

WHAT'S THE POINT?

the gospel according to Ecclesiastes

*“The End of the Matter”
Ecclesiastes 12:8-14*

“Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.”¹ Solomon comes to an end of his writing by stating almost exactly what he said at the beginning of the book. As we have trekked through this book, we have begun to understand Solomon’s logic. Everything is like a vapor. It goes so quickly. So, *what’s the point of anything we do and anything that happens?*

As we’ve gone through this series, I’ve heard from some of you saying that Ecclesiastes had been a depressing book to you. It was a book you really didn’t know or think much about. Yet, in going through this series, I’ve also heard from many people how encouraging the message has become. And I’ve found that for myself, too. I’ve personally loved the book of Ecclesiastes for a long time, and it used to be what I considered to be my *favorite* book of the Bible. But in studying and preaching on this book, I’ve found just how practical it is in its encouragement. Solomon doesn’t want us living with blinders on. He wants us to live in light of the truth.

Sadly, we don’t like living in light of the truth. Sometimes it doesn’t seem right. Sometimes it doesn’t feel right. And so, Solomon has had a very difficult task. Let me give an illustration. Imagine that you’re taking a vacation to your favorite spot on this earth. You’ve saved up money. You’ve paid for your travels. You’ve set aside the place you’re going to stay. You go on the vacation, and everything’s fine, but then you realize you want more. So, you spend some more money here and there and then over there. As you keep spending, your friend or spouse says, “Did you have money for that?” You say, “No, but I want to savor the whole experience! I only get to do this once.” So you spend more. You buy the \$1,000 outfit and go out to eat for \$500 at the best restaurant around. Your friend or spouse lovingly urges you to reconsider how much you’re putting on your credit card. And then you say, “But this is really fun!” They tell you that you’re going to experience the weight of this after you get back from the trip. Finally, you simply cover your ears and say, “I’m not listening!”

Now, why do I give this illustration? Because Solomon is talking to people who don’t want to listen. In the beginning of the book, we even see how Solomon talks about the bankruptcy of living a life without thought to God. Why would he do that? Because naturally, we are born sinners – meaning that we do not want to trust in and depend on God for our meaning and life. We want the stuff around us, even ourselves, to give us our significance and hope.

Yet Solomon shows us through his own experience and even with great patience that the point of our vain, mist-like lives is not found in other things that will fade away. Our very existence and the value of our lives, will find its significance only in God. While we may not want to listen to this with our naturally sinful ears, we need to hear these words. If we do, and if we respond rightly, we’ll be radically and graciously changed. And, actually, this is essentially the idea that Solomon wants to emphasize as we

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:8.

come to the last few verses of this book of Ecclesiastes. So, please turn in your Bibles to Ecclesiastes 12, and I will begin reading in verse 9:

⁹Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. ¹⁰The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth. ¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. ¹²My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. ¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil. ²

In these last few verses, Solomon expresses to us the great value of this book. Now, right off the bat, some of you could say, “Is this Solomon who’s talking here or someone else?” Actually, it could be that someone else added this ending. It can sometimes sound odd to have someone talking in the third person about themselves. So, was Solomon saying, “Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught. . .”? Could this be someone else who wrote at some later date?

Well, it could be someone else; however, I’m not personally convinced. There are scenarios where we can talk of ourselves in third person and it’s not a problem whatsoever. In Matthew 20:17-18, we read this: “¹⁷And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death. . ..’”³ Jesus is not talking about someone else. He’s talking about himself, and he’s using a specific title for a specific reason. I believe that’s the similar case here with Solomon. He is the Preacher. If you don’t remember, let me remind you that this term “Preacher” is why the book is called Ecclesiastes. This Hebrew word for “preacher” refers to someone who speaks in front of a gathered people. The word “Ecclesiastes” comes from the Greek form for church, ekklesia. So, yes, Solomon is the king over Israel; but with this term, he is also the teacher to a group of people who need to take heed to the wisdom. He’s speaking the truth. And because he’s speaking the truth, you ought to listen.

Many of you could say, “Well, we did listen. This study was great!” And then I will start a new series in November on Gratitude, and I’ll have another series during the Christmas time, and then starting in January, we’ll dive into the book of Hebrews. After a couple of months, the book of Ecclesiastes could be long-gone in your mind. It’s understandable. We forget quickly, don’t we? But our ability to easily forget shouldn’t cause us to excuse our forgetfulness. Instead, it should cause us to want to continually remind ourselves of what we learned. And so, with these final words of Solomon, I believe that the Preacher shows us that **Solomon’s teaching deserves continual meditation.**

This isn’t to say that you should always read Ecclesiastes every day until you die. Instead, recognize its importance. Recognize the truths. When you forget the truths communicated here – go back to Solomon and the Scriptures as a whole to remind you. Don’t treat Ecclesiastes as a lesser book in the

² *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:9–14.

³ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Mt 20:17–18.

canon. It deserves continual meditation, and Solomon gives us three reasons why it deserves continual thought. The first reason is:

1. Because of *how* he taught: with skill (vv. 9-10).

Solomon thought carefully how he was going to teach. He didn't want to waste anyone's time. He also wanted to draw in their attention. Solomon knew something that many people forget: truth should affect our minds and emotions.

There was a 17th century French mathematician and physicist by the name of Blaise Pascal who later converted to Christianity and devoted time to philosophy. In talking about how to talk about the Christian message, he wrote, **"Men despise religion. They hate it and are afraid it may be true. The cure for this is first to show that religion is not contrary to reason, but worthy of reverence and respect. Next make it attractive, make good men wish it were true, and then show that it is."**

I think Pascal restated Solomon's understanding and intentions. People don't want to listen. Give them what's reasonable and then show them that it's so attractive that even if they don't accept it, they'll wish it were true. I actually have seen this before. One time I was watching a conversation between a Christian pastor and a person who would probably have considered themselves irreligious. As this pastor spoke of the Christian message, he winsomely described how the gospel was beautiful and good and reasonable. This other individual (with other people) had objections, but the pastor made a final point and after that conversation, the irreligious individual responded by saying something like, "I can see how it sounds really good – if it were true!" He was shown reason and he was shown beauty.

Here Solomon says he's done the same thing. He's given reason and beauty. And Solomon doesn't simply say that he gives a little bit of wisdom. He says that he has taken great care and thought with the knowledge he's given. He didn't just write down a sermon to get it done. He carefully weighed what he was going to say. He studied before writing it down, and then once he had all the information, he carefully thought about the placement of where he was going to put all of this.

The conclusion of all of that work includes the book of Ecclesiastes. Now, hold on a second, does Ecclesiastes reveal great thought? Absolutely. He pulls no punches. He talks about money, sex, power, popularity, government, oppression, food, drink, work. And in the midst of this, he tells it like it is. He doesn't want us to have any false ideas about any of it. He talks about death and the "vanity" of living "under the sun." Problems will come. Then he slowly, but surely, talks about a reality over everything. He talks about God and eternity.

He did all of this with clarity. That doesn't mean everything makes sense right away, but when we ponder the statements, they sink in and mean so much to it. Think about some of his statements with me. He talks about everything being a "striving after the wind." He says that in much wisdom is vexation. Then in the famous "time for everything" chapter, he beautifully repeats the word "time" over and over again with contrasting statements to help us understand his point. In addition to this, while there's repetition throughout the whole book, there is an overall construction to the book. He tells of his own personal quest for meaning. Then he moves on to tell us that God is all that matters, and he proceeds to tell us how to live for God in a vain world. He does this in chapters 7-11 by contrasting wisdom and folly. At the end, he talks again about death and dying and then gives us the main point at the end.

Solomon is masterful in his communication of truth. “The famous American writer Tom Wolfe described Ecclesiastes as ‘the highest flower of poetry, eloquence, and truth’ – ‘the greatest single piece of writing I have known’” (as quot. in Ryken, p. 276).

Solomon wrote with precision and beauty. But he also wrote with integrity. He said that he “uprightly...wrote words of truth.” He wrote what he did because he cared for God’s glory and our good. You know, this past week I was talking to someone about Solomon and they said, “You know, it seems like Solomon probably repented towards the end of his life.” To that, I said, “I believe so.” If Ecclesiastes is indeed written by Solomon (which I believe he did), then he wrote it towards the end of his life. And I believe in his writing he recognizes his own failures – the sinfulness of many of his own pursuits. And here we see that instead of clinging to the things of this world, Solomon sees again that only God can satisfy. So, he calls us to see what he missed for decades. With integrity, beauty and knowledge, he wants us to know the truth!

How glorious to see God’s work through Solomon and to have this treasure of a book to have been able to study and to continue to study. Also, by the way, Solomon’s example here should spur us on, too, in our communication. The early church leader, Ambrose, once said to preachers, “Therefore let your sermons be flowing, let them be clear and lucid so that by suitable disputation you may pour sweetness into the ears of the people. . . .” Or, to put another way, one commentator named Sean O’Donnell wrote, “Don’t waste my time, preacher. The dark days are coming soon. I’ve got better things to do than to hear you make the Bible boring” (O’Donnell, p. 213).

Now, we need to be careful with these statements because then we could be in danger of just wanting sermons to suit our personal preferences. That’s not what either Ambrose or O’Donnell would encourage. Clearly God uses different types of communication and writing skills to teach people. Not every book in the Bible is like Ecclesiastes. Paul’s writings are different from John’s which are different from Moses. Instead, what I think Solomon’s example encourages us to is to pray that we are able to communicate God’s truth with grace, truthfulness, and passion.

I say “passion” because Solomon is quite passionate about communicating truth. In his book, you soar between mountain peaks of joy and valleys of despair. He doesn’t want us disengaged. So it should be for us when we talk about God with others. We should want them to know that we not only believe what we say, but we love what we believe. Don’t waste someone’s time talking to them about something you’re not passionate about.

You know, I could be sitting in someone’s house and then I ask a question about the paintings on their wall and they then dive into a 30-minute dissertation on paint strokes. Immediately I know that they love paintings. And, you know what? I may not love paintings, but their love draws me in. Now, your passion may not be painting. If you love your child, you’ll tell stories about your child. If you enjoy food like I do, you’ll comment on the nuances of flavors. If you enjoy cars, guess what? You’ll talk about cars with excitement. If you’re a child, you might talk about the fort you created or the new toy.

I know I may be laboring over this point, but let me ask you this: “With the same intensity and joy do you talk about God?” Some people will say, “Well, that’s different. God is confusing. He’s complex. I just don’t have a smart mind.” To that I say, “How much time have you spent studying the other things you love? Did you have to be smart to love those things?” Oh Ventura, may our children see the joy of the Lord in us. May our co-workers. May our spouses. May our friends. May our church family see and hear it every time we gather together. Sunday School teachers, teach with precision and beauty! Church

family, tell others about God with precision and beauty. Church, as we sing, let's sing with both precision and beauty and joy! You don't have to talk like Solomon. You may sound like Peter, the fisherman. Either way, if you're a follower of Christ, pray that God only continues to grip your heart so you speak with God's joy. The psalmist wrote, "In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust. . ."⁴ Praise God for him and for his Word! Praise God for Solomon's example of *how* he wrote. And thank the Lord for the gift he gave us through Solomon: this book of Ecclesiastes.

But Solomon doesn't only tell us *how* he wrote, he tells his us that his book is worthy of continual meditation:

2. Because of *why* he taught: to change lives (vv. 11-12).

Verses 11 says, "¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd."⁵

What's the intent of a wise person's teachings, more specifically Solomon's teachings, more specifically this book of Ecclesiastes? To be like goads and nails firmly fixed. Even in his conclusion, Solomon is using precision and beauty with his words. He gives us word pictures *again*. But what do these mean?

Let's take goads first. A goad was a tool used by a farmer. It was a sharp stick that spurs an animal on to keep moving. It's not a tool that's intended to kill, but it gives just enough pain to get the animal to cooperate. We have items like this today. What about a bit in a horse's mouth? Or, maybe when your dog has gone a little crazy on the leash, you've pulled back. It hurts a little, but you're trying to teach for the welfare of others and even for the animal.

The book of Ecclesiastes does that for those of us who are listening. Another early church Christian by the name of Gregory Thaumaturgos wrote, "**the mind is roused and spurred by the instructions of wise people just as much as the body is by an ox-goad being applied**" (as quot. Ryken, p. 277). How has Ecclesiastes done this?

When thinking about the glories of money, Solomon reminds us that we can living clinging to the stuff, but as soon as we're done, people will have no problem taking the money out of our cold, dead hands and then forgetting about us and removing our legacy. That might seem like hyperbole, but then we remember that we barely know any of the billions upon billions of people who have existed in history past. Even Solomon's statement of "chasing after the wind" comes as a cattle-prod because we realize that if we live for what we see, we're wasting our time and we're going to weary ourselves.

But this cattle prod isn't to kill us. It's to rescue us and keep us focused! That's why Solomon writes. He gives us the faithful wounds of a friend because these words are most helpful for us. And that gets us to the second word-picture. Solomon says his teaching is like "nails firmly fixed."

As I think about this illustration, I'm reminded of our family's experience with trampolines. When we first moved to the house we lived in, we put our trampoline in the back yard, and then the Fall time came. November hit and our backyard was a wind tunnel. I woke up in the morning, went to the kitchen sink, looked out the window, and I saw the step ladder, but the trampoline was nowhere in view of that

⁴ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ps 56:4.

⁵ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:11.

window. How could a trampoline disappear? I looked a little more and I saw the trampoline upside down by the woods. Now, you'd like to think I had learned my lesson after that incident. Well, the next year, I did. I took off the trampoline material so that the trampoline wouldn't have lift. Yet, somehow the wind got it and it went upside down again. An upside-down or sideways trampoline has been our experience probably 3 times or so. Then, I remember a time last year where I was talking with someone and they were saying their trampoline had these ties to keep the trampoline stuck to the ground. I thought, "Brilliant! They make ties!" Why didn't I even think there would be ties for trampolines? How idiotic of me. You know, this is the idea of nails firmly fixed. It communicates security and stability. God's truth is to be stuck in our mind and as the wise, those who trust God, embrace the truth, they find a stability in the midst of whatever life brings. So, wise words sting, but they also secure.

Praise God for wise words! But why are these words of Solomon so valuable? I mean, Solomon was really foolish. How do we know that what he's saying here is of lasting importance? The end of verse 11 is absolutely fascinating to me: "they are given by one Shepherd."⁶ In the KJV, NKJV, ESV, HCSB, NIV (and I'm sure others), the word "Shepherd" has been capitalized by the translators. Is that right for them to do? In Israel, kings were referred to as shepherds. Couldn't Solomon simply be talking about himself? Yes, but I'm not sure. He is giving greater reasons why what he wrote is so valuable. And, in this context, he refers to himself as the Preacher three times. Plus the way it's word "one Shepherd," it sounds like he wants to highlight Someone specific. So, I think Solomon is saying that the words he's writing are ultimately given by God himself. Psalm 23 and Psalm 80 both refer to God as the shepherd of his people. And so Solomon is actually admitting that he's aware that what he has written here has been given by God himself.

Think of the profound implications of this. We live *under the sun*, and God, who is *above the sun*, condescends to us in our need and writes us a book that confesses the difficulties in this world. He tells us of the effects of sin and sinfulness, and then he shows us that he is weaving something together so beautiful that we can only imagine it. And he calls us to trust him! This is the shepherd who leads us beside still waters and restores our soul! The One above the sun comes below the sun to give us wisdom.

Because of this, Solomon writes in verse 12, "¹²My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh."⁷ With love, he speaks to his "son." This could be his literal son, but given that this is the Preacher speaking to a gathering, I tend to think this is a term of endearment to the congregation. He has written with beauty, integrity and passion. He has written so that our lives would be changed through the truth prodding us and also sticking in our minds for our own security and wisdom. He doesn't want this to be thrown away. He writes with care for the readers.

And so he calls us to beware of anything beyond these words. He says that there will be no end to new books. And that's true today as then. There's nothing new under the sun. In America, we publish somewhere between 600,000 to 1 million books a year. Now, Solomon isn't against reading other things. He's not saying you shouldn't go to the library and pick up books outside of Ecclesiastes. But what he is concerned about is the weariness of the flesh through much study. Based on the context of that phrase in this book, I think Solomon's talking about a person who will read Ecclesiastes and they'll think, "Yeah, but I've got to figure out *this* answer." If you aren't content with Solomon's conclusion

⁶ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:11.

⁷ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:12.

here, you will never be content. This reminds me of the time I watched a debate between a Christian pastor and a well-known atheist Christopher Hitchens. Hitchens spoke of always asking questions and the Christian paraphrased or quoted from a man named GK Chesterton. Chesterton had said something like, **“The point of an open mind is the same as an open mouth – to close on something.”** Think of that point. If you are always open and you never close on anything, you’ll starve your brain. Or, as Solomon says, “You’ll weary yourself.” You need to be content with certain answers, and you need to be content with certain tensions that you may never have the answers to. Instead of spinning your wheels reading books after books and thinking you’re so smart because you can read a lot and you’re well-versed in all the leading philosophies, what are you doing with Solomon’s words here that have been written so well with care and love under the divine direction of God himself? Teaching that gives the main point within just twelve chapters. He’s not wanting to waste your time. He cuts right to the point. Solomon’s teaching deserves continual meditation. And he gives one more reason why:

3. Because of *what* he taught: that God matters supremely (vv. 13-14).

Verse 13 says, ¹³“The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”⁸ The end of the matter; all has been heard? Solomon isn’t saying that he has talked about every specific thing there is to talk about, but instead, he’s addressed all he needs to address to make his point. There’s nothing more that needs to be said that will either prove his point or change his conclusion. And what’s the main point? Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

There are three points in this. The first is regarding fearing God. This is something Solomon expanded on as we moved through this book, but let me take some time to re-explain what this means. The term “fear” has mostly negative connotations in our day. And the term fear has many negative connotations in the Bible, too. Why would God say “Fear not,” and then say “Fear me?” And when he says “Fear me,” is he saying that every human being is to be absolutely terrified of God at every moment? Did God create us for that?

The idea of fear can seem complex, but it can be quite easy to understand. In Proverbs, we’re told of a different kind of fear: the fear of man. I remember years ago talking with someone about my struggle with the fear of man, and they had no idea to what I was referring. I think they thought I was afraid of people, but I didn’t mean that. Instead, I meant that I can tend to live on the basis of what people think of me. If people don’t like this or that thing, I can become a chameleon and adapt to their preferences. I can be fearful of what people think of me. If I do something they don’t like, then I’ll worry. If I do something they do like, then I’m satisfied. That’s the idea of “fear of man.” And it’s a snare because people are not the Creators, Kings or Judges. Yet, I’ll submit to their whims. And I do that because I’m placing my trust in people. But when I do that, I will always be changing on the basis of changing people.

Instead, it’s far superior to fear God. He’s supreme. He’s the Creator, King and Judge. I was created for him and his glory – not for people and their glory. So, I should be concerned about him and his desires. I should be concerned about dishonoring him, and I should find satisfaction in what he delights in! When I live this way, I’m living securely in the One who never changes and is in control of all. And I live this way because I trust him. Listen, Ventura. This idea of fear comes because there is trust in God!

⁸ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:13.

“Fear God,” Solomon says. Don’t live for money, stuff, government, oppression. Trust in God and live for him! But then Solomon also urges us to *obey!* If you fear God, you cannot be ambivalent to obedience. This again is where I’m so bothered by slaughtered gospel presentations where people only emphasize “belief” on Jesus without any call to follow him. Trust *and* obey. God saved us by grace apart from works. But he also saved us *unto* good works. You can’t claim salvation and live like the devil.

Before you get angry with that statement, hopefully it comes to you as a goad. But I also hope it comes to you as an encouragement because Solomon says that this is the whole duty of man. God created us for a purpose. He didn’t create us to live in sinfulness. Think of the parable of Jesus where the son ran away from his father and lived however he wanted and then came to his senses, realizing that he has been completely missing out. What did he do then? He returned to his father.

This is the point Solomon has made over and over again. Embracing sinfulness only kills us. It never rewards. But trusting yourself to God, fearing him and obeying him even when the results don’t pan out the way you like, that’s worth it because there’s an eternity. There’s a faithful God, and Solomon emphasizes that in the last verse of this book. Look at verse 14 again: For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.⁹

This verse can be both troubling and tremendously encouraging. In one sense, it’s encouraging because Solomon says that every action matters! People who think, “What’s the Point?” miss out. Everything we do in this world will be judged. There are right and wrong actions, and what we do actually do matter.

But these are also troubling words. One person I read this past week said we could think of this verse like God hitting the record button on the day we were born and then him hitting the stop, rewind and play button at the judgment. But it’s more than that. Imagine that somehow there’s a recording for every thought and desire? Imagine every single one being played before God? First Corinthians 4:5 says that the when the Lord comes again, he **“will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart.”**¹⁰

At that judgment, to use Solomon’s words, will you be declared a fool or a wise person? Look at your life. Look at your desires. If you go to God’s courtroom and face the Judge on your own works, will he judge you as right or wrong? And, you cannot go to the judge and get the scales and say you balanced your good and bad. God tells us, through Solomon, that the question boils down to whether or not we actually trust in, love and seek after God himself. Do we live our lives on the basis of him or not? If we don’t live on the basis of the One who is Life, then we will have death. You can’t pursue death and receive life. So, what’s the judgment?

It’s at this point that I need to bring in more encouragement. When I read the “one Shepherd” statement from this chapter, most of you probably immediately thought of Jesus himself – and rightly so. When Jesus came to this earth, he often referred to himself as the Shepherd. He is the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep. In John 10:10, Jesus said, **“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”**¹¹ This Shepherd is also referred to in the New Testament as *the Wisdom* from God. Colossians 2:3 says, **“in [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”**¹² He is wisdom

⁹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ec 12:14.

¹⁰ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 1 Co 4:5.

¹¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Jn 10:10.

¹² *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Col 2:3.

in the flesh who taught with skill, perfection. He only spoke what was truthful because he is Truth. He spoke to not merely change lives but to give life so that our lives would change. And he taught that God's glory matters supremely. But not only that, Jesus lived the perfect life we could never live and took the punishment we deserved and died in the place of sinners who would never make it through the judgment uncondemned. But because Jesus was condemned on our behalf, he paved the way for sinners to not only make it to the judgment, but through the judgment. He, the Shepherd, the Wisdom from God, gave us his righteousness so that we could be restored to God. We can now fear God and keep his commandments.

Praise God for this one shepherd who is both the perfect Judge and the glorious Savior. Solomon's search really does point to him. As Solomon started this book, he talked about the constant chasing for pleasure that never finds complete satisfaction. Jesus spoke of this, too. And, as the fulfillment of Ecclesiastes, the one Shepherd once said, "28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."¹³ Only in him do we find rest. Only in him do we find meaning. Only in him do we have eternal hope and eternal life.

This is the gospel according to Ecclesiastes.

Are you chasing after many things only to find them all fail? Do you seek to trust yourself and yet you know even you fail? Have you felt like God has failed? Oh, please look to Jesus again. He suffered supremely so that you could be rescued and have hope. I'm not here to answer all your questions, but I do pray that the words of Solomon and the sacrifice of Jesus can cause you to see that living for anything else will pass away. But Christ gives superior satisfaction and hope.

Let's pray.

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¹³ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Mt 11:28.