and be friends with one another.
- B. This points us to Jesus who took on the opposite of contentment to give us peace. It wasn't quiet for Him on the cross. It was absolute torture and restlessness.
- C. He considered us when we did not consider Him, and died as an enemy of God to become friends with us. Phil 2.
- D. He was betrayed by Israel, abandoned by His disciples, and forsaken by His father. He constantly gave of Himself... serving and being selfless. And yet, He died alone, so that we may never be alone.
  1. He was cut off as Son and brother... so that we may never be cut off as sons and brothers and sisters of Christ.
- E. He is the One who had nothing in His earthly life and ministry, but became the greatest king this world has ever known, through dearth and resurrection.
- F. Most oppressed... receiving the greatest injustice... but death was not better for Him. He took on the ultimate death and went through it to bring us to the other side. Death may be a better earthly life. Unborn may be better than death. But resurrection after death in Christ is the best.