

“In Much Wisdom is Much Vexation”

Sermon Notes

➤ **The search for meaning in life is a worthy endeavor but . . .**

1. The Task is _____ (vv. 13-15).

2. The Results are _____ (vv. 16-18).

Next Week: Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 - “Come Now, I Will Test You With Pleasure”

MEFC Community Group Study Questions
For the week of October 4th-10th

Getting Started

1. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, identified the ideal human life as being characterized by excellent contemplation (theoria) rather than excellent action (praxis). Do you agree? Based on today's reading, do you think that the author of Ecclesiastes would have agreed, or not?

Digging Deeper

2. In the late 1800's, a world view known as modernism developed which affirmed the power of mankind to create, improve and reshape the world with the aid of practical experimentation, scientific knowledge and technology. What advice might the author of Ecclesiastes have had for these philosophers?

3. Since the mid-twentieth century, in reaction against the philosophy of modernism, a world view known as postmodernism has emerged. Postmodernists reject the notion of stability of meaning, and describes all truth as relative. Your truth may not be my truth. Do you think that the author of Ecclesiastes might have agreed with this world view? Why or why not?

Open Your Bible to Ecclesiastes 1:12-18

4. In Ecclesiastes 1:12, the author begins to speak in the first person, while previously he was speaking in the third person (see Eccl 1:1). What does this indicate about the authorship of the work? Could both verses be inspired if they were written by different individuals?

5. The author refers to himself as "Qohelet." This word is not found anywhere else in the Bible, but the root is found many times in references to the assembly or gathering. The term could be literally translated "assembly person." English versions translate this as Preacher (ESV), Teacher (NIV), spokesman (God's Word Translation), Philosopher (Good News Translation), the Quester (The Message), or just transliterate Qohelet (NASB), or Ecclesiastes (Wycliff Bible). The Expanded Bible adds the alternative translation "Assembler". Why the various translations, and what do they imply about the interpretation of this book?

6. Do you believe that Solomon was wise? If yes, how do you explain 1 Kings 11? If no, how do you explain 1 Kings 4:29-34? In either case, is it wise to seek wisdom if (as the author of Ecclesiastes concludes) it is "a striving after wind"?

7. Why did the author of Ecclesiastes seek madness and folly (v. 17)? Do you think he ultimately attains real wisdom? If so, what is the source of his vexation and sorrow (v. 18)?