

Ecclesiastes 1 The Futility of All Endeavors

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. 2 “Futility of futilities,” says the Preacher,

“Futility of futilities! All is futility.” 3 What advantage does a person have in all his work Which he does under the sun? 4 A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.

5 Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hurrying to its place it rises there again. 6 Blowing toward the south, Then turning toward the north, The wind continues swirling along; And on its circular courses the wind returns. 7 All the rivers flow into the sea, Yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, There they flow again.

8 All things are wearisome; No one can tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing. 9 What has been, it is what will be, And what has been done, it is what will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there anything of which one might say, “See this, it is new”? It has already existed for ages Which were before us. 11 There is no remembrance of the earlier things, And of the later things as well, which will occur, There will be no remembrance of them Among those who will come later still.

The Futility of Wisdom

12 I, the Preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom about everything that has been done under heaven. It is a sorry task with which God has given the sons of mankind to be troubled. 14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is futility and striving after wind. 15 What is crooked cannot be straightened, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

16 I said to myself, “Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.” 17 And I applied my mind to know wisdom and to know insanity and foolishness; I realized that this also is striving after wind. 18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief; and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?
Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Paul's Questions and insights

1. Which of David's sons is the writer talking about?
2. What does futility mean?
3. Why does the writer refer to himself as 'the preacher'?
4. Have you ever come to a place in your life when everything seemed pointless?
5. What benefit is there for a person to work hard throughout their life?
6. How does it make you feel to think of life as an ever-continuous cycle?
7. Is it true that the last generation is the same as this generation? Has this always been the case?
8. Is it true that the earth remains forever?
9. If all this just happened, do you think, the rotation of the sun would be so consistent?
10. Is it true that the wind is chasing itself around the world?
11. Do all rivers flow into the sea?
12. Why doesn't the sea overflow onto the whole earth?
13. Are all things wearisome? Is the eye dissatisfied and the ear not able to know contentment?
14. Is it true that there is nothing new under the sun?
15. Can we still say that, in these days?
16. Do new generations choose to forget previous generations? Or do we take thought for future generations?
17. To be a King at a very prosperous time in the history of Israel must have been an amazing privilege!
18. Solomon had embarked on a life of mega exposure, indulging in extreme access to anything and everything!
19. When Solomon asked God to give him wisdom, he should have also asked God to give him understanding, because the more you know, the heavier the responsibility.
20. Solomon's great learning became too much for him to bear and drove him into depression.
21. Solomon failed to see that the chase was more important than the achievement.
22. Solomon was ready to give up on the lost and the broken as no-hopers but God sees things very differently.
23. Why do we talk to ourselves?
24. What part of us is doing the talking, what part of us is doing the listening and what part of us is doing the answering?
25. Solomon had indeed excelled to the top of the ladder as 'the man of great wisdom'.
26. Even Jesus himself commended Solomon for his great learning.
27. Solomon is most definitely telling the true when he says, 'his mind has observed a

wealth of knowledge’.

28. We reason with our mind.

29. Why does Solomon address sanity and foolishness as opposite sides to the line?

Reason being the line.

30. He concludes, despite knowing what he knows, he is in no better place than a fool.

31. It is true, wisdom brings great insight.

32. Some people are troublemakers, other people are problem solvers – which one are you?

33. The reason why knowledge brings pain, is because knowing is a heavy burden to bear and innocence is bliss.