

Summary of the Preacher's Main Points So Far:

1. The Whole of Life is *vanity* – a mere breath in which none of our personal accomplishments or legacies will survive or be remembered (Ecclesiastes 1).
2. Even those specific things that are precious to us, that we hold onto so tightly and invest so much in, also have little or no lasting satisfaction (Ecclesiastes 2).
3. Life is not about struggling to gain; but rather letting go, and learning to simply receive and enjoy life as a gift -- accepting this is the beginning of true Joy, Hope, and Freedom (Ecclesiastes 3).
4. A) Making life about “ME” is the source of most pain.

B) Making life about others -- you will find true joy and contentment that cannot be matched elsewhere under the sun (Ecclesiastes 4).
5. Religion, like any other pursuit, is vanity if approached for personal gain, rather than as a platform for giving (Ecclesiastes 5).
6. Don't try to control your life, or you will suffer the tragedy of never finding contentment (Ecclesiastes 6).
7. Let Death be your teacher and learn to live life backwards and choose wisdom over escapism; but know that even wisdom is limited (Ecclesiastes 7).
8. Learning to respect authority and doing what's right even when it seems to make no difference has significance beyond life under the sun (Ecclesiastes 8).
9. Life is a gift, not Gain. But be careful to worship God and not the gifts (Ecclesiastes 9).

Wisdom Under the Sun (10:1-7, 10-13, 15-20)

As dead flies give perfume a bad smell,
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

² The heart of the wise inclines to the right,
but the heart of the fool to the left.

³ Even as fools walk along the road,
they lack sense
and show everyone how stupid they are.

4 If a ruler's anger rises against you,
do not leave your post;
calmness can lay great offenses to rest.

5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun,
the sort of error that arises from a ruler:

6 Fools are put in many high positions,
while the rich occupy the low ones.

7 I have seen slaves on horseback,
while princes go on foot like slaves.

10 If the ax is dull
and its edge unsharpened,
more strength is needed,
but skill will bring success.

11 If a snake bites before it is charmed,
the charmer receives no fee.

12 Words from the mouth of the wise are gracious,
but fools are consumed by their own lips.

13 At the beginning their words are folly;
at the end they are wicked madness—
and fools multiply words.

The toil of fools wearies them;
they do not know the way to town.

16 Woe to the land whose king was a servant^(a)
and whose princes feast in the morning.

17 Blessed is the land whose king is of noble birth
and whose princes eat at a proper time—
for strength and not for drunkenness.

18 Through laziness, the rafters sag;
because of idle hands, the house leaks.

19 A feast is made for laughter,
wine makes life merry,
and money is the answer for everything.

20 Do not revile the king even in your thoughts,
or curse the rich in your bedroom,
because a bird in the sky may carry your words,
and a bird on the wing may report what you say.

Irony in Life Under the Sun (10:8-9)

10:8-9

Whoever digs a pit may fall into it;
whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake.
9 Whoever quarries stones may be injured by them;
whoever splits logs may be endangered by them.

Uncertainties in Life Under the Sun (10:14; 11:1-6)

10:14 No one knows what is coming—who can tell someone else what will happen after them?

11:1-6

Ship your grain across the sea;
after many days you may receive a return.
2 Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight;
you do not know what disaster may come upon the land.
3 If clouds are full of water,
they pour rain on the earth.
Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north,
in the place where it falls, there it will lie.
4 Whoever watches the wind will not plant;
whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.
5 As you do not know the path of the wind,
or how the body is formed^(a) in a mother's womb,
so you cannot understand the work of God,
the Maker of all things.
6 Sow your seed in the morning,
and at evening let your hands not be idle,
for you do not know which will succeed,
whether this or that,
or whether both will do equally well.