



LIVING LIFE BACKWARD

How Ecclesiastes Teaches Us to Live Life in Light of the End

REVIEW

- Intro
 - Context critical
 - Must go through hard truths to get to real joy
 - Allow the Holy Spirit to work
- Chapter 1: “Vanity [breath] of vanities...” (Eccl 1:1)
 - Life is a breath
 - Your life comes and goes, and no one will remember you
 - Only by preparing to die will we know how to live
- Chapter 2: “all was vanity [breath] and a striving after wind...” (Eccl 2:11)
 - Nothing Satisfies (Wisdom, Pleasure, Work, Wealth)
 - All result in death
 - Don't expect satisfaction in fleeting things, just enjoy them as a gift from God

REVIEW

- Chapter 3: “For everything there is a season...” (Eccl 3:1)
 - There is a wisdom and beauty in the rhythms of life, even if we can't see it
 - God's eternal nature provides comfort against the darkness
 - Enjoy today as a gift, but it will change
- Chapter 4: “...the dead who are already dead are more fortunate than the living...Two are better than one” (Eccl 4:2,9)
 - There is terrible oppression in the world
 - Oppression also hurts the oppressor
 - Not lazy, not overly busy
 - Happiness is found in a “we” mentality, serving one another



ECCLESIASTES 5:1-7

UNDIVIDED GOD SEEKS UNDIVIDED WORSHIPPERS

- Deuteronomy 6:4-9
- Undivided God
- Undivided Love for God
- God's Commands on Your Heart
 - Listen to God's commands!
 - Talk about God's commands!
 - Remind yourself!
- "Let his commandments seep into the way you look at the world"

LISTENING TO GOD

- Beware in Religion!
- Sacrifice of Fools
- Don't "be hasty to utter a word before God"
 - Say the words you think he wants to hear
 - Accuse God when life is hard (think Job)
 - Promise God something you won't do
- Fools talk too much. Just listen!

SPEAKING TO GOD

- Talking to God is serious...so do what you vow
- What are some reasons (good or bad) people make vows before God?
- Reality
 - God is in heaven
 - God will judge all
 - God sees the heart
 - “God is the one you must fear”
- Matt 5:34-37
- If you think you can fool God like you fool people, you fool yourself

THINKING IT THROUGH

- Many Ways of Not Listening
 - Proud theology nerd
 - Skeptic
 - Hurting
 - Successful
 - Busy
 - Downtrodden
- The world can seem like it's a mess...
 - Listen to God
 - Trust Him and His Word (not yourself!)
 - Love the LORD with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength
- God has spoken. We can choose how to respond.



APPLICATIONS

- What are some practical ways to listen to God better?
- “God is in heaven.” “Fear God.” Why is it so easy to lose this perspective?



LISTENING PRACTICE

- Ask God:
 - For a heart to listen to Him and love Him wholeheartedly
 - If you need to repent of a religious facade
 - Where do I need to “let my words be few”?
 - If what areas of my life do I need to listen to You better?