



Faith in Action

The Conclusion

The Preacher

- ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 1:1** The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.
 - The teachings of the leader of the assembly.
- The Preacher is Solomon
 - ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 1:12** I, the Preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.
 - ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 2:9** Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me.

Fleeting Nature of Human Existence

- ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 1:2** "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."
- ^{NIV} **Ecclesiastes 1:2** "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."
 - *Vapour, breathe, vanity, futility, worthless*
 - The idea is no substantial or abiding value.
- ²'Breath of breaths,' said Qoheleth, 'Breath of breaths. Everything is temporary!'
 - *Apollos Commentary*



Cycles of Futility

- ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 1:3** What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun? ⁴ A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever. ⁵ Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hastening to its place it rises there again. ⁶ Blowing toward the south, Then turning toward the north, The wind continues swirling along; And on its circular courses the wind returns. ⁷ All the rivers flow into the sea, Yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, There they flow again. ⁸ All things are wearisome; Man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing. ⁹ That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So, there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there anything of which one might say, "See this, it is new "? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us. ¹¹ There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later still.

- 1:3 = question about advantage to wearying human labour
- 1:4–7 = nature's own wearying labour
 - 1:4 = temporary changes, but enduring base of the earth
 - 1:5 = temporary changes, but enduring, cyclic consistency of sun
 - 1:6 = temporary changes, but enduring, cyclic consistency of wind
 - 1:7 = temporary changes, but enduring, cyclic consistency of rivers
- 1:8 = accentuates the wearying labour of 1:3
- 1:9–11 = temporary changes, but enduring cyclic consistency of 'innovations'

Human Labour is Cursed

- ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 1:13** And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with. ¹⁴ I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind. ¹⁵ What is crooked cannot be straightened, and what is lacking cannot be counted.
- ^{NAS} **Genesis 3:17** Then to Adam He said, " ... Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field; ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, Till you return to the ground"



Futility Checklist

- ✓ Pleasure (ch 2)
- ✓ Possessions (ch 2)
- ✓ Labour (ch 2)
- ✓ Wealth (ch 5)
- ✓ Life (ch 6)

The Conclusion

- ^{NAS} **Ecclesiastes 12:13** The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. ¹⁴ For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.
- ^{NAS} **Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ^{NAS} **John 14:15** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

Application



Choose Your Life Path Carefully

- ^{NAS} **Matthew 7:13** "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. ¹⁴ "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.
- ^{NIV} **1 Peter 4:17** For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"
- ^{NIV} **1 John 5:19** We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

Examine Yourself Often

- ^{NIV} **2 Corinthians 13:5** Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you-- unless, of course, you fail the test?
- ^{NAS} **Matthew 7:16** "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷ "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹ "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ "So then, you will know them by their fruits. ²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

Build Your Life Well

- NAS **Matthew 7:26** "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. ²⁷ "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall."



Build Your Life Well

- ^{NAS} **Matthew 7:24** "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. ²⁵ "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock."



Conclusion

The Good Life

- ^{NAS} **John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God... ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men ... ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- ^{NAS} **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- ^{NAS} **John 10:10** "The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.
- ^{NAS} **1 John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

The Conclusion

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Faith in Action

- ^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 5:7** for we walk by faith, not by sight.
- ^{ESV} **Psalm 1:1** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ² but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.