

At the start of the Reformation of the Church in Scotland in 1557, John Knox wrote to his congregation before going into exile and said,

“You are bishops and kings; your wife, children, servants, and family are your bishopric and charge. Of you it shall be required how carefully and diligently you have instructed them in God’s true knowledge . . .

And therefore I say, you must make them partakers in, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.”

Let's Worship God

22nd-27th August 2016
Ecclesiastes



Let's Worship God is a ministry of



Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church

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Family worship, a joy to be experienced every day!



Mon.
22nd Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn

Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading

2 Timothy 3:10-17 - Meaningless

notes

We are going to be looking at Ecclesiastes using notes written by Dr. Tim Donachie. The book of Ecclesiastes is sometimes seen as the most puzzling book in the Old Testament, but it is not a book that Christians should ignore. Like the rest of scripture, it was written for our learning (Rom. 15:4) and admonition (1 Cor. 10:11). It is therefore profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The book has special relevance today in our materialistic society, for it helps us to see the vanity of many earthly pursuits. It contains lessons for all, but especially for the young who have so much to lose if they make the wrong choices early in life.

The book was written by Solomon ch.1:1 who also refers to himself as the Preacher 1:1,2,12; 7:27; 12:8,9,10. The purpose of the book is seen quite clearly in chapter 1 and verse 3 - What does man gain from all his labour at which he toils under the sun? The question that Solomon is asking is one that is very relevant for us today and one which many people ask themselves, is there any purpose in life? or what is the meaning of life? It is this that Solomon investigates in this book.

There are two main messages or themes that can be seen throughout the book: 1. The meaninglessness of life on earth (1:2). The key word here is meaningless or as it is in the King James version. vanity . It occurs 35 times in 29 verses and means futility, uselessness, nothingness. It is important however, to remember that this futility is under the sun . In other words, things are meaningless when they are viewed from a merely human or earthly perspective. If God is left out of any human activity life is truly without meaning or value. 2. The second main theme leads on from the first. Life can only truly have meaning when it is lived in obedience to God s commands and for his glory. (12:13).

questions

1. Why is Ecclesiastes profitable to study?
2. What are the themes of the book?

praise pray

- Ps.145B:all
1. Pray that the Lord would help us to profit by our study in Ecclesiastes.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Sat.
27th Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn

Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading

Ecclesiastes 1:15-18 - True Wisdom

notes

Sometimes Christians are intimidated when supposedly clever people seek to undermine their faith by casting doubt on the authority and reliability of the Scriptures. Scientific discoveries dismiss the idea of a universe created in six days by a sovereign God; the moral absolutes of the Bible are considered obsolete, restrictive and even harmful. Atheism is paraded as the intellectual choice. These things however, should not alarm believers, indeed, they should expect them. Solomon was right when he suggested that no matter how elevated the knowledge, no matter how deep the investigation, human knowledge and wisdom without God are truly meaningless.

True wisdom comes only through submission to God and acceptance of the truth that he has graciously revealed in His Word. True meaning can only be found through a diligent examination and personal application of the scriptures of truth that make a man wise for salvation (2 Tim. 3:15). This is something that Solomon himself knew for he writes in Proverbs that The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10).

questions

1. Where is true wisdom found?
2. How can we find true meaning?

praise pray

- Ps. 147B:all
1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God s Word tomorrow.
 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
 3. Pray for family matters.



Fri.
26th Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn

Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading Ecclesiastes 1:12-14 - Education

notes There is a widespread view in society that the problems facing society can be solved through better education. Ignorance is seen to be the greatest enemy. Education is, of course, a good thing, but to suggest that better education is the answer to the search for meaning is quite wrong, as Solomon was quick to acknowledge.

In his investigation of all that is done under heaven v. 13 he came to the conclusion that it was meaningless and futile, like trying to grasp hold of the wind. Even the best education in the world cannot untangle the twists in the human heart; it cannot make up for what is lacking in the soul. (Sinclair Ferguson).

It is very instructive to see that the man to whom God had granted great wisdom (1 Kings 3:12) was unable to use that wisdom and knowledge to come to any other conclusion than that everything was meaningless!

questions

1. What do people think will fix society?
2. What did Solomon conclude?

praise pray Ps. 147A:7-13

1. Pray for wisdom.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.



Tue.
23rd Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn

Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading Ecclesiastes 1:1-7 - Order and Routine

notes Solomon introduces himself and states his purpose for writing. He asks this very searching question about the meaning of life and then seeks, through investigation, to answer it. As a man who had been granted riches, position, and wisdom (1 Kings 3:12-13), Solomon was in a good position to undertake the search for answers. He begins his investigation by considering what could be described as the cycles of life. He looks at the world and he concludes that nothing ever seems to change. vs. 4-7. Generation follows generation, the sun rises and sets every day, the weather continues pretty much as it always has done, and the seas never become full in spite of all the water that pour into them.

This constancy the fact that the natural order continues generation after generation had precisely the opposite effect on the writer than it should have had! The Bible is quite clear that the very constancy and regularity of the universe and the cycle of life is clear evidence of a creator and a preserver of all that has been made. Instead of causing frustration it should lead to praise and worship of the God who has established such order in the world. Indeed, the apostle Paul states that the very orderliness of the created universe leaves men without excuse if they do not recognise and worship the eternal God. (Rom. 1:20-21)

Order and routine can sometimes be seen by people as being boring and yet for the Christian, order and routine should be seen as a precious gift from God who causes the sun to rise and set, gives yearly seedtime and harvest, gives the gift of children, and orders our days upon the earth in accordance with his will. We should daily thank God that we do not live in a random, uncontrolled and purposeless world, but rather in a world under the direction of a sovereign God who does all things for the good of his people and the glory of his name.

questions

1. What does Solomon observe about life?
2. As Christians, how should we view order and routine?

praise pray Ps. 146A:all

1. Give thanks for the sovereignty of God in all things.
2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
3. Pray for family matters.



Wed.
24th Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading Ecclesiastes 1:8 - Contentment

notes

Not only does the preacher think that nothing ever changes, he also complained that nothing ever satisfies (v.8), and that there is never anything new (vs. 9-11). Solomon is speaking in v. 8 about the inability of the things of time and space to satisfy the heart of man. Even in the garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve had the abundance of Divine provision, a provision that more than satisfied all their physical, material and emotional needs, it was not enough! Eve saw the one fruit that had been denied to them and wanted it!

There is a restlessness and greed in the heart of man that is never satisfied. It is no accident that Solomon highlights the eye and the ear for those two organs that are the source of much of man's discontent. He sees something and wants it - just like Eve (Gen. 3:6), Achan (Josh. 7:21), and David (2 Sam. 11:2,3) - or he hears of something desirable and will not rest until he is able to secure it for himself, no matter what the cost.

This restless longing for more is in stark contrast to the teaching of the Word of God and should have no place in the life of the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer recognises that in and of himself he has nothing. He knows that every good and perfect gift is from above (James 1:7), and that if he has the Lord Jesus Christ as his saviour, he has that which is the ultimate treasure. His eyes will be focused upon the Lord, and his ears will be listening to what he has to say to him, and he will be able to put the things of the world in their proper place. For the Christian, the restless searching for new things and experiences will be replaced by godly contentment, no matter what his personal circumstances. (Prov. 19:23, Phil. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 6:6, 8).

questions 1. How do the eye and the ear lead to discontent?

2. What is the Christian's ultimate treasure?

Ps. 146B:all

praise 1. Give thanks that Christ is our treasure.

pray 2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.

3. Pray for family matters.



Thur.
25th Aug.

Let's Worship God

Verse To Learn
Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher, vanity of vanities!
All is vanity.
Ecclesiastes 1:2

reading Ecclesiastes 1:9-11 - Nothing New

notes

For man living in the twenty-first century it may seem very strange or even ridiculous to accept what Solomon said about there being nothing new under the sun. With all the technological inventions, new scientific discoveries, new medicines, new music etc. that have proliferated in last 100 years it would seem to be utterly foolish to state that there is nothing new under the sun! But is that what Solomon is talking about in Ecclesiastes 1:9-11?

As Jay Adams comments, Solomon does not refer to discoveries like atomic power or to technological advances like the invention of computers, but to the socio-religious sphere of life. It is in this area that nothing is new. Human beings, generation after generation, do the same vain things in relation to God, the world, and one another. New philosophies or new heresies are rarely new. There is a great tendency, even amongst some Christian people to seek for something new in worship, theology or in the practice of religion. Holding on to established practices and doctrine is seen as being not only old-fashioned, but unthinking. Solomon cuts right through this kind of thinking and says that the new thing or doctrine that is promoted is really the same old thing in different clothing!

Not only is there nothing new, Solomon also reminds us that even the greatest of men and the most significant accomplishments are soon forgotten. The kingdom of Solomon was, in many respects, Israel's golden age but success and prosperity do not last long (Ps 103:14-16; Isa 40:6-8; Jas 4:14). It is good to remember that all that man does and all that he achieves is ultimately worthless if it is not done for the glory of God and for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

There is one new thing that far surpasses anything else - far greater than the most superb technological inventions - and is ultimately the only thing that has true value and worth, and that is the New Birth through the Lord Jesus Christ!

questions 1. What does Solomon mean when he says there is nothing new?

2. What does he say happens to man's great accomplishments?

praise Ps. 147A:1-6

pray 1. Give thanks for the unchanging truth of God's Word.

2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.

3. Pray for family matters.