



ST. PAUL'S BIBLE STUDY

Ecclesiastes
2:1-11

Pastor's Notes

V. 1a Verse 1 starts with Solomon's testing of the world's pleasures. Keep in mind that Solomon tests himself in this life under the sun and his reactions to things around him.

V. 1b-2 Right away we hear from Solomon that his experiment is a disaster. In the end, nothing useful is accomplished by manufactured happiness. Grabbing at enjoyment and trying to squeeze happiness out of it only works for a moment. If we were to paint a picture of verse 2, Solomon is criticizing the type of person who seeks after pleasure no matter the cost and will laugh at everything. Sure, these people may be fun to be around for a time (they lift the blues); however, a continual seeking of pleasure and laughter at everything is mad and empty. Think of the teenagers that can't handle the death of a classmate due to drunk driving crash, but will go out and drink and party to celebrate and laugh with their classmates to honor the deceased memory. This is mad!

V. 3-ff Solomon now gets down to specifics in verses 3 and following: wine, property, women, and song.

V. 3 "How much is enough?" To see all that life under the sun has to offer with respect to wine, Solomon recounts his drinking, and drinking, and drinking. Not just a sip. He leaves no stone unturned. So, he gets plastered drunk. Keep in mind that Solomon is speaking about life under the sun and to give life under the sun a fair shake, everything must be tested to the max—all the wine must be drunk, for there might be untapped pleasure at the bottom of the bottle.

V. 4-6 Next Solomon explores property. Houses and more houses. Oh, and for his houses: gardens and parks! And don't forget pools!

CONSIDER: Material things will not satisfy, like wine. Take it from the man who had it all and then some. So, why are we so tied up in trying to acquire more stuff, when one of the richest men the world has ever known, said that it is never ending—empty? Guess what, the music artists that flash their dollar bills, while driving their Aston Martin Cars, while sipping their personalized vodka in front of their 6.2 million dollar mansion, well... they are not satisfied.

V. 7 Oh, and get this! The more stuff that you have, the harder it is to take care of it. This is why Solomon had to get slaves. One might think that maids, butlers, and servants are advantageous, but they are not! Trees are easier to take care of than other humans. So, there is no such thing as greater pleasure with more stuff, but just more headaches—more stuff to take care of with more people needed to help take care of it.

V. 8 Just in case we were wondering, Solomon also had a lot of silver and gold (cash), singers, and concubines. Again, he had it all and did it all.

CONSIDER: Christianity and the Bible are 'not' anti-sex. Sex is good; God loves sex—within marriage. Think about it this way, Proverbs 6:26 says that adultery is worse than prostitution. Why? At least the prostitute is just trying to make a living, whereas someone in adultery needlessly destroys a marriage and family. You see, that is the key. The reason why God says, "Do not commit adultery," is not to prohibit sex, but to protect marriage. And how are current and future marriages protected? They are protected when sex is practiced within the institution of marriage—where it belongs and flourishes!

V. 9 Solomon is the big kid on the block. He has done more than you.

V. 10 Keep in mind that the senses are lousy at determining what is good and evil. Sin is sweet poison, just ask Eve! We are not ethical hedonists!

V. 11 Coming full circle—what is learned? Everything—wine, property, women, and song—are empty. Nothing is gained from them in this life under the sun. $0+0=0$