

ARE YOU LIVING UNDER OR ABOVE THE SUN?
(Solomon's Guide to Enjoy Life & Stay Off the Dead-End Streets)

I. SOLOMON'S INTRODUCTION (1:1-11)

A. The BACKGROUND. (1:1-3)

The MESSAGE of Ecclesiastes is that God designed life to _____ Him and be _____ in relationship with Him, but APART FROM A _____, VERTICAL, _____ RELATIONSHIP WITH _____, MAN IS _____ AND LIFE IS _____.

B. The BEGINNING OBSERVATIONS of the Preacher. (1:4-11)

1. Regarding *people*, there appears to be an endless cycle of _____ and _____ while the earth remains. (1:4) 3 takeaways or implications:

- The earth abides forever reminds us of both its _____. {Genesis 1:1} Ecclesiastes assumes that a person believes in God.
- If He is Creator and you and I are created, we are _____ to Him. And the last verse of Ecclesiastes reminds us that one day God will judge you and me. No exceptions.
- One generation passes away & another generation comes reminds us of the brevity of ____ & the reality of _____. And apart from the WOG, you cannot understand death, nor properly prepare for it. This hints of the Fall with all its implications.

2. Regarding *nature*, there appears to be _____ which are constant, yet without real purpose or direction. (1:5-7)

- Where is creation headed? Is there a divine direction of life?
- What do we learn from history?
- What difference does it make what you believe about the future?

3. Regarding the *flesh*, human existence is _____ and the flesh is never _____, nor do they provide the answers we seek. (1:8) What is really satisfying in life?

4. Regarding something *new*, there is _____ new under the sun though our memories are short & may forget this. (1:9-11)

- But what does God say about something "new" in the Son? As a believer in Christ, you have a ...

- 1) A new _____, as a "new creation in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17), with ...
- 2) A new _____, as you "have eternal life" (1 John 5:13), along with ...
- 3) A new _____, the love of Christ compelling you (2 Cor. 5:14), to encourage ...
- 4) A new _____, to live for Him who died for you (2 Cor. 5:15) and ...
- 5) A new _____, to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), with the possibility of ...

- 6) A new _____, to no longer be conformed to this world but transformed through the WOG and
- 7) A new _____, the Holy Spirit to give victory over the flesh & produce godly fruit including ...
- 8) A new _____, to love others as Christ has loved you (John 13:34-35), with ...
- 9) A new _____, as an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-20), and will one day enjoy ...
- 10) A new _____ and new _____ wherein dwells righteousness (Rev.21-22).

II. SOLOMON'S INVESTIGATION (1:12–11:10)

A. Solomon's PURSUITS. (1:12–18)

1. Solomon's reckless abandonment in pursuing happiness and meaning of life are seen by the words "to _____ {investigate the roots} and to _____" {to explore thoroughly on all sides by experimentation and experience}. Did he have the brains & bucks to do this?
2. The "wisdom" spoken of here is _____. (1:13c) – see Isaiah 55:8-9. The challenge was not merely the examination of the facts but the interpretation of the facts.
3. What was a "burdensome task"? (1:13a) To seek to find lasting purpose & meaning apart from _____ and His _____.
4. Who has given this task and who has it been given to? (1:13b) "*this burdensome task _____ has given to the _____, by which they may be exercised.*" What insights does the Hebrew yield?
5. Why is this so? Because all is "_____ " apart from a right vertical relationship with _____ and a knowledge of His _____. (1:14a)
6. A basic observation of the fallen world that adds to the frustration: "What is crooked _____ be made straight, and what is lacking _____ be numbered." What does this mean?
7. A personal testimony and its conclusion: "I communed with my heart, saying, "Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My heart has understood great wisdom and knowledge." 17 And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is _____. Why? For in much wisdom is _____, And he who increases knowledge _____.

Principle to remember: If everything is empty "UNDER the sun", then purpose and meaning must be found "_____ the sun" or "in the _____". How can a person live "above the sun"?

- 1) By coming to personally know _____ as your Savior. (John 10:9-10)
- 2) By finding your security and identity in life _____. (Eph. 1:6-7, 13)
- 3) By targeting living for _____ as your purpose in life. (Phil.1:21)
- 4) By allowing the Word of God to give you a divine _____ "above the sun". (Rom.12:1-2)
- 5) By walking _____ in fellowship with Christ as motivated by His love and enabled by His Spirit. (Gal.2:20)

Closing take-home: God designed life to _____ Him and be _____ in relationship with Him, but APART FROM A _____, VERTICAL, _____ RELATIONSHIP WITH _____, MAN IS _____ AND LIFE IS _____.