

ECCLESIASTES CHAPTERS 9-12 – “DEATH COMES TO ALL; WISDOM SUPERIOR TO FOLLY; THE VALUE OF DILIGENCE; SEEK IN EARLY LIFE; THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN !”

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

DEATH COMES TO ALL – Chapter 8:10-9:12

Ecc 9:1 For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them.

Ecc 9:2 All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so is the sinner; He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath.

Ecc 9:3 This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

Ecc 9:4 But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

Ecc 9:5 For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten.

Ecc 9:6 Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun.

Ecc 9:7 Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works.

Ecc 9:8 Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil.

Ecc 9:9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

Ecc 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Ecc 9:11 I returned and saw under the sun that— The race is not to the swift, Nor the battle to the strong, Nor bread to the wise, Nor riches to men of understanding, Nor favor to men of skill; But time and chance happen to them all.

Ecc 9:12 For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare, So the sons of men are snared in an evil time, When it falls suddenly upon them.

vs. 1-3 Solomon is saying there's one event common to all mankind. We're all going to die. Whether you're good or bad, whether you offer sacrifice or don't, no matter who you are, the one unifying factor of all people is death.

v. 4 Solomon's conclusion is that it's better to be a dog and hang on to life than to die for a noble cause. Why? Because of an error in his thinking, as seen in the next verse...

vs. 5-6 “When you die, that's it,” says Solomon. In Luke 16, however, Jesus says this isn't so. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man said, “Let me go back and tell my brothers that hell is real.” In other words, he was cognizant of both hell and earth. There are those who will try and convince you that, on the basis of this Scripture, when you die, there is no memory, no eternal damnation. But Jesus, our Greater than Solomon, clarifies the issue.

vs. 7-8 Because Solomon erroneously concludes that nothing exists beyond this life, he says all that's left to do is to put on your fine clothes, douse yourself with after-shave, and live as if life is one big party.

v. 9 Live it up with your wife,” says Solomon. “Wait a minute,” says Paul. “Let you who are married be as though you're not. cf. - *1 Corinthians* 7:29, 30). Don't make money, emotions, or even family a priority. A lot of married couples in the church are putting themselves through unnecessary torture because they're so into their marriages. Jesus said that whoever doesn't hate his family in comparison with his love for Him can't be part of the kingdom (Luke 14:26). We must make Jesus the priority of our lives—not our marriages, not our emotions, not our material possessions. Make the Lord the priority of your life and everything else falls into place. Love the Lord. Worship Him daily. Serve Him faithfully. Any husband, any wife who makes Jesus the love and passion of his or her life will find his or her marriage radically de-pressurized. But try and make your marriage partner your fulfillment, your focal point, and you will experience continual frustration. How does one be a happy wife? Love Jesus. How does one be a good husband? Love Jesus.

vs. 10-11 Notice in his backslidden state that Solomon emphasizes the material rather than the spiritual when he says, “Get involved in working with your hands—in physical, material pursuits. Do it with all your might because that's all there is.”

v. 12 “Like a fish scooped up in a net or a bird plucked out of the sky, so too, your time is coming. It's all fate,” Solomon concludes.

Solomon's start: *1Ch 22:9-10;12-13* Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. [10] He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.' [12] Only may the LORD give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. [13] Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. .

1Ch 28:7, 9 [7] Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.' [9] "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

1Ch 29:23,25 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. [25] So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel. ***2Ch 7:17, 19-20*** As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, [19] "But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, [20] then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

Solomon's mid life reign – turned from God: *1Ki 11:1-13*
1Ki 11:4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. ***1Ki 11:9*** So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,[10] and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.

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WISDOM SUPERIOR TO FOLLY – Chapter 9:13-10:7

Ecc 9:13 This wisdom I have also seen under the sun, and it seemed great to me:

Ecc 9:14 There was a little city with few men in it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great snares around it.

Ecc 9:15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man.

Ecc 9:16 Then I said: "Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, And his words are not heard.

Ecc 9:17 Words of the wise, spoken quietly, should be heard Rather than the shout of a ruler of fools.

Ecc 9:18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war; But one sinner destroys much good."

Ecc 10:1 Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honor.

Ecc 10:2 A wise man's heart is at his right hand, But a fool's heart at his left.

Ecc 10:3 Even when a fool walks along the way, He lacks wisdom, And he shows everyone that he is a fool.

Ecc 10:4 If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, Do not leave your post; For conciliation pacifies great offenses.

Ecc 10:5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, As an error proceeding from the ruler:

Ecc 10:6 Folly is set in great dignity, While the rich sit in a lowly place.

Ecc 10:7 I have seen servants on horses, While princes walk on the ground like servants.

Ecc 10:8 He who digs a pit will fall into it, And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.

Ecc 10:9 He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, And he who splits wood may be endangered by it.

Ecc 10:10 If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength; But wisdom brings success.

Ecc 10:11 A serpent may bite when it is not charmed; The babblers is no different.

Ecc 10:12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious, But the lips of a fool shall swallow him up;

Ecc 10:13 The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, And the end of his talk is raving madness.

Ecc 10:14 A fool also multiplies words. No man knows what is to be; Who can tell him what will be after him?

Ecc 10:15 The labor of fools wearies them, For they do not even know how to go to the city!

vs. 13-18 Joseph Parker, a noted theologian once said: “We are prone to say, ‘Show us true wisdom and the world will instantly recognize it and obey its commands.’ ” History, however, gives a flat contradiction to this supposition. The world has not known wisdom when it has seen it, nor answered the voice of eloquence when it has heard it, nor bowed before the presence of beauty when it has been most openly revealed.” Yet the wise man must not be discouraged—for his time is yet to come.

Chap. 10-v. 1 If you purchased a bottle of expensive perfume and found a dead fly floating at the top, you would be disgusted. A little folly in someone who is supposed to be wise will cause his reputation to be discredited.

v. 2 Biblically, the right hand speaks of strength. If you are wise, whatever you do, you’ll do it with your whole heart, enthusiastically.

v. 3 A fool need not wear a sign to identify him as a fool, for his lack of wisdom announces his own foolishness.

v. 4 If your boss comes down on you, don’t stand up and storm out of the office. Just turn the other cheek. If we wouldn’t fight, if we wouldn’t retaliate, but rather understand that there is something the Lord has for us to learn in every situation, how much better off we would be. Jesus taught us to be those who yield—and yet how determined we are to state our case and stand up for our rights.

v. 5-7 Some assume every time they see a limousine, that a rock star is inside. Why? Because, for the most part, our society rewards showmanship rather than true achievement. A man hits a little round golf ball and makes millions of dollars a year, while poverty abounds. Things aren’t right in our society **v. 8** If you want to end up in the pits, try and entrap someone else. *Breaks through a wall* - “I can bend the rules.” But here, Solomon is saying that, no matter who you are or how prominent you might be, if you break through—if you overstep boundaries—you’re going to be stung.

v. 9 In Solomon’s day, stones or large rocks were placed as land markers. “If you try and change the boundaries, the very rock you moved will fall on you,” Solomon warns. Dt. 20:19 says to be careful not to chop down fruit-bearing trees during the heat of battle. “If you’re cutting down, you are in danger yourself.”

v. 10 A dull ax requires a lot more energy than a sharp one. You might be saying, “When am I going to have opportunity to do something really significant for God?” These are days when He’s sharpening the ax. The fool quickly grabs any tool, even if it’s dull. Not so the wise man.

v. 11 Like a snake who must continually be charmed with a flute, babblers must be kept happy or they’ll bite.

vs. 12-15 A foolish man speaks foolishly, frivolously, and so constantly that he doesn’t even know “how to go to the city” or, in our vernacular, “when to come in out of the rain.”

“under the sun” – 6 times in today’s study
May we be sure to live – “Under the SON!!”

This is the whole conclusion to the matter! --Fear God and keep His commandments!

"How Great Thou Art" – Stuart K. Hine

*Oh Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder Thy power
throughout the universe displayed*

*Refrain: Then sings my soul my Savior God to Thee,
How great thou art! How great Thou art! Then
sings my soul my Savior God to Thee! How great
Thou art! How great Thou art!*

*When Christ shall come With shout of acclamation
To take me home What joy shall fill my heart! Then
I shall bow in humble adoration And there proclaim
my God how great Thou art. (Refrain)*

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Ecc 10:16 Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, And your princes feast in the morning!
Ecc 10:17 Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles, And your princes feast at the proper time— For strength and not for drunkenness!
Ecc 10:18 Because of laziness the building decays, And through idleness of hands the house leaks.

Ecc 10:19 A feast is made for laughter, And wine makes merry; But money answers everything.

Ecc 10:20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought; Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; For a bird of the air may carry your voice, And a bird in flight may tell the matter.

THE VALUE OF DILIGENCE – Chapter 11:1-8

Ecc 11:1 Cast your bread upon the waters, For you will find it after many days.

Ecc 11:2 Give a serving to seven, and also to eight, For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.

Ecc 11:3 If the clouds are full of rain, They empty themselves upon the earth; And if a tree falls to the south or the north, In the place where the tree falls, there it shall lie.

Ecc 11:4 He who observes the wind will not sow, And he who regards the clouds will not reap.

Ecc 11:5 As you do not know what is the way of the wind, Or how the bones grow in the womb of her who is with child, So you do not know the works of God who makes everything.

Ecc 11:6 In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.

Ecc 11:7 Truly the light is sweet, And it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun;

vs. 16-17 Poor is the country who has fools in the place of leadership, who, first thing in the morning, begin to party; who, like children, live to pursue their own pleasures. But how blessed is the country who has wise leaders, who realize that the purpose of eating is simply to give them strength to carry out the tasks of the day.

v. 18 In this section, we have seen a foolish person accurately described by Solomon as one with too many words, too little sense, too early partying, and too late getting to work.

v. 19 These are the words of a fool. How do you know if you're a fool? Is drinking important to you? Is partying a priority for you? Is money the real key to life in your perspective? If so, congratulations. You are a bona fide fool.

v. 20 This is where the saying, “A little bird told me” comes from. How many times have we been absolutely amazed to discover that what we spoke in greatest confidence has somehow circulated throughout the entire region? You see, the “bird” of which Solomon writes is the bird of reality. Whenever you speak about someone else, count on your words getting back to him.

v. 1 Today we would say, “Don't put your extra bread in the freezer—give it away, instead.” “Freely you have received, freely give.” (see Matthew 10:8). He who gives to the poor lends to the Lord (Proverbs 19:17). And since God will be a debtor to no man, whatever we give will be returned to us “pressed down and running over” (Luke 6:38).

v. 2 If you've been generous with lots of folks, lots of folks will be generous with you. The problem is, although we agree with this in theory, we find ourselves saying, “As soon as I get a better job” or, “as soon as we pay off the credit card bill,” or, “as soon as we get our yard planted, then we'll really share.”

vs. 3-4 He who is always anticipating the storm or worried about which way the tree will fall will never sow and, therefore, never reap. Folks, there is never a good time to give. If you're waiting for a more convenient time, it will never come. So do it now. Now is the time to do whatever the Lord has placed upon your heart.

v. 5 Because we don't know the ways of God, we can't base our giving, our loving, or our ministering on our ability to plan when is the appropriate time to do so. Rather, we need simply to be obedient and faithful to keep giving and loving every day.

v. 6 Keep giving because you don't know which seed will sprout. Keep loving because you don't know which person you show love to might respond and see Jesus in the process. Keep sowing in the morning; keep reaching out in the evening. Don't give up. There really is no easy time to open your home, to write that check, to give generously of whatever resources you have. But if you'll do it faithfully, it will return to you in the day of your own trouble.

v. 7 Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: This is Solomon's way of saying, “Life is really a privilege. Be thankful for it.”

Man has tried to be happy without God. It is being tried every day by millions of people. Ecclesiastes shows the absurdity of the attempt by Solomon, the wisest, richest and one of the most powerful of men. He had a wisdom that was God-given. He tried every field of endeavor and pleasure that was known to man. His conclusion was that all is vanity, empty, purposeless. Satisfaction in life can never be attained in the manner. The experiments which Solomon made and his experiences are shown as follows:

(Session 1) Science – *Chapter 1:4-11*
 Wisdom and Philosophy, - *Chapter 1:12-18*
 Pleasure, - *Chapter 2:1-11*
 Materialism (Living for the “Now”) – *Chapter 2:12-26*
 (Session #2) Fatalism – *Chapter 3:1-15*
 Egotism - *Chapters 3:16-4:16*
 Religion – *Chapter 5:1-8*
 Wealth – *Chapters 5:9-6:12*

(Session 3)
Morality – Chapters 7:1-12:12
The Result of the Experiment/s – Chapter 12:13-14

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Ecc 11:8 But if a man lives many years And rejoices in them all, Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming is vanity.

SEEK IN EARLY LIFE – Chapter 11:9-12:8

Ecc 11:9 Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.

Ecc 11:10 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.

Ecc 12:1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them":

Ecc 12:2 While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;

*Ecc 12:3 In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;
Ecc 12:4 When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low.*

Ecc 12:5 Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.

Ecc 12:6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well.

Ecc 12:7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

v. 8 The Bible gives no loophole for troubled teenage years, midlife crisis, or the depression of old age. Rather, here we are told to rejoice in every year, every season of life. Jesus said, “I have come that you might have life and life more abundantly. But the Pharisees couldn’t handle Him. So they called Him a winebibber and a glutton. They found fault with Jesus because there was a robustness about His life, an attraction so evident that people from the world loved to hang around Him. Most likely, Jesus would have a hard time in many ministerial associations even today because they would think Him far too happy to be in the ministry.

v. 9 Parents, I think we should tell our kids how wonderful life is, that youth is a special time. I think sometimes we can be so overbearing and so heavy on trying to make sure they don’t make a mistake that we take away the glory and joy that youth can bring.

v. 10 As believers, we know Jesus came to bring abundant life. But we also know that judgment is coming and that, to those who violate the principles of God, the repercussions are tragic.

v. 1 The word translated “remember” doesn’t mean to daydream or reminisce, but rather it’s an action word that literally means “to act decisively.” That is why, throughout the Bible, when God says, “I will remember you,” He’s not merely saying, “You’re on My mind,” but rather, “I will act decisively on your behalf.” Solomon is saying, “Act decisively and radically toward your Creator in the days when you’re young because harder days are coming.” Young people make a terrible mistake when they think, “It’s too hard to act decisively for the Lord now. Solomon has some interesting things to say about aging that are applicable to every one of us as, regardless of our age, we are older than when we started this chapter...

v. 2 *be not darkened...* This is a Hebrew idiom that means “Before you get depressed.” Many older people are vulnerable to becoming irritable. For them, the sun no longer shines; the moon is no longer bright; the luster of life is gone. *the clouds do not return..* Again, if we were in Solomon’s culture, we would understand that this phrase refers to the mind becoming foggy.

v. 3 See Right Column

v. 4 Hearing begins to fail. The ear is also an incredible instrument. At its peak, it can differentiate between 15,000 tones. But when is it at its peak? At about one and a half years of age. After that, it’s pretty much all downhill. With age, sleep patterns are more easily disrupted. Even a bird chirping outside can waken one.

v. 5 Studies indicate that there are chemical changes which take place in the brain that make us more vulnerable to fears the older we get. **See Right Column for balance of vs. 5 & 6**

v. 7 Finally, after all this process is completed, no matter how healthy we might be or how young we might feel, we eventually die. What is Solomon saying through all of this? First of all, aging is inevitable. It is not something about which we should be embarrassed, but rather something we should be embracing, for with the ancient is wisdom and in length of days is understanding (Job 12:12).

Ecc 12:3a *In the day when the keepers of the house tremble,* The “keepers of the house” speak of the legs.

Ecclesiastes 12:3b *...and the strong men bow down...* The “strong men” refer to the shoulders. Whereas once we stood erect and strong, now our shoulders bend forward a bit and bow somewhat.

Ecclesiastes 12:3c *...and the grinders cease because they are few...* The “grinders,” or teeth, cease working because they’re losing numbers.

Ecclesiastes 12:3d *...and those that look through the windows grow dim,* Your eye is an amazing instrument.. Cataracts **Ecclesiastes 12:5a** *Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way;* ... I hear myself cautioning youngsters about the very things I would do most freely and easily as a kid.

Ecclesiastes 12:5b *... When the almond tree blossoms,* ... Almond trees are white on top. Thus, this speaks of the graying of one’s hair.

Ecclesiastes 12:5c *... The grasshopper is a burden...* When asked to perform some task, the inevitable answer of young guys is, “No problem.” But as we get older, things that were once no problem suddenly become surprisingly burdensome.

Ecclesiastes 12:5d *...and desire fail...* This, of course, speaks of passion.

Ecclesiastes 12:5e *... For man goes to his eternal home, ..., eternity.*

Ecclesiastes 12:5f *... And the mourners go about the streets.:* As his passion begins to fail, as the grasshopper becomes a burden, as he becomes almond tree-like on his head, man finds himself mourning at more and more funerals for his friends and colleagues.

Ecclesiastes 12:6a *before the silver cord be loosed...* The “silver cord” speaks of the spinal cord. Paralysis begins to set in.

Ecclesiastes 12:6 b *...or the golden bowl is broken...* The “golden bowl” was a phrase used to possibly describe the brain. Truly, the brain is an amazing device, constantly processing incredible amounts of information. Yet, in old age, the brain starts to slow down a bit.

Ecclesiastes 12:6c *...or the pitcher be broken at the fountain...* This may speak of the lungs. But eventually, you find yourself out of breath more easily as your breathing capacity diminishes with age.

Ecclesiastes 12:6d *...or the wheel broken at the well.* This speaks of the heart—that incredible machine that pumps blood!

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Ecc 12:8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity."

THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN ! – Chapter 12:9-14

Ecc 12:9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs.

Ecc 12:10 The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright—words of truth.

Ecc 12:11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

Ecc 12:12 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

Ecc 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

vs. 8 & 9 Grappling with advancing age, struggling with the meaning of life, Solomon still continued to teach. This says to me that even during seasons of struggle, we need to share. It's important to realize that truth is truth and must be conveyed no matter what season one is in personally. Share truth with people even if, like Solomon, you are struggling because truth needs to be spoken faithfully, consistently, diligently

v. 10 Solomon searched for just the right words to express what was on his heart. *which was written* - Aren't you beginning to sense that all the while Solomon was struggling, he knew what was real?

v. 11 Just as goads are used to prod cattle, the words of the wise get us moving in the right direction. Words of wisdom nail down truth. Which are *given*. Where from? Not from me. Not from you. But from one Shepherd—Jesus Christ. The words of the Lord revealed in His Word are what will move the cattle and fasten down truth in the lives of those we love.

vs. 12-14

We've been waiting several weeks for the meaning and the purpose of life!!! We come to it now in verse 13! Now we find the conclusion of the whole matter.

Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: You want to know where it's found? 1) Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. It's in fearing God and keeping His commandments! For this is man's all.

Ecc 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil. Life, its meaning and its purpose is found in an obedient relationship with God. Everything else is an empty and frustrating existence, at best. (continued – see right column)

Notice true life here as he declares it and God intends it, isn't just found in that there is an existence of God, out there, somewhere. And it's not found just only in the life of a person who has only received Jesus as Savior, but have then not taken the further step of obedience to God's word. This is where life is found. The richest life is not found in simply knowing that there is a God, or in being saved, but then living a life in God marked by being in obedience to Him. That's the richest, fullest, life that God intends it to be. Jesus said in John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

So that is the meaning and purpose in life, to be engaged in a personal, obedient relationship with the Lord! That's it? It took 11 ½ chapters of build up to something that simple? Exactly right! That's it! Yes, That's it! You would think Solomon would take another 15 chapters to describe all of this. But he doesn't want to do that. The meaning and the purpose of life is found just in that place! It's simple as it can be! And that's the way God intends it to be – to be simple!

To know God, to put my faith in Him, to begin a relationship with Him; to learn His word and to obey His Word; to commune with Him, grow in that relationship as a result of that. Solomon says that is the greatest life a person can possibly live on this side of heaven! And that's the truth!

Only a life lived for God is worthy of living. Everything else is empty and it is frustrating. That's the point of the book! We're never going to have all the gold that Solomon had or the riches, hobbies, access to learning and sin, but he did and went on the search for us. He looked everywhere. He even developed his own philosophy. Without Him it's all nonsense, it's all emptiness and frustration.

He said **it's all found in knowing God and walking in fellowship with Him.** Which tells us **we're living the greatest life a person can live on this side of heaven!**

Lord thank You for delivering me from a life of emptiness and frustration!!! Lord, **by Your grace, I can walk in Your ways and keep Your commandments. By Your grace, Lord, I not only fear You, but I love You."** And life has meaning—**not under the sun, but in the Son.** Amen.