

Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:27)





Where Did the Time Go?

Ecclesiastes

What Do You Think?

- What comes to mind when you hear “Ecclesiastes”?
- How might people summarize the Book of Ecclesiastes?

Prolegomena

- My perspective:
 - Written by Solomon (cf. 1:1, 12)
 - A memoir or reflection near the end of his life (ca. 930 BC)
 - See 1 Kings 11
 - “Where did the time go?!”

Prolegomena

- Confusing, contradictory, contrary to other Scripture?
- Pessimistic or realistic?
- Cynical or practical?
- Dangerous to *cherry-pick*!

Key Words & Phrases

- *Vanity*
- *Under the sun*
- *Striving after wind*
- *Wisdom / Folly*
- *Evil (grievous)*

Key Words & Phrases

- *Vanity*
 - *Vapor, breath* -> temporal, vacuous, empty, unsubstantial, worthless
 - Wind (Ps. 1:4)
 - Idols/false gods (Deut. 32:21)
 - Brevity of life (Ps. 94:11)

Key Words & Phrases

- *Vanity* (in Ecclesiastes)
 1. Unfulfilling/unsatisfying (2:11)
 2. Senseless/inconsistent (2:15)
 3. Fleeting/transitory (3:19)

Key Words & Phrases

- *Under the sun*
 - Location?
 - As opposed to *above* the sun – i.e. - the dwelling place of God
 - Earthly life, apart from God
 - But see 2:24-26; 5:18-20

Key Words & Phrases

- *Under the sun*
 - Time?
 - Work is done during the day (1:3; cf. John 9:4; 1 Thess. 5:1-11)
 - Repetition/monotony (1:5)
 - *Your fleeting life* (9:9)

Key Words & Phrases

- *Under the sun*
 - Time?
 - Work is done during the day (1:3)
 - Labor* (e.g. – 2:18-20; 5:18)
 - Repetition/monotony (1:5)
 - Labor* (6:7)

Conclusion?

- Realizing and lamenting that we live in a fallen world (see Gen. 3)
- Man was made for far more, and longs for it (cf. Eccl. 3:11)
- Our temporal existence should whet our appetite for eternal satisfaction

Perspective

- Yet God has given us life to live in the *here and now* (2:24-26; 5:18-20; 9:9)
 - “We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.” (John 9:4)

Perspective

- In eternity we will give an accounting of what we do in time (12:13-14)
 - *What is your reaction to that?*
 - Fear? Dismissal?
 - Anticipation?
 - See Luke 19:11-27; Rev. 22:12

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Judge
 - Acts 17:22-31
 - Recognize God as God (17:24-29)
 - Repent! (17:30-31)
 - John 5:19-29

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Means and Fulfilment of our eternal longings
 - The Way (John 14:6)
 - The Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)
 - The Reconciler (2 Cor. 5:18-20)
 - The Propitiation (1 John 2:2)

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Example
 - Ecclesiastes is about *wisdom*
 - “A poor yet wise lad is better than an old and foolish king...” (4:13)
 - “The words of wise men are like goads...” (12:11)

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Example
 - “The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.” (Luke 2:40)

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Example
 - “And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:52; cf. 1 Sam. 2:26; Prov. 3:1-7; 8:32-36)
 - See Matt. 7:24-27

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Example
 - “If the ruler’s temper rises against you, do not abandon your position, because composure allays great offenses [lit. *sins*]” (10:4)

Where is Jesus?

- Jesus is the Example
 - Wisdom -> self-control -> avoid sin/pursue righteousness
 - Responding to anger with anger is sin (Rom. 12:17-20; Gal. 5:19-21)
 - See 1 Pet. 2:21-25; 3:8-12

So What?

- Live in light of the end
 - “So teach us to number our days,
That we may present to You a
heart of wisdom.” (Ps. 90:12)
 - Cf. John 9:4

So What?

- Live in light of what's beyond the end (12:13-14; cf. 1 Cor. 4:1-5; 2 Pet. 3:11-18; 1 John 3:1-3)
- If you live in the fear of God now you don't need to fear judgement later (cf. 1 John 2:28-29; 4:15-21)