

# Ecclesiastes

## Introduction

As a reminder, in 1 Kings 4:32, the Bible says that Solomon, “spoke 3000 proverbs, and his songs were 1005.” Because we are studying the Bible in chronological order, we are examining the writings of king Solomon in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs at this point.

## The Work of Solomon Speaks to the Competitors to Christianity in our Culture Today

- Egotism: the idolatry of self – Addressed in Proverbs
- Materialism: the idolatry of stuff – Addressed in Ecclesiastes
- Eroticism – the idolatry of sex – Addressed in Song of Songs

The Word Ecclesiastes literally means “preacher”. Solomon recorded his experiences and attitudes while he was out of fellowship with God. He wrote this late in life specifically to his children and grandchildren in order to advise them that life apart from God was futile. He asked the question, “What is the purpose of life?”

**Key Chapter** – Chapter 12: A Call to Remember

**Key Words** – We must understand two key ideas

- Vanity (occurs 37 times) – refers to meaningless or futility
- Under the Sun – denotes life without reference to God

**The Structure:** The key to understanding Ecclesiastes is found in the beginning and end. In the beginning we have the preacher’s basic message. In the end, we have his final assessment

### **I. The Theme (1:1-3)**

### **II. Seeking Satisfaction in Life (1:4-12:12)**

- Through nature (1:4-11)
- Through wisdom (1:12-18)
- Through pleasure (2:1-11)
- Through materialism (2:12-26)
- Through self centeredness (3:1-4:16)
- Through religion (5:1-8)
- Through wealth (5:9-6:12)
- Through morality (7:1-12:12)

### **III. A Spiritual Admonition (12:13-14)**

**Ten Vanities of Ecclesiastes:** Solomon sought happiness, meaning, and satisfaction in ten areas of life and made conclusions on each.

- Human Wisdom (2:15-16) – wise and foolish die alike
- Human Labor (2:19-21) – Laborer and the wise die alike
- Human Plans (2:26) – Man proposes, God disposes
- Envy (4:4) – success brings envy, not joy
- Greed (4:7) – Get more and remain empty
- Fame (4:16) – One day popular and the next forgotten
- Wealth (5:10) – Money does not satisfy
- Coveting (6:9) – Wanting causes more wanting
- Frivolity (7:6) – Time wasted brings a sad end
- Recognition (8:10-14) – Bad are often honored by men



Ecclesiastes

To every thing  
there is a **SEASON**  
and a **TIME**  
to every purpose  
under the *heaven*

## Most Famous Passage from Ecclesiastes – Chapter 3

1 To everything *there is* a season,

A time for every purpose under heaven:

2 A time to be born, And a time to die;

A time to plant, And a time to pluck *what is* planted;

3 A time to kill, And a time to heal;

A time to break down,

And a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, And a time to laugh;

A time to mourn, And a time to dance;

5 A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing;

6 A time to gain, And a time to lose;

A time to keep, And a time to throw away;

7 A time to tear, And a time to sew; A time to keep silence,

And a time to speak; 8 A time to love,

And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace.

Solomon concluded that life is composed of joy and sorrow, building and destroying, living and dying. Each comes at the proper time. This reminded him that we are creatures of time and must come to grips with our own mortality if we are to be happy in this life and in the life to come.

## Solomon's and Great Wealth - Ecclesiastes 5:8-20

### Life Lessons:

- **Money is Essential (v.18)** – “**It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink and to enjoy the good of all his labor**” – Solomon realized that money is just a part of life.
- **Money is an Endowment (v.19)** – “**this is the gift of God**” - Solomon had come to the place where he realized that his money was a gift from God.
- **Money is given for Enjoyment (19)** – “**rejoice in his labor**” - God wants us to enjoy the money he has given to us and to use the money for His glory!

### Life Warnings

- **Money is Temporary (14-15)** - “**And he shall take nothing from his labor**” - The man who had it all realized that money was temporary, passing, and fading.
- **Money is Tempting (10)** – “**He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance, with increase**” - Solomon had come to the place where he realized that the great temptation of his life was that he love the blessings of God more than he loved God, and this is the great temptation of our time
- **Money can be Treacherous (11-13)** □ - Solomon had given in to the temptation to love the blessings of God more than God himself and found the results to be devastating:

10 – It did not satisfy. He was always left empty, wanting, and searching

11 – When you love money, more and more of your time is devoted to making and protecting it and less and less time is then available for the most important things in this life – God and family!

12 – Stress – The love of money causes worry, anxiety, stress – How are we going to protect it, save it, invest it, keep it, and spend it?