



ST. PAUL'S BIBLE STUDY

Ecclesiastes
1:8-18

Pastor's Notes

V. 8a— Verses 2-7 describe life under the sun (i.e., vanity, trapped in a cycle, and having no purpose); however, starting in verse 8, Solomon begins to share his reactions to life under the sun. And what is his assessment? "Everything is so tiresome!" Wow, if this does not sum life up! Over and over life happens, and with toil! Nothing comes easy in life. No sweat, no gain as they say.

V. 8b— Solomon also shares that the eye is not satisfied with seeing or the ear with hearing. In other words, the senses are never satisfied for apart from Christ, there is nothing new under the sun. This is why millionaires commit suicide. This is why Alexander the Great wished for other worlds to conquer once he conquered this one. People want more and more and more. We even see this in the church, some Christians are never satisfied, jumping from church to church to church, always looking for the new spiritual high, but never satisfied.

V. 9 & 10 — Guess what, history repeats itself. In fact, there is nothing new under the sun. What is has been done before. What is tried now, has been tried before. The sooner we realize this, the better we will be at not jumping on the next temporary bandwagon. In fact, there really is no such thing as progress—progress is a false hope because we are grounded and stuck in this life under the sun. There is no such thing as gold at the end of the rainbow. There is no such thing as a perfect utopia. The problems that people face today, they faced a 1,000 years ago and will face in the future. Sure there are advancements in medicine and technology, but they don't progress beyond this life under the sun. Medicine and technology are limited.

V. 11— It is rather depressing to consider verse 11. People who live in the future centuries are already destined to be forgotten by the following generations. Time has a way of erasing memories and legacies. For example, how much do you know about your grandparents? How about your great-grandparents? How about your great-great-grandparents? Do you even know their names? In the eyes of the world, we disappear when we die—memories fad.

Transition— As we transition into verses 12 and following, Solomon begins his investigation of life under the sun. Keep in mind that as he writes this, he is recalling a period in his life when he had wandered away from the Word/Lord. Now he writes about his empty searches.

V. 13— Keep in mind that Solomon is now relying on himself—his wisdom— and is leaving God out.

V. 14— Human wisdom deals only with what can be seen under the sun. So, what does Solomon find under the sun? People try to quench their thirst with things that turn out to be mirages. There is no gold at the end of the rainbow.

V. 15— And there is more. Everything in this world is crooked, morally and physically and spiritually. Life is not fair. We cannot fix death and we can't fix our aging bodies, so how on earth are we able to fix the world. We can't even keep our rooms and cars clean—and we expect that we can clean up the world?

V. 16— Solomon is basically saying here, "I am by far the wisest person around. I did it all. I have now concluded that everything is vanity. I am write because I have experienced more life than you."

V. 18— The more that you know, the more you realize that you don't know. Ignorance is bliss. The more that we understand life under the sun, the more we are vexed. Pain is a mark of a person who tries to figure out life under the sun.