



### **INTRODUCTION:**

- Today we are going to complete our series in Ecclesiastes but I first I want to recap what a LIFE WORTH LIVING looks like
- First... a LIFE WORTH LIVING is a life that is lived with eternity in mind
- It's a life that understands that this life is only preparation for the life to come... that's why we study the BIBLE
- BIBLE... BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LEAVING EARTH
- So we are to be ETERNALLY MINDED in the decisions we make
- Second... a LIFE WORTH LIVING is a life that embraces all the seasons of life
- It's a life that has embraced the reality that God created the seasons and God reveals Himself to us in every season of life
- So we are to look for God's hand as we go through the seasons of life
- Third... a LIFE WORTH LIVING is a life that ENJOYS the blessings that God gives and lives a generous life of gratitude
- It's a life that realizes that every blessing is from the hand of God
- Even the blessings that we believe are the result of our hard work
- It's all from God and so we live generously, giving back to God and to those in need
- Fourth... a LIFE WORTH LIVING as a life that embraces WISDOM
- It's a life that is lived from God's Perspective
- So we ask for God to lead and direct us in every area of our life
- Fifth... a LIFE WORTH LIVING is a LIFE that embraces the OPPORTUNITIES that God brings in our lives
- It's a life that is ready to respond when God strikes our lives with the lightening bolt of opportunity.
- Today we are going to look at the final installment in this series
- It's probably the most important aspect of a LIFE WORTH LIVING
- That is... a LIFE WORTH LIVING is a life that GLORIFIES GOD
- Solomon refers to it as the Fear of God
- Scholars interpret it as the Reverence of God
- But simply put, it's a life that brings HONOR and GLORY to God

### ***In Chapter 1 Solomon begins Ecclesiastes by saying...***

Ecclesiastes 1:2–3 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity." <sup>3</sup>  
What profit has a man from all his labor In which he toils under the sun?



- Everything is temporary, it's fleeting, here today and gone tomorrow
- That is his hypothesis

### ***And then he sets up his grand social experiment***

Ecclesiastes 1:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised.

- Solomon determined to use his God given wisdom to analyze every experience known to man
- He pursued pleasure, self gratification, a life of hedonism
- Not withholding anything he desired
- He pursued wealth, materialism, power, prestige, honor, glory

I think of Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom

The young Asian character named Willie says to Indiana... You're going to get killed chasing after fortune and glory

Indiana Jones responds and says... Maybe. But not today

- Solomon had it all... fortune and glory
- He used his wisdom to get the most you could possibly get out of life
- But at the end of it all... he comes to a final conclusion
- Let's turn to Ecclesiastes 12
- Let's look at the conclusion to Solomon's grand social experiment

Ecclesiastes 12:9–14 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out *and* set in order many proverbs. <sup>10</sup> The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and *what was* written *was* upright—words of truth. <sup>11</sup> The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd. <sup>12</sup> And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books *there is* no end, and much study *is* wearisome to the flesh.

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

- What is the conclusion Solomon comes to?



- Fear God and Keep His Commandments

### ***WHAT does it mean to Fear God and Keep His Commandments?***

- For some people Fearing God is like driving down the street while watching for cops in your rear view mirror.

### ***For others Fearing God is to literally be afraid of God***

There's a story about young Teddy Roosevelt. His mother said that he was so afraid of the Madison Square Church that he refused to go inside alone. He was afraid of something called the ZEAL. He said it was some monster, maybe a large animal like a dragon or an alligator that lived in the dark corners of the church... ready to jump at him. He heard the preacher read about in the Bible. So his mom used a concordance and began reading every scripture that contained the word ZEAL until suddenly, very excited, the young Roosevelt told her to stop. She stopped at John 2:17 where Jesus' disciples remembered that it was written, "The ZEAL of thine house hath eaten me up." He was terrified of church because he thought the ZEAL would eat him up.

### ***According to the Theological Workbook of the OT...***

The Word FEAR is used to describe the emotion one feels when they experience an awe-inspiring exhibition of power

### ***It's the word that David uses in Psalm 9:20***

Psalm 9:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> Put them in fear, O LORD, *That* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men.

- I could remember standing at the shore when massive waves were crashing over the sea wall.
- You could feel the power of the water, the ground rumbling...
- That emotion of exhilaration, awe and fear all mixed together
- And when this word is used in the verb form
- It means that God is to be awed, worshipped, honored or revered

### ***The Fear Of God is rooted in our love for God***

Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your



strength. <sup>6</sup> “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- Literally loving God is to be woven into every area of our life
- Home, Work, Friends, Walking about town, Kids

### ***The Fear Of God affects how we approach worship***

Leviticus 26:1–2 (NKJV)

**26** ‘You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a *sacred* pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I *am* the LORD your God. <sup>2</sup> You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.

### ***God commands His people to reverence His sanctuary***

- David says to come into His Presence with singing and into His courts with praise in an attitude of worship and awe
- When we come into the sanctuary, dragging our feet, not focused on the Lord, distracting people from worship, coming in late... we’re showing disrespect to God
- Then we wonder why God doesn’t honor us when we need help
- Where’s God when you need Him?
- Maybe it’s because you find yourself in that place where you honor Him with your lips, but your heart is far from Him

### ***The Fear Of God affects how we treat people***

Leviticus 19:13–14 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> ‘You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. <sup>14</sup> You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the LORD.

### ***The mark of a people who FEAR God is their love for others***

Matthew 22:37–39 (NKJV)



<sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, '*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: '*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*'

### ***But Jesus got it from Leviticus***

Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

- Now, this is not a threat... you better be loving or I'm going to get you
- I am the Lord... I am the big and powerful OZ.
- It's a reminder... I am the Lord, Jehovah, the One who has loved you with an everlasting love and
- Because I've been generous with my love to you
- You be generous with your love to each other

### ***The Fear Of God affects how we lead***

Deuteronomy 17:18–20 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from *the one* before the priests, the Levites. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment *to* the right hand or *to* the left, and that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

- In Proverbs, Solomon says the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom
- But the Fear of the Lord also affects how we live

### ***Solomon says to Keep God's Commandments***

Deuteronomy 11:1 (NKJV)

**11** "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always.

Deuteronomy 30:15–16 (NKJV)



<sup>15</sup> “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, <sup>16</sup> in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.

- Now if you take out love, all you’re left with is legalism
- But when you are motivated by love, not only will you want to do what the other person asks you to do...
- But you go beyond that do what brings joy to that persons heart

### ***What brings joy to God’s heart?***

- The Bible says that all of heaven rejoices when one sinner repents
- When you and I turn our lives over to Jesus, when we receive His love
- That brings God joy

### ***God chose you from the foundations of the world to receive His love***

Ephesians 1:3–4 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

### ***The Bible says that God rejoices over You***

Zephaniah 3:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet *you* with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”

- If you and I could grasp the fact that God loves You, He is for You, He’s not out to harm you, to punish you, to judge you... He loves you
- If you could be rooted and grounded in His love... you would change the world by teaching others to Fear the Lord and Keep His Commandments
- As Solomon says... this is man’s all... that’s what you were created for
- To be a recipient and giver of God’s love
- Someday God will bring everything into the light... good or evil
- What will come out of your life?