



Ecclesiastes:
“Vanity of Vanities”
An Introduction

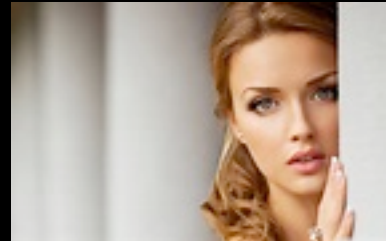
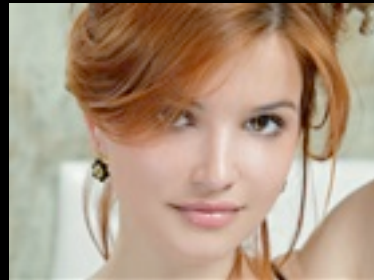


How do you keep score?

How Do You Keep Score?



How Do You Keep Score?



How Do You Keep Score?



How Do You Keep Score?



How would others (your wife, kids, co-workers, and closest friends) answer this question for you?

How Do You Keep Score?



How do your goals and values compare with what Scripture teaches?

Background



Author: King Solomon, the son of David and the wisest man to ever live (see 1 Kings 3–4)

Date: Written late in Solomon's life (935 BC)

- Song of Solomon—early years
- Proverbs—middle years

Background



Purpose: To show the futility of trying to find life apart from God—“All is Vanity”

1. Fleeting or like a vapor
2. Futile or meaningless
3. Incomprehensible or mysterious

Background



Themes:

- The vanity of trying to find meaning and purpose in life through intellectual pursuits, work, riches, fame, and pleasure
- The call to fear God and enjoy life while you can

Background



Christ in Ecclesiastes:

- God has set eternity in the heart of man (3:11).
- Only Christ can ultimately provide joy and fulfillment (John 10:9-10)—a contrast of life "under the sun" vs. life "under the Son."

Background



Christ in Ecclesiastes: *“Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes as a warning to those who attempt to find joy without God. In fact, living without God is impossible for He has ‘placed eternity in the hearts [of men]’ (3:11). Solomon’s pursuit of happiness through experiences and philosophy remained unattainable without God . . .*

Background



“Christ did not come into the world to make life bearable for humans. He came to provide life ‘more abundantly’ (John 10:9, 10). Christ remains the ‘one Shepherd’ who is the source of all wisdom (John 12:11). Therefore, every pursuit without Christ is futile.” (John MacArthur)

Unique Features



- Solomon's honest exploration for purpose and meaning in life
- Repetition of the word "vanity" and phrase "under the sun"
- The pessimistic and cynical tone (contra. Proverbs)

Unique Features



- Difficult to outline and apparent lack of organization—shifting topics
- The wide array of topics from work, leisure, entertainment, time, worship, nature, money, death, sleep, eating, drinking, government, etc.

Background



Outline:

- The Introduction (1:1-11)
- The Search for Meaning in this World (1:12–6)
- Living Wisely in this World (7–11)
- The Conclusion (12)

Background



Key Chapter(s): 1, 2, 3, 12

Key Verse(s): 1:2-3, 11; 3:1, 11; 4:9-12; 12:11-14

Key Words: Vanity (of vanities) or meaningless; under the sun/heaven; striving after wind; wisdom; folly; there is nothing better for a man than to . . .

Chart



Chapter	Section	Title	Key Verses	Content	Questions
1:1-11	Introduction	All is Vanity	1:2-3, 11	Nothing New Under the Sun (1-11)	1:2
1:12-18	The Search for Meaning in this World	Futility		In the Pursuit of Knowledge— "Increased Sorrow" (12-18)	

Chart



Verse	Question
1:2	Are we really to conclude that life has no meaning?

To Note



- Parking
- Name Tags and Room Numbers
- Open Group
- Workbooks



**Small Group Discussion Questions
(Overview)
September 24, 2015**

- Why did you sign up for Summit? What do you hope to get out of our time together? What reservations, if any, do you have about participating in this Bible study?
- How would you finish this statement, “Spiritually speaking, I would describe this time in my life as”
- Have you ever studied the Book of Ecclesiastes? What do you remember? What questions do you have about the book that you hope we discuss?
- One of the primary themes of Ecclesiastes is the endless pursuit of meaning and fulfillment apart from the Lord. What are some of the common ways men tend to look for life apart from the Lord?
- Would you say you are unconvinced, somewhat convinced, or completely convinced that meaning and fulfillment are ultimately found in the Lord? How can this group support and pray for you over the next week as you try to pursue and honor the Lord?

<p>ECCLESIASTES: VANITY</p> <p>Outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction (1:1-11) • Searching for Meaning in this World (1:12–6:12) • Living Wisely in this World (7:1-11:10) • Conclusion (12:1-14) 	<p>Author: King Solomon, the son of David and the wisest man to ever live (see 1 Kings 3-4).</p> <p>Date/Setting: Late in Solomon's life (935 BC); cf. Song of Solomon was written in his early years and Proverbs in his middle years.</p> <p>Purpose: To show the futility of trying to find life apart from God.</p> <p>Themes: The vanity of trying to find meaning and purpose in life through work, riches, fame & pleasure. The call to fear God and enjoy life while you can.</p> <p>Christ in Ecclesiastes: God has set eternity in the heart of man (3:11). Only Christ can ultimately provide joy and fulfillment (John 10:9-10)—a contrast of life "under the sun" vs. life "under the Son."</p> <p>Key Chapter(s): 1, 2, 3, 12</p> <p>Key Verse(s): 1:2-3, 11; 3:1, 11; 4:9-12; 12:11-14</p> <p>Key Words: Vanity (of vanities) or meaningless; under the sun/heaven; striving after wind; wisdom; folly.</p>
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Chapter	Section	Title	Key Verse(s)	Contents	?
1:1-11	Introduction	All Is Vanity	1:2-3, 11	Nothing New Under the Sun (1-11)	1:2
1:12-18	Searching for Meaning in this World	Futility	2:11, 17, 24-26	In the Pursuit of Knowledge—"Increased Sorrow" (12-18)	
2				In Pleasure & Possessions—"Striving After Wind" (1-11)	
				In Living Wisely—"The Wise Dies Just Like the Fool" (12-17)	
3		Injustice	3:1, 11	In Work & Toil—"Enjoyed by Someone Else" (18-23)	
				Find Joy in God & Enjoy Life While You Can (24-26)	
4		Wealth	4:9-12	The Various Seasons of Life (1-8)	
	Find Joy in God & Enjoy Life While You Can (9-15)				
5	Wealth	5:1-2	Injustice—The Righteous and Wicked Suffer the Same Fate (16-22)		
			Oppression—No One to Comfort the Oppressed (1-3)		
6	Wealth	6:1-2	Envy—Leads to a Self-Destructing Pace (4-6)		
			Isolation—No One to Enjoy Life With (7-12)	4:2	
7	Wealth	6:1-2	Fame—Fleeting (13-16)		
			Fear God (1-7)		
8	Wealth	5:1-2	Ungodly Leadership—Oppression of the Poor (8-10)		
			Greed—Unsatiated Appetite for More (11-12)		
9	Wealth	5:1-2	Loss of Investment—You Lose It Either Way (13-17)		
			Find Joy in God & Enjoy Life While You Can (18-20)		
10	Living Wisely in this World	Proverbs	No Time to Enjoy It (1-6)		
			No Lasting Satisfaction (7-12)		
11	Living Wisely in this World	Proverbs			
12:1-8	Living Wisely in this World	Proverbs			
12:9-14	Conclusion	Fear God			