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Ecclesiastes

Lesson 13: Christ, Our Wisdom for Living

http://www.clearcreekchapel.org/Ministries/Education_ABE.htm

God Alone Holds the Key to Life's Meaning

- Why do I exist?
- What is the purpose of my life?
- How can I find meaning and significance to my life?
- What can I do to make my life worthwhile?

Author's intention

The author wants to:

- Teach us to use our eyes as well as our ears to learn the ways of God and man
- Ask questions about the boundaries of life

Ecclesiastes and Proverbs

- Proverbs is optimistic about life in a God-ordered universe
- Ecclesiastes is pessimistic about finding meaning in God's universe

Question for Ecclesiastes study:

How can the theme of meaninglessness in Ecclesiastes be squared with the overall view of the Bible that a rational and personal God reveals himself and his purposes for creation?



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Author

Ecclesiastes 1:1 – Son of David

Proverbs 1:1 – Son of David

Ecclesiastes 1:12 – King in Jerusalem

Proverbs 1:1 – King of Israel

Solomon was the author of Ecclesiastes

Qoheleth means preacher or teacher.

The root of the word “Ecclesiastes” signifies an assembly, the equivalent of the Greek word ekklesia.

Structure

Title/author (1:1)

a poem about the brevity and insignificance of life (1:2-11)

b wisdom’s failure to discover life’s meaning (1:12-2:26)

c poem about time (3:1-15)

d God is in heaven and you are on earth (3:16-6:12)

c’ poem about time (7:1-14)

b’ wisdom’s failure (7:15-10:19)

a’ poem about life’s brevity (10:20-12:8)

Conclusion (12:9-14)

Two voices

Narrator/Interpreter: 1:1, 7:27, 12:9

The Teacher, First Person: 1:12

Ecclesiastes and the fear of the Lord

Ecclesiastes affirms that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Ecc. 5:7, 12:13)

Ecclesiastes analyzes how far a man will get in life without the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom.

Solomon expects us to follow through with the implications of believing in God.

Reflection: if I were an atheist for a day.

Themes/Word Concepts

- man's labor, work
- life “under the sun”
- profit, advantage
- misery, futility, adversity, evil
- goodness, good
- light vs. darkness
- portion, heritage, lot



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- folly
- vexation
- meaningless
- saw, consider, search, seek, found

Ecclesiastes and “meaninglessness”

Meaninglessness is:

- Not without cause or explanation
- A judgment or condition imposed upon the world
- A manifestation of the fall
- Evidence of God’s rule as creator, judge, and covenanter

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

The New Testament:

- Upholds God’s imposition of meaninglessness on a fallen world
- Deepens and broadens our understanding of meaninglessness
- Reveals the ultimate resolution for meaninglessness