



ST. PAUL'S BIBLE STUDY

Ecclesiastes
10:8-20

Pastor's Notes

V. 8 Be care in your endeavors, for life under the sun is dangerous. Be careful when you go full steam ahead in life, especially when you can't see through the fog of life. Life under the sun will catch you off guard.

V. 9 Don't rest your ladder upon the limb you are cutting. You have eyes in your head, slow down and be alert to dangers.

V. 10 Slow down, plan. Preparing for a task takes less time than trying to finish a task without being adequately prepared. Finishing a job is hard in this life under the sun; it is even harder when you act stupid and don't do it right.

V. 11 How foolish it is not to use one's expertise! Wisdom should be implemented first before bad things happen!

V. 12a A wise person chooses his words carefully and does so to edify. The wise person is careful with his words making sure they are accurate and truthful.

V. 12b The life of a fool is all talk and no listening. A fool does not listen to sound wisdom because he is too busy talking. Rather than learning, a fool is consumed with talking about himself. A fool spews forth many empty words that can easily swallow himself up if challenged. The fool gets trapped in his words because he often talks before thinking. The fool makes sweeping generalizations and states things as facts although he lacks proof. The fool makes wild claims and accuses people without proof.

V. 13 The fool will talk so much about unfounded things that the fool will begin to believe his senseless prattle. Even though no one will take him seriously, his mind is his captive audience to his words – words that typically self-justify himself and condemn everyone else. The more he talks, the more he hears and obeys his own rotten words/ideas. A vicious cycle can develop resulting in his madness. Unfortunately, when a person comes to point out his wickedness, the sound and truthful advice given to him will be scandalized as too preachy or too hateful. Because of his madness, he will reject truthful words as mad.

V. 14 A fool does not know when to shut up. He keeps talking, when he should stop. Indeed, ignorance does not deter the fool. He will claim to be an expert on everything. No matter how much the fool does not know, he is always quick

to share what he currently thinks about things he does not understand. Remember the slogan, "I stayed at a Holiday Inn Express"?

V. 15 A fool can talk himself into exhaustion. It takes a lot of energy to convince oneself that they are right. Having suppressed reality around himself, the fool then has to convince himself that he is right by erasing facts and rewriting history. As a result, he will not have the mental energy to remember the simplest things in life.

V. 16a This is the same theme as 10:5-7; those who covet high positions are least qualified. The Peter principle..

V. 16b An immature leader is led by the gratification of his sinful nature, not wisdom. A wise person works during the daytime and rests in the evening, whereas a fool skips over the work of the day and wants to have the party right away in the morning. The fool does not like the pain and work of the day but longs for the relaxation of the night.

V. 17a Kings that grow up knowing that their position is one of service are good for the land.

V. 17b It is good when the king's advisors follow his lead and eat at proper times – good for good order. It also shows respect for their leader when advisors do not gratify their sinful desires but uphold good order.

V. 18 Laziness can self-destruct a person. The clay roofs in ancient times needed constant care. A little energy is always required to keep the house maintained. Again, laziness can lead to human destruction. Life under the sun is hard, and it takes work and pain and toils to keep going in this life under the sun.

V. 19 This verse is to be taken as good! God gives us good gifts. They are to be enjoyed. They are not our source of our identity or the solution to life under the sun; however, they are gifts given to us to enjoy in this life of toil. A life within the fear of God brings about joy in the feast, a merry heart from the gift of wine, and the knowledge that hard work brings money, and money can fix problems.

V. 20 Be careful with people who can control your life. Be careful not to cross someone of power, for people in power have a way of always finding out. People in power did not get there by being oblivious to what is going on around them. So, be careful in your words towards leaders – not only for the sake of the 4th Commandment – but also because your words will get carried to them – they will find out, and there may be a retribution towards you. If you are going to speak against authority, you better be ready to own up to it and fight.