

**Ecclesiastes**  
***Living in Light of the End***  
**The Fear of God**  
**Ecclesiastes 5:1-7**

*Grace Fellowship Church / Dave Wernz / July 16, 2023*

**I. Foolish Worship**

**A. Meaningless Gestures**

**Ecclesiastes 5:1** “Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.”

Routine is not our enemy, but doing the things for the sake of doing the things does not make us worshipers of God.

**Matthew 7:21-23** “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Religious activity is not the problem and routine is not the enemy, but we cannot afford to let daily rituals become meaningless gestures.

**B. Mindless Words**

**Ecclesiastes 5:2-3** “Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore, let your words be few. <sup>3</sup> For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words.”

**Proverbs 18:13** “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.”

*NLT* “Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish.”

**Matthew 15:7-8** “You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: <sup>8</sup> ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.’”

**C. Empty Promises**

**2 Timothy 2:11-13** “The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him; <sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; <sup>13</sup> if we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself.”

If you are a disciple of Jesus, are you learning to live like Him?

If He is your Lord, are you obedient to His commands?

If He is your Father, do you love, honor, and try to please Him?

**Ecclesiastes 5:6** “Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?”

## II. True Worship

### A. His Holiness Leads to Humility

God’s holiness is not merely one of His attributes. It is the sum total of His being, and the source of His glory. He is different; there is literally nothing like Him. We will not have the humility necessary for true worship, until we acknowledge the holiness of our God.

**Isaiah 6:1-5** “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of His robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!’ <sup>4</sup> And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost...’”

### B. Our Limitations Lead Us to Trepidation

When we try to hide or mitigate our limitations, it actually neutralizes our opportunity for humility and undermines our worship. But God not only knows and sees us, He loves us more deeply than we can ever know.

### C. The Gospel Should Lead Us to Gratitude & Celebration

The path of true worship is holding seemingly opposite truths in tension:

- **God’s perfect holiness** means that any trace of sin would guarantee my destruction - I should definitely be afraid.
- **Christ’s perfect sacrifice** means that my sins are forgiven and I am acceptable in God’s sight - I absolutely can be confident in God’s presence.
- **My weakness and foolishness** mean that even my best attempts at worship are offensive to God - I should definitely be afraid.
- **Christ’s perfect life, sacrificial death, and eternal advocacy** overshadow all of my efforts flawlessly - I can absolutely be pleasing to God.