

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

ENJOY LIFE (ECCLESIASTES 9-10)

Memory Verse: "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." Ecclesiastes 12:13-14



Solomon's Life: 1 Kings 1-11, 2 Chronicles 1-9

- Ecclesiastes is believed to have been written toward the end of his life.

1. This World is Fallen and Unpredictable

- Ecclesiastes 9:2 - The same events happen to the good and the evil.
 - Rain falls on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45)
 - Eternal perspective: God works all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28) and our spiritual lives are often stronger when our physical lives face adversity.
 - Psalm 23:4 - God comforts while we are IN the valley and the darkness.
- Ecclesiastes 9:11-12 - We are subject to time and chance.
- Bad things happen to good people because of the Fall in Genesis 3.
 - Adam and Eve ate from the wrong tree in rebellion to God

2. Enjoy Life within God's Parameters

- Ecclesiastes 9:7, 10:19 - Joy, a merry heart, laughter, God's approval.
 - The world should not be more joyful than the Church.
 - Galatians 5:22-23 - Both joy and self-control are fruits of the Spirit, but we often neglect one or the other.
- Ecclesiastes 9:8 - White garments and oil.
 - White represents purity (Isaiah 1:18, Revelation 19:14).
 - Oil represents holiness (Exodus 30:31-32, 40:9).
 - Are we enjoying life AND staying pure and holy?
- Ecclesiastes 9:9 - Enjoy your vain life with the wife you love: Your portion.
 - The Hebrew term Hevel is translated: Vain, fleeting, meaningless, pointless.
 - You will not be all in for God until you admit that everything without Him is pointless.
 - Gen Z (upper teens and 20s) are leading the way in church attendance. Their formative years were during the unstable times of the pandemic.
- Ecclesiastes 9:17 - The words of the wise are heard in quiet.
 - In 1 Kings 19:11-18, Elijah hears a strong wind, earthquake, and fire. But God was in the whisper.
- Ecclesiastes 10:18 - Sloth (laziness) and idle hands cause degradation.
 - Enjoyment of life should be balanced with work.

Conclusion:

- Genesis 2:9, 1 Peter 2:24: The cross is the new tree of life that reverses the curse of sin.
 - Jesus came that we may have life to the full (John 10:10).

Questions

1. Read Ecclesiastes 9:2, Ecclesiastes 9:12, and Psalm 23:4-6. Have you experienced your faith or the faith of others grow more during the hard times or the good times? Explain.
2. Read Genesis 3. How would you use this chapter to help you answer the question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"
3. Read Romans 8:28-31. How does this passage give us confidence despite the unpredictability of life from our standpoint?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 9:11. What examples have you seen of people being rewarded or challenged that did not make sense? How does this affect how we view life, faith, and heaven?
5. Read Ecclesiastes 9:7, 9:9, and 10:19, as well as Galatians 5:22-23. Are Christians known for joy? Why or why not? How can we better allow the Spirit's joy to manifest itself through us?
6. Read Ecclesiastes 9:8, Isaiah 1:18, and Revelation 19:14, which show that *white* represents purity. Read Exodus 30:31-32 and 40:9, which show that *oil* represents holiness. What are common ways you have seen people enjoy life WITHOUT purity and holiness? What does it look like to actually enjoy life within the parameters of purity and holiness?
7. Read Ecclesiastes 9:9 and 10:18. What are common ways you have seen people enjoy life without balancing it with hard work? What does it look like to actually enjoy life and have a healthy balance with work?
8. Read Genesis 2:9, 1 Peter 2:24, and John 10:10. Once we have surrendered to the "New Tree of Life", the Cross, what should it look like for someone to lead toward living life to the full? What impact has salvation had on the way you live your life?