

“The Limits of Wisdom”

Sermon Outline

Don't boast in character as a means of escaping vanity under the sun

Recognize two limits to character...

1. Strength of character does not guarantee success (11-12)

2. Wisdom is not always prized (13-18)

Rather, boast in the character of the Son (1 Cor 1:30; Rev 5:12)

Community Group Study Questions

For the Week of March 14th - 20th

Let's use the COMA method of studying the Bible, with some adaptation to our text, Ecclesiastes 9:11-18. The method comes from David Helm in One-to-One Bible Reading.

Context

Ecclesiastes 9:11-18 is wisdom literature. What does this mean for understanding the text?

The Preacher: Are there any clues about the circumstances in which the Preacher composed these words (hint: how would he know about wise people giving counsel?)?

The original audience: Are there any clues about the Israelites who first heard these words? How would these words have landed on Jews who knew their OT history - such as hearing "time and chance happen to them all"? If any, are there idioms, phrases, or cultural ideas they would have grasped but we don't?

Observation

What ideas are repeated? What is being communicated by these repetitions?

What images, illustrations, or metaphors does the Preacher use (e.g. the five illustrations in v. 11)? What does he mean by them?

What observations does the Preacher help us make about wisdom? Does he offer comments or proverbial sayings?

Meaning

What is the Preacher's main idea?

How does the passage look forward to Jesus, and life under the Son?

Application

How does the main idea challenge or confirm your beliefs?

Is there some attitude you need to change?

How does the Preacher challenge you to live in a way that is more loyal to King Jesus?