

ECCLESIASTES SERMON SERIES - DEVOTIONAL

NORTHVIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH

DAY 1

OVERVIEW OF ECCLESIASTES

This week we will begin studying a new biblical book which falls into a very different literary genre than the Gospel of Luke. While Luke is structured as a biography and follows a narrative (story) form, Ecclesiastes is an Old Testament book of Wisdom. It will be really helpful for us to get a grasp of both the literary style of this book and its overall message before we begin to study it, so take time today to watch or read one of these resources:

- Watch The Bible Project's 8 minute video on Ecclesiastes which can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrsQ1tc-2wkl>
- AND / OR
- Read an overview of Ecclesiastes here:
<https://www.stjohnsvancouver.org/bible-studies-blog/ecclesiastes>

Adoration: As you pray today, thank God for the 66 different biblical books which are inspired by the Holy Spirit and tell one cohesive story about him!

DAY 2

ECCLESIASTES 1 - THE TEACHER

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-18 and take note of what you learn about the teacher.

1. How does he identify himself? (v 1, 12)
2. What is his diagnosis of life on earth? (v 2)
3. What topics or subjects has he attempted to study and understand? (v 12-17)

Adoration: As you pray today, thank God that he alone can provide ultimate meaning to our lives.

DAY 3

ECCLESIASTES 1 - THE TEACHER'S QUESTIONS

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 and take note of the questions in this text.

1. Write down the two questions asked by the teacher.
2. In verses 4-8 and 11, we see the teacher explaining why he asked the first question:
 - a. What does he identify as transitory? (v 4a, v 11)
 - b. What does he identify as always the same? (v 4b-7)
3. Drawing on similar imagery, James teaches new Testament believers how to live in response to the knowledge of their own transitoriness. Read James 1:9-11 and James 4:13-17 and summarize what he teaches.

Confession: As you pray today confess the ways in which you may be thinking wrongly about your personal legacy. How important is it for you to be known, remembered, and recognized? Is God calling you to live more humbly before him?

DAY 4

ECCLESIASTES 1 - THE TEACHER'S PROVERBS - PROVERB 1

Read Ecclesiastes 1:12-15, and take note of how the teacher develops his thoughts:

1. What is the teacher studying and exploring by wisdom? (v13a)
2. What is the conclusion of his study? (Put 1:13b-14 in your own words)
3. What "proverb" does he create to summarize his findings? (v 15)

The NIV Application Commentary explains this proverb by saying, "There is a human insistence that the impossible can in fact be achieved—that what God has made "crooked" or "twisted" can indeed be made straight by human, mortal effort. It is all futile, for God is God, and the world is the way it is. Refusing to accept reality can only result in unhappiness and weariness."

- Reflect: Is there an area or situation in your own life in which you find yourself refusing to accept reality, and in which you are fighting in your own strength against God and his sovereignty?

Supplication: As you pray today, ask God to help you discern your response to this situation: What may you need to accept and/or surrender to him?

DAY 5

ECCLESIASTES 1 - THE TEACHER'S PROVERBS - PROVERB 2

Read Ecclesiastes 1:16-18, and take note of how the teacher develops his thoughts:

1. What is the teacher applying himself to study? (v17a)
 - a. How is this "topic" different from what he is studying in verse 13a?
2. What is the conclusion of his study? (v 17b)
3. What "proverb" does he create to summarize his findings? (v 18)

The NIV Application Commentary explains this proverb by saying, "Although wisdom and knowledge are good and useful, they paradoxically bring with them "sorrow" ... and "grief" ... because they enable people like [the teacher] to gain particular clarity as to just how "evil" the "business" of living can be."

- Reflect: Is there an area or situation in your own life in which more knowledge about a situation has increased your sorrow?

Supplication: As you pray today, ask God to help you to live in hope, as you remember that one day He will judge evil and make all things new (Read Revelation 21-22 if you need encouragement!).