

**Ecclesiastes**  
*Living in Light of the End*  
**A Search for Purpose and Joy**  
**Ecclesiastes 1:12 – 2:11, 24-26**

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / June 18, 2023*

Four things we can learn from Solomon today:

**I. He Wants You to Get Serious about Finding Real Purpose in Life**

**Ecclesiastes 1:13** “And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven...”

That word “seek” means to penetrate into the depth of something, while the word “search” means to step back and get the big picture or take a comprehensive survey of it all.

**II. He Wants You to Get Honest about What You Can and Cannot Control**

**Ecclesiastes 1:15** “What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.”

In other words, we’ll never get this all sorted out on our own because the real problem is a sin problem that has left us and all of creation in bondage to futility.

Education, medication, and Information will never fix the real problem because it’s a spiritual problem that’s rooted in our separation from God.

**III. He Wants You to Get Over What the World Tells You to Chase After**

**A. Liquor and Laughter Won’t Last** (2:2-3)

**B. Projects and Possessions Pass On to Others** (2:4-6, 18-19)

**Ecclesiastes 2:18-19** “...I must leave it to the man who will come after me... <sup>19</sup> he will be master of all for which I toiled...”

**C. Song and Sex Will Never Satisfy** (2:8)

**D. Fame and Fulfillment Fade Quickly** (2:9,16)

**Ecclesiastes 2:16** “...there is no enduring remembrance...in the days to come all will have been long forgotten...”

**IV. He Wants You to Get Excited about What God Can Do in Your Life**

Notice how the tone of these verses move us from the depressing philosophy of “life under the sun” to the refreshing reality of a living God in the midst of it that changes the way we perceive everything around us!

**Ecclesiastes 2:24-26** “There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, <sup>25</sup> for apart from Him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? <sup>26</sup> For to the one who pleases Him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner He has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.”

The difference a living God makes in the midst of our broken world:

### A. You'll Be Able to Receive What You Could Never Achieve

Solomon wants you to know that true satisfaction is possible, but not without God. You have to receive because it has to be given by God. Three times in verse 26, he uses the word “give.”

**Ecclesiastes 2:26** “For to the one who pleases Him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner He has given the business of gathering and collecting only to give to the one who pleases God...”

When it comes to joy, purpose, and peace, we were designed to be receivers, not achievers. You can only get these from God Himself and He gives them to you when you invite Him into your life!

It's not about reaching our dreams, fulfilling our potential, or customizing and crafting our own identity and truth. It's about recognizing our shocking frailty and desperate need to be tethered again to a good, wise, loving, and personal God.

### B. You'll Go from Chasing the Extraordinary to Enjoying the Ordinary

**Ecclesiastes 2:24-25** “There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God,<sup>25</sup> for apart from Him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?”

Our world is all about trying to seize and possess more things, but real joy is found when you begin to express gratitude for the ordinary things you enjoy every day.

**1 Timothy 6:17** “...the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.”

### C. You'll Go from the Exhaustion of Living for Self to the Joy of Pleasing Him

**Ecclesiastes 2:26** “For to the one who pleases Him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner He has given the business of gathering and collecting only to give to the one who pleases God...”

Real joy is found in knowing God, pleasing God, and living for something bigger than ourselves.

**Psalms 16:11** “You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

**2 Corinthians 5:9** “So we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.”

Don't make a mistake thinking that pleasing God instead of pleasing self would be the end of fun. When you begin to do what you were designed to do—live for God, enjoy God, and see all good things as coming from God—you begin to tap into joy because your world just got bigger!

**See Revelation 21:1-7**

Video: Oklahoma Softball  
Players' Joy in the Lord

