



INTRODUCTION:

- Today we start a new series through the Book of Ecclesiastes entitled... Life Worth Living
- In our midweek study we are going through the Book of Ecclesiastes
- It's an interesting study because we find Solomon on a search for the meaning of life on the human plane and he is asking the question...
- Is Life Worthy Living?

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 3:11

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

- God has put eternity in our hearts and it's this longing for eternity is what drives man's desire to find meaning in life... to find a life worth living
- Sociologists have been trying to discover what the source of this longing is, but they believe it only comes from exposure to religious teaching
- In other words, the reason why you long for eternity is because you were exposed to some kind of religious teaching some time in your life
- However, there are now studies that reveal that belief in an eternal life apart from our physical bodies is actually hardwired into each of us

A new study from Boston University was conducted with 283 children from Ecuador

- What they discovered is the children could recall thoughts and emotions that pre-dated their birth
- The sociologists concluded that independent of religion, there seems to be an innate awareness of ones everlasting soul giving human beings an awareness of eternity
- Again, science is catching up to what the Bible already knows to be true... eternity is in our hearts
- It's not a theory or a religious conviction... it's part of the spiritual DNA of man that God has placed in every man's heart.
- It's this longing for eternity that drives us to want to connect to something bigger than us
- And you will never be satisfied in this life because you were made for so much more than this world... you were made for eternity



Man is a trichotomy... he has a threefold nature... body, soul, spirit

- God has created within man physical drives that insure that our physical body has what it needs to survive
- Our hunger drive that insures we keep our bodies fed, our thirst drive that insures that we keep our bodies hydrated, our sexual drive that insures the future of mankind... all created by God
- God has also created psychological drives that insure that we live socially and psychologically healthy lives
- The drive for love, belonging, community, companionship, acceptance... all created by God
- Just as the body and the soul or the psyche has drives, our spiritual nature has a drive and that drive is to know God
- It is the greatest drive that man has
- Because if it goes unfulfilled, it leads to frustration and emptiness in all other areas of life

This is where Solomon is coming from when he says...

Ecclesiastes 1:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

- Speaking of life on the human plane, apart from God... it's vanity, emptiness, meaningless, it's like grasping for the wind... it all vanishes
- But deep inside the spiritual nature of man, God has placed eternity
- And so religion is man's quest for eternity apart from God... for instance

Buddhism... teaches that man is not a trichotomy, but a dichotomy

- Man is a body and a consciousness
- The consciousness of man is eternal, but the body is temporal
- Man's life is like a wave... you are born and the wave begins to crest
- You live your life trying to be the best person you can possibly be, be positive, do good things for people which makes for good Karma and then you die and the wave crashes back into the sea
- You become part of the consciousness of the universe
- And your life is a perpetual cycle of birth, death and rebirth

Solomon looking at life on the natural plane said the same thing

Ecclesiastes 1:3–7 (NKJV)



³ What profit has a man from all his labor In which he toils under the sun? ⁴ One generation passes away, and *another* generation comes; But the earth abides forever. ⁵ The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, And hastens to the place where it arose. ⁶ The wind goes toward the south, And turns around to the north; The wind whirls about continually, And comes again on its circuit. ⁷ All the rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea *is* not full; To the place from which the rivers come, There they return again.

Elton John said it like this...

It's the Circle of Life and it moves us all. Through despair and hope, through faith and love. Till we find our place on the path unwinding in the Circle. The Circle of Life.

Man attempting to understand God on the natural plane

- But Solomon tells us... no one can find out the work God does from beginning to end
- God is eternal. He exists outside time and space
- Man is temporal. He is bound by time and space

Only God speaks with authority concerning the moment time and space came into being

Genesis 1:1–5 (NKJV)

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

Man only has theories. He cannot know because he wasn't there

- Neither can man know the future because can't see that far ahead
- But God sees the beginning to the end... He exists in the present
- There is no past, there is no future... He is eternally present
- Because man is limited in his perspective, in his search for meaning, in his search to know God –
- Man determines I cannot know God and arrives at one of 3 conclusions
- **FIRST**, because I cannot know God, I cannot prove God so God must not exist...
- This is probably the weakest and most foolish of all belief systems



The Bible says...

Psalm 14:1 (NKJV)

¹ The fool has said in his heart, “*There is no God.*”

- It’s such an arrogant and foolish statement to deny the existence of God
- It’s as if to say... I was there at creation, I’ve circled around all the planets of the solar system, I’ve traveled to the countless numbers of galaxies, I was like Captain James T Kirk and I went where no man has ever gone before and after looking in every nook and cranny of the universe I can say with certainty... there is no God.
- What a stupid thing to say

The second conclusion is to simply admit that there is something...

- I just don’t know what it is
- That’s what agnostic means... I don’t know... in latin Agnostic is translated **IDIOT...** to be an agnostic is to admit I’m an idiot
- It’s more intellectually honest, but where the agnostic becomes intellectually dishonest is when he says... neither can I know

Because the Bible says that God has revealed Himself to us...

Psalm 19:1 (NKJV)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

- Just by looking at the stars in the sky, the heavens... you have to wonder how did they get there?
- What kind of being could create such a thing?
- On vimeo how there are video clips of the stars in the sky from different parts of the world... and it’s breathtaking
- There’s something about looking into the heavens that awakens us to something greater... It reminds us that eternity is in our hearts...
- But even more incredible than the heavens God revealed Himself personally to us by becoming flesh and living amongst us through Jesus

The third conclusion the natural man arrives to is, there is a God,

- But, I can’t know Him and my small insignificant life is swallowed up by His giant plans
- So everything that happens in God’s will and I can do nothing about it



Solomon says...

Ecclesiastes 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does *it*, that men should fear before Him.

Everything is the will of God.

- He's going to do what He's going to do so it doesn't matter
- This is the foundation for Islam – Kismet – everything is the will of Allah
- I live, I die, it's all the will of Allah
- Reformed theologians have the same view, it's wrapped up in their view of the sovereignty of God
- Everything is God's will. I have no say in the matter so I better get on the band wagon and just accept my lot in life
- Existentialists call it fatalism
- But here's where this philosophy of man breaks down...
- God has given us a free will and He has given us the freedom to choose
- Sin was not God's plan for man. Man chose to sin and brought death into the world
- Man was created to live in a tropical paradise with the most beautiful woman in the world... of course she was the only woman in the world
- But man messed that up... it wasn't God's perfect will
- So everything that happens in the world is not the will of God
- Now God is sovereign and in His sovereignty He intervened in human history by becoming a man, taking upon Himself all our sin, dying a substitutionary death on the cross so that you and I could have eternal life
- Eternity is in our hearts

So you can see that religion is man's attempt to understand his spiritual nature apart from God

- It's man's attempt to satisfy the spiritual drive, but when man rejects God this drive goes unfulfilled and leads to a sense of emptiness and meaninglessness... it's all vanity under the sun.

So what is the answer?

Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. ¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.



- The only way man will find meaning in life is to experience a personal encounter with God whereby man acknowledges God and thus chooses to trust and obey His commandments... for this is man's all
- This is what man was created for

C.S Lewis wrote, "If I find myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I wasn't made for this world."

If you find yourself frustrated at the things of the world, it's because you were never made for this world

- You are a heavenly people, made for a heavenly purpose
- You were made for eternity... you will never be satisfied
- And there will come a day when God will judge every work, every secret thing, good or evil and you and I will have to give an account
- And on that day I'm convinced that God is going to ask each and every one of us... did you believe that I loved You
- Or did you live your life trying to make a way for yourself because you didn't believe I cared?

AW Tozer wrote this...

"How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God who has none. Eternal years lie in His heart. For Him time does not pass, it remains; and those who are in Christ share with Him all the riches of limitless time and endless years."

- That is a life worth living

Years ago, a preacher waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of the preacher. Finally the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

"Preacher," said the young man, "sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip." The preacher chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

- God has placed eternity in our hearts. Are you ready for eternity?