

I. Limited Perspective - Eccl 1:12-15

1. Introduction - "I the teacher" (**verse 12**)
 - king over Jerusalem
 2. He is seeking for meaning and significance
 - Rea -as are we
 - seeking "under the sun"
 - he finds it all "meaningless" - transitory with no lasting value
 3. How important is "finding meaning" in life?
 - Rea -identifies as "teacher" though he was king
 4. He applies his mind (**verse 13**)
 - Rea -"figure" things out?
 5. We say "knowledge is power"
 - Rea -but "lean not to your own understanding"
 - Rea -"knowing" and "knowledge" (especially in the scientific realm) is extremely limited - an example is how "science" handled Covid
 6. He says that God did this - "a heavy burden laid on mankind"
 7. It's like chasing the wind (**verse 14**)
 - Rea -it is meaningless
 - that just means he doesn't see the meaning. We think that if we can't understand it, then, it can't be understood - not true
 8. What is lacking or "crooked" (**verse 15**)
 - Rea -we cannot fix the deepest problems of humanity
 - Rea -we cannot understand people, end wars, end poverty, etc
 - Rea -frustrated
 9. As knowledge increases so does sorrow - see 1:18
 - Rea -the world doesn't always make sense, and we often can't fix it
- Ideas and Questions:**
1. Discuss the limits of "knowledge" and even "wisdom"
 2. Sounds like a young man who's gonna "fix" everything
 3. His quest for understanding and "meaning" is very "meaningful" for us

II. Inheritance Blown - Eccl. 2:18-21

1. He had toiled (**verse 18**) and hated it because he dies and leaves it to someone else
 - he may be a "fool" (**verse 19**)
2. The irony is that the person who inherits may have never worked a day in his life
 - Rea -he had no control over his own legacy
 - what will they say about us after we're gone - they probably won't say anything about us when we're gone
3. These thoughts lead to "despair" (**verse 20**)
 - Rea -"despair" is the idea that it's useless - so I might as well eat drink and be merry. In our day it leads to cynicism. Notice the cynicism in our "sit-coms"
 - Rea -his situation is compounded by the fact that this is true for all of us not just the "teacher"
4. **Verse 21** contains the teacher's frustration

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. So, why do YOU think we ought to work hard... just to leave it to another?
2. He begins right – seeking wisdom vs money and things
3. There is a bit of a philosopher in all of us - “doctrines” are often man’s way of “making sense of it all” but all our doctrines are also limited. “Theology” is the study of God... that’s laughable, who can understand God?

III. Enjoy Work - Eccl. 2:22-26

1. What do you get for all your work? (**Verse 22**)
Rea -a bigger house? Status? Fame?
2. Our minds cannot rest (verse 23)
3. We make a good thing the ultimate thing
4. God is referenced rarely in Ecclesiastes - but is mentioned in **verse 24**
Rea -God was referenced in 1:13 - then again at 2:24 and 2:26 (twice)
Rea -those who are frustrated by life (from the philosophical sense) are often, also, frustrated with God
5. Find satisfaction in the work of your hands - this is from God
-you can do no better than to enjoy what you eat and drink
Rea -mmm sounds downright depressing - to live life to eat... a biscuit? No wonder Cracker Barrel is running over
6. Many see these gifts as entitled
7. Without Him who can eat and enjoy life? (**Verse 25**)
Rea -so he identifies the source of enjoyment. There is a big difference in experiencing life and enjoying life. We experience life with the body, we enjoy life with our hearts.
8. Two things that God does in **verse 26**
A. He gives wisdom and knowledge to those who please Him
B. To the sinner He gives the frustration of storing up till they die - chasing after wind
*so the difference is where a person places God
Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
 1. We have questions about the meaning of life - all of us do
Remember the song that said “is that all there is?”
If believers can’t answer “meaning” questions then we too, have failed and might as well eat, drink and be merry
 2. The “Purpose Driven Church” and “Life” are all about significance in life
-the gospel itself answers these questions
 3. There is a grave danger in all our philosophy and theology - to try and understand it all
-“lean NOT to thy own understanding”
-leaning on your understanding is like leaning on the wind - it changes often
 4. Life is bankrupt of meaning with out Jesus