

Putting Things Into Perspective

The book of Ecclesiastes was likely written by Solomon. The theme of the book is “Why are we here?” The author admits to trying everything the world has to offer, but finding satisfaction in none of it. This is very relevant to what we are experiencing today as the coronavirus situation has many reevaluating what is really important.

Consider, for example:

The meaning of life is not in pleasure. *“I thought in my heart, ‘Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.’ But that also proved to be meaningless.”* (Ecc. 2:1).

The meaning of life is not solely in work. *“I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me.”* (Ecc. 2:18).

The meaning of life is not wealth or possessions. *“Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.”* (Ecc. 5:10-11a).

The meaning of life is not found in education. *“I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men! I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.”* (Ecc. 1:13-14)

The meaning of life does not come from accomplishments. *“I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees...Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.”* (Ecc. 2:4-11).

Now, let it be stated that there is nothing wrong with any of these in and of themselves – they just don’t provide lasting satisfaction or the answer to the question: “Why am I here?”

Solomon summed it up well when he penned, *“‘Meaningless! Meaningless!’ says the Teacher. ‘Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.’ What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun? Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever...All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.”* (Ecc. 1:2-8).

But, in the end, he figured it all out. He came to the realization of what life is all about. He found the answer to purpose and satisfaction of life: *“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”* (Ecc. 12:13-14)

If we can learn to trust, obey, and serve God, we will find purpose and peace in our lives. This is putting things into proper perspective!

(This article is based upon a Bible discussion by Chris Clark, Cole Clark, and Steve Doss on a Facebook Live discussion from 4/8/20. You can view the full discussion it at www.facebook.com/broadwaychurchofchristcampbellsville)