

Ecclesiastes Part 4

Announcement:

Has your group created a plan for how you will meet this Summer? Ask everyone in your group to make sure they complete a short survey that was sent out last week. It will help us prepare for Grow Groups this fall.

Ice Breaker(If needed):

- Does the overall theme of Ecclesiastes strike you as depressing or encouraging? Why?

Sermon Discussion (Read Ecclesiastes 3:9-20):

- Parker stated that Ecclesiastes reminds us that we are dirt (made from dust - to dust we shall return).
 - How does the idea that we are dirt clue us into where we can and cannot find meaning?
 - Do you agree that we should think of ourselves as dirt? Why or why not? How would thinking of ourselves that way challenge our identity and affect our choices?
- Read Ecclesiastes 3:11
 - Practically, what does it look like to find our meaning in God?
 - How do we look for meaning in somebody we can't see?

Going Deeper/Application: (Read Ecclesiastes 12:12-14)

- How do these verses help us close and sum up such a complex book as Ecclesiastes?
- How does “fearing God” change our view of ourselves and how we live?
 - Here is a statement from Barnabus Piper that helps us understand “fear God”:
“Fear God” is the foundation for these final words. This means to live with the awareness that God is real and is exactly who He says He is in the Bible. It means living as if God is sovereign over all things and good in all He does. It means being in awe of God and worshiping Him. And yes, it does mean being afraid, but

not because God is capricious or unpredictable or has even the slightest hint of malice in Him. Rather it is a fear of wonder and respect because of His greatness and holiness. Think of Isaiah's response to seeing God, "woe is me, for I am man of unclean lips," or John's response in Revelation 1: "I fell at his feet as though dead."

- Think about the themes we've studied from Ecclesiastes—all is vanity under the sun, wisdom, work, wealth, fame, power, justice, death, and enjoyment. How does this simple but deep verse help us navigate each one?
- How would you summarize Ecclesiastes? What would your final words about the book be to help people understand it?

Final Challenge:

We have spent 4 weeks in this not-so-popular book of Ecclesiastes.

- Can you share one thing God has challenged you with, to change or adjust in both your thoughts and actions as you live life under the sun?

Prayer Time:

This week let's pray for our Congregation (These are just suggestions please feel free to pray as the Spirit leads)

- That we would maintain a prayerful, expectant and Christ-centered heart
- For a spirit of peace, cooperation, and patience in the midst of the process
- That we would fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith