

SERMON OUTLINE Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

The Call to Live by Wisdom and Faith

THE TWO GIFTS OF ECCLESIASTES

Honesty About Life Under the Sun

1. *If all we can see is all there is, then there's nothing but vanity/mystery in this life (1:2, 14; 2:11, 17, 26; 3:16; 4:1-3; 5:8; 8:16-17; 9:1; 11:8; 12:7).*
2. *Nothing on earth can truly satisfy by itself (1:1, 3, 4, 8, 11; 2:1-25; 5:10, 19; 6:1-8; 8:14; 9:11).*
3. *There is nothing new (1:5-11).*
4. *No one knows the future (2:19, 22; 6:12; 7:14; 8:7; 9:12) and death comes to everyone (2:15-16; 3:19-20; 6:6; 8:8; 9:2-3; 12:1-8).*
5. *Getting the most pleasure out of whatever good God gives, whenever He gives it (2:24; 3:12-13; 3:22; 5:18; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:8-9).*

The Urgent Need to Get (and Keep) Our Heads Above the Sun (2:24-25; 3:11, 14, 17; 5:19; 6:1-5, 10; 7:13, 14, 20, 29; 8:11-13; 9:1-6; 10:5; 11:9; 12:14)

THE GIFTS OF ECCLESIASTES COMBINED AND APPLIED (7:1-4)

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

The main idea of this sermon is the main idea of Ecclesiastes: Living life as God intends means living by wisdom and faith. Because life is under the sun, we need wisdom to know how the world ordinarily works and what it means to live in light of it. And because life is also above the sun, we need faith in God's promises to live the full lives God made us for. The main takeaways are to learn wisdom and live by it and learn God's promises and live by them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. What has stood out to you the most from our time in Ecclesiastes?
3. What is one way you are living differently in light of the truths of Ecclesiastes?
4. Which of the two approaches (looking at the whole book or looking at 7:1-4) best helped you see the glory of Ecclesiastes?
5. How have you experienced the five under the sun lessons of Ecclesiastes? Which one have you seen most?
6. What has God used most consistently to keep your head above the sun (in His promises)?
7. What is something you once thought would satisfy you, but eventually realized couldn't? Is there anything other than Jesus that you still think might?
8. Have you had the chance to share the message of Ecclesiastes with anyone lately? How did they respond?
9. In what way/s did the sermon help you see the greatness of God?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

10. Read back through Ecclesiastes and make a note of whatever stands out the most. Share it at DG after the last sermon.
11. Share the message of Ecclesiastes with someone who is looking for satisfaction under the sun. Use it to point them to Jesus.
12. Read your Bible thoughtfully and prayerfully every day this week. Keep reading until you have something to hold onto.
13. Make your funeral plan.
14. Begin reading Colossians in preparation for the next book we'll be in (in the new year).
15. Ask two different people in your family or DG (1) One thing they got from this sermon, and (2) How you can pray for them.
16. Pick one specific thing you mean to do differently, with the Spirit's help, as a result of the things you heard in this text/sermon.

PRAYER POINTS

17. Adoration. Praise God that He is eternal, gracious, righteous, and just. Praise God that He is life and perfect in all His ways. Praise God that He is kind, wise, and good. Praise God that He never changes. Praise God that He sees and knows all.
18. Confess. Confess the ways you are looking for lasting satisfaction outside of Jesus. Confess any ways you are living foolishly. Confess the ways you've been living as a functional atheist, given into fads, and acted as if you will not stand before God in judgment. Confess ways you've neglected to get your eyes above the sun—failed to trust in God's promises.
19. Thanksgiving. Thank God for the grace He's given us through our time in Ecclesiastes. Thank God for the two main gifts of Ecclesiastes—honesty about life under the sun and the way that points us to Jesus. Thank God for sending His Son!
20. Supplication. Ask God to help all of us recognize the inadequacy of the things of earth to truly satisfy. Ask God to make Jesus our greatest treasure. Ask God to help us to live in light of the certainty of our death and eternity after. Ask God to give us both good things and the ability to enjoy them. Ask God to use us to bring the gospel to our community and the world. Ask God to give us wisdom and faith to live well in this world.