



# Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

## “The End of The Matter”

Epilogue

# *A REMINDER (12:11)*



1. Goad – a sharp rod used to drive animals.
2. Firmly Embedded Nail – firm, strong, immovable.

*The wisdom of Ecclesiastes serves as a concrete, and often painful (but good) reminder that life without God is ultimately meaningless.*

# *THE END OF THE MATTER (12:13)*



## 1. Fear God.

- Fear and *cavod*
- Cultivate intimacy

# *THE END OF THE MATTER (12:13)*



1. Fear God.

2. Obey his commands.

- Matt 22:36-40; Jn 15:12, 17

- Obedience is the natural outworking of intimacy with God.

# AGAINST LEGALISM



On the nature of obedience, a Christian legalist may turn to Jesus' statement "If you love me you will obey my commandments" (Jn 14:15) as a proof text to show that obedience equals love. This fundamentally misunderstands the statement. The command of Jesus *is* love, which is only possible as the love of God saturates our hearts. If anything, Jesus is teaching his disciples the nature of love . . . "we love because he first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19).

# *AGAINST LEGALISM*



If someone has trouble obeying, he does not primarily have an obedience problem, he has a love problem. If someone has trouble loving, he has a remembering problem. If someone has trouble remembering the gospel he must be re-minded of the love of God, which will compel him (2 Cor 5:14). We must disciple people in belief first . . . this is where the Spirit is primarily working to bring about a deep-seated conviction in the disciple's heart that he is unconditionally loved by the Father. Only then can a disciple truly obey Jesus' command.

# *THE END OF THE MATTER (12:13)*



1. Fear God.
2. Obey his commands.
3. Everything will be laid bare.
  - We bring NOTHING

# PRAYER



“When You would guide me I control myself, when You would be sovereign I rule myself, when You would take care of me I suffice myself, when I should depend on Your providings I supply myself, when I should submit to Your providence I follow my will, when I should study, love, honor and trust You I serve myself. I fault and correct Your laws to suit myself. Instead of You I look to man’s approbation and I am by nature an idolater . . .



# PRAYER



Lord, it is my chief design to bring my heart back to You. Convince me that I cannot be my own god or make myself happy or my own Christ to restore my joy or my own spirit to teach, guide, and rule me. Show me that none of these things can heal a wounded conscious or support a tottering frame or uphold a departing spirit. Then take me to the cross and leave me there.”

“Man a Nothing” in *The Valley of Vision*



**Small Group Discussion Questions**  
**(Ecclesiastes 12:9-14)**  
**November 5, 2015**

*Allow each person in your group to answer one of the following questions:*

- *What questions did this week's reading raise for you?*
  - *Did you learn anything new?*
  - *What encouraged you the most?*
  - *In what ways will you apply what you learned? Be specific.*
  - *Think of one thing you learned. Who can you encourage with this truth?*
- What are some differences between God's wisdom and the world's "wisdom"? Does God's wisdom ever change? Does the world's?
  - Do your daily decisions reflect a life grounded in the person and work of Jesus, or, do they reflect a life centered on yourself? Discuss among your group the various ways that this reminder—life apart from God is meaningless—manifests itself in your life.
  - What does it mean to fear God? What consistent steps are you taking to cultivate intimacy with God? Share some practical disciplines that have proven effective and commit to hold one another accountable to implement one of those.
  - What is the relationship between intimacy with God and obedience? Is obedience something we can conjure up apart from the Spirit's work in our lives? Do you ever find yourself attempting to live the Christian life without depending on God's help? What is the natural result?
  - Ecclesiastes ends with the reminder that everything will be laid bare before God. Have you received the forgiveness, grace, and new life found only in Christ? If not, His invitation to come stands (Matthew 11:28-30). If so, is there anything hindering your intimacy with Jesus? Take this opportunity to share this with the group.