

1966 Ecclesiastes

Notes from R. B. Thieme series

Ecclesiastes 1:

514_0001

Most people who have problems suffer from self-induced misery. This is one of the primary sources of misery. We are often our own worst enemies and we produce all of the misery which we need for a lifetime.

If you are normal, you have a desire to be happy.

Some come to church out of superstition. They know they will have a bad week unless they show up as sort of a good luck charm and so that they have a good week. For these, church is a very difficult thing.

We often blame it on God. We are constantly in the process of alienating our friends. The longer and more ardor we use in seeking happiness, the further we are from it. There is no short road to happiness. There is no question about it. As a believer, there is a short road to happiness, and this road we often ignore.

There is an honest man in the past who was in a position to chase after anything that he wanted, and he wound up the most miserable of creatures. He had a wonderful father, King David, who taught him doctrine. Solomon started out quite beautifully but he became too successful. One income of many was \$20 million/year. He does not mind telling us about the money which he has made. However, when he had a lot of money, he figured that maybe he should pursue money. He never knew what it was like to be poor. He was born rich, died rich and was rich all the time in between. He was handsome, successful; and he decided that what he need was happiness. He turned his back on God and spent many years in misery and he brought it on himself. He was only seeking happiness.

Solomon carried on 7 experiments, and he drew some conclusions; and he also, at the end of all this, wrote the book of Proverbs.

Bob never liked the name preacher from his father. His father dealt with him with great sarcasm. He had a marvelous vocabulary and he knew how to use sarcasm.

Those who are always seeking happiness will be bitter and miserable and Bob is here to tell us that we will do ourselves less damage if we beat ourselves over the head with a hammer. Solomon will try to keep us from falling into this trap.

Eccles. 1:1 [The words of the Teacher](#) [= the man with the message], [son of David, king in Jerusalem](#).

Solomon gives us the conclusion right up front. Ecclesiastes can be summed up in the first 2 verses. This is what happens when you go looking for happiness.

Single people are miserable because they are not married and married people are miserable because they are not single. The Word of God says it does not matter which one.

Eccles. 1:2 "Absolute futility [Emptiness of emptinesses; Vanity of Vanities]," says the Teacher. "Absolute futility [Emptiness of emptinesses; Vanity of Vanities]. Everything is futile."

Eccles. 1:3 What does a man gain for all his efforts he labors at under the sun?

Eccles. 1:4 A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

Eccles. 1:5 The sun rises and the sun sets; panting, it returns to its place where it rises.

Eccles. 1:6 Gusting to the south, turning to the north, turning, turning, goes the wind, and the wind returns in its cycles.

Eccles. 1:7 All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is never full. The streams are flowing to the place, and they flow there again.

Eccles. 1:8 All things are wearisome; man is unable to speak. The eye is not satisfied by seeing or the ear filled with hearing.

Eccles. 1:9 What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun.

Eccles. 1:10 Can one say about anything, "Look, this is new"? It has already existed in the ages before us.

Eccles. 1:11 There is no memory of those who came before; and of those who will come after there will also be no memory among those who follow them.

Eccles. 1:12 I, the Teacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.

The experimentation begins in v. 12. He decides that he needs to have a college degree in order to be happy. Many people have been great and successful without academics. Bob is not against that; but he knows academics does not mean happiness. Whether you go or not is not an issue.

After his Freshman year, he says, "It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with."

Eccles. 1:13 I applied my mind to seek and explore through wisdom all that is done under heaven. God has given people this miserable task to keep them occupied.

Solomon concludes that this was feeding on air. It did not lead to happiness.

Eccles. 1:14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun and have found everything to be futile [= feeding on air], a pursuit of the wind.

He made the following observations.

Eccles. 1:15 What is crooked cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.

He was no slouch. He worked.

Eccles. 1:16 I said to myself, "Look, I have amassed wisdom far beyond all those who were over Jerusalem before me, and my mind has thoroughly grasped wisdom and knowledge."

Solomon even studied psychology (*madness and folly*). Possessing a degree does not make one happy.

Eccles. 1:17 I applied my mind to know wisdom and knowledge, madness and folly; I learned that this too is a pursuit of the wind.

His great education simply made him sorrowful.

Eccles. 1:18 For with much wisdom is much sorrow; as knowledge increases, grief increases.

He decides now to go out and play because he has been a bookworm and he needs to get out to the beach and loosen up some.

Eccles. 2:1 I said in my heart, Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore consider and behold goodness; this also is vanity.

All the laughs in the world don't give him a steady happiness.

Eccles. 2:2 I said of laughter, It is madness; and of mirth, What does it do?

He decides to drink a little wine. However, this did not bring him happiness either.

Eccles. 2:3 I sought in my heart to drag my flesh with wine, yet leading my heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, until I might see where the good for the sons of men might be, what they should do under the heavens all the days of their life.

He decides then that he wants to build some great buildings. He became one of the greatest contractors of his day. He lived in many of these houses. He got to working too hard and decided he wanted to get out to the country. Country people want to come to the city; and they cross each other's paths on the weekends.

Eccles. 2:4 I made my works great; I built houses for myself; I planted vineyards for myself.

Isn't it fun to get out there and play with the holly hocks and the petunias? Some of the most miserable people Bob has ever seen, miserable, and they love flowers. They putter around.

Eccles. 2:5 I made gardens and orchards for myself, And I planted trees in them, of all fruit.

He made all kinds of landscaping.

Eccles. 2:6 I made pools of water for myself, to water the forest shooting forth trees.

People collect things; and he collected slaves and livestock. Bob knew someone with this great gun collection including one which belonged to Wyatt Earp.

Eccles. 2:7 I bought slaves and slave women, and sons of the house were mine; also livestock, a herd and a great flock were mine, above all that were before me in Jerusalem.

He also had a coin and gem collection. He also had a live orchestra in every room.

Eccles. 2:8 I also gathered silver and gold to myself, and the treasure of kings and of the provinces. I got men singers and women singers for myself, and the delights of the sons of men, a wife and very many wives.

He never lost his wisdom.

Eccles. 2:9 I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me.

He never withheld any pleasure from his own eyes. He was stimulated by all of this stuff, but he became bored.

Eccles. 2:10 *And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I did not withhold my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor, and this was my part of all my labor.*

Then he looked at all of these things which he had been doing. He says, *behold, all of this was emptiness*. None of these happiness were on the road to happiness.

Eccles. 2:11 *Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit; and there is no profit under the sun.*

Eccles. 2:12 *And I turned to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; for what can the man do who comes after the king, when they have already done it?*

Eccles. 2:13 *Then I saw that wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness.*

Eccles. 2:14 *The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walks in darkness; and I also knew that one event happens to all of them.*

Eccles. 2:15 *Then I said in my heart, As it happens to the fool, so it happens even to me; and why was I then more wise? And I said in my heart that this also is vanity.*

Eccles. 2:16 *For there is no memory of the wise more than of the fool forever, since that which is now shall all be forgotten in the days to come. And how does the wise die above the fool!*

Then he thinks about having children and he thought of a status symbol of children. You either show them off or you are embarrassed by them. Children are not a source of happiness to parents unless they are morons. Many of you think it would be great to be loved by children. You think that being popular with children is one of the greatest thing in the world.

Younger children, like 9 or younger, and you can make them love you with a piece of candy. They are naturally unstable and immature, and someone with more candy will take them away from you. It is easy to entertain little children.

Some parents get so emotionally involved with their children that they become emotionally involved when the kid starts talking to them out of the corner of their mouths.

Some spend all of their lives trying to bribe their children. They just give them everything. One example of a guy who never taught his kid anything; and the kid, who was given everything, began to steal. He thought everything belonged to him.

Think twice before having a big family. Bob warns us that he did not write this.

You can enjoy your children; but do not depend upon them for happiness. Do not ever depend upon them for happiness.

Solomon, the wealthiest man in the world, hates life. He has pleasures beyond pleasures and he hates life.

Solomon has not indulged in things that are wrong. Pleasure and academics and children are not guarantees of happiness.

Others make you think that you will be happy only if you get married or have children.

Eccles. 2:17 [Therefore I hated life; because the work that is done under the sun is sad to me; for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.](#)

Now Solomon thinks about all of his children, and he has 700 wives and 300 concubines, so he has children. Who knows what my kids will be like? They might be wise men and they might be fools. It is because of Rehoboam that the tribes of Israel split up.

Eccles. 2:18 [Yes, I hated all my labor which I had done under the sun; that I must leave it to the man who shall be after me.](#)

No idea of what his kids will do. This is emptiness as well.

Eccles. 2:19 [And who knows whether he shall be wise or a fool? Yet he shall have rule over all my labor in which I have labored, and acted wisely under the sun. This is also vanity.](#)

Solomon despairs over this.

Eccles. 2:20 [And I turned to cause my heart to despair over all the labor which I did under the sun.](#)

His experimentation is academics, pleasure and then family. There is a man with knowledge and wisdom and stability; but if he leaves it to someone else, what will be the result of that?

You can enjoy city life and country life; you can enjoy laughter. If you have Bible doctrine, you get an inner stability. If you have Bible doctrine you can handle your children or enjoy your children. It is doctrine in the frontal lobe which leads to great happiness.

“Wait till you have children,” and smile when you say that. When the shoe is on the other foot, it is quite interesting.

There was this enlisted men who razzed officers; but when he became an officer, all of the things which he looked down on, he became.

We will have an all out war sooner or later; and many of our children will be killed and they will suffer. What will you do when your children go to war? Will you be miserable? Will you fall apart? There is no excuse for abnormal grief or misery. Hope is all Bible doctrine connected with phase III. Hope is phase III Bible doctrine.

Bob preached at his father’s and his uncle’s funeral and he did not fall apart because they were with God. Knowing this gives him great comfort.

There is a lot of misery which is unnecessary. There is no excuse. In the midst of pleasure, family and academics. He will leave it behind his work behind to someone who did not labor. This is also emptiness and a great evil. This is evil in the sense of deception. Solomon wants you to know that he is not a happy person with all of these things. He has a lot of money, 1000 wives, and a great background; and he is not a happy person. Many of us think that, if we were in Solomon’s shoes, we would be happy. The greatest source of misery today is self-induced misery.

Eccles. 2:21 **When there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and with success; yet to a man who has not labored in it, he shall leave it for his share. This also is vanity and a great evil.**

Let’s look back at the other side of this. There are people who come to Bible class and now they are enjoying their lives. Things they had before they like.

When you have it, you develop great happiness.

Philip. 4:11 **Not that I speak according to need, for I have learned to be content in whatever state I am.**

Philip. 4:12 **I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. In everything and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.**

Philip. 4:13 **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.**

Ecclesiastes 2:

514_0002

Being in church on a Sunday morning is not a place which you associate with happiness.

Two categories of self-induced misery, misery that you produce from yourself for yourself. One way to be miserable, as a believer, is to seek after happiness. No believer can be happy apart from Bible doctrine in the right lobe. The difference between misery and happiness in the human race can be a very fine line. Solomon sought happiness as a believer. He had a wonderful, doctrinal heritage.

Last time we studied 3 ways in which Solomon sought happiness: through academic pursuits, which he concluded to be emptiness and feeding upon wind. Then he tried pleasure. Then he tried having a family and children.

Train up a child in the way in which he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. *When he is old* means, *when he is mature*.

In this next interlude, Solomon recalls what he has been taught. Solomon cannot lose his salvation. He will always be in the top circle.

Solomon summarizes; he says that he causes his own frontal lobe to despair. He has tried all of the pleasures of life. After these botched attempts, Solomon realizes that he is not finding any happiness.

Eccles. 2:20 [And I turned to cause my heart to despair over all the labor which I did under the sun.](#)

Solomon did learn some doctrine from his parents and he knew that his father had great happiness. Wisdom is the application of doctrine; knowledge is the initial learning of doctrine. He recalls that his father and mother were stable and happy people. They learned Bible doctrine and as they grew older, they had more and more happiness. He now sees himself becoming old and he knows that he does not have what his father had.

You may have heard *youth is wasted on youth*, which means that, by the time someone can actually enjoy life, he is too old to. However, this is not really the case.

Once you begin to learn Bible doctrine, you move into a higher bracket. We find out who rules your life. In this correct kind of happiness, your emotions become your slaves. When it is Spring and the sap begins to run, has spiritual application.

David took in doctrine 3x a day, every day. Happiness and stability go together. Solomon realizes that his father left him a lot of stuff, and he is trying to use it to be happy; but he has ignored and rejected Bible doctrine.

Eccles. 2:21 [When there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and with success; yet to a man who has not labored in it, he shall leave it for his share. This also is vanity and a great evil.](#)

Eccles. 2:22 For what has man from all his labor, and from the troubling of his heart, in which he has labored under the sun?

There is no peace in Solomon's mind. His worry and fear add up to great inner misery.

Eccles. 2:23 For all his days are sorrows, and his labor sadness; yea, his heart does not take rest in the night. This is also vanity.

Here, the idea is to find something good to do, and he figured he could eat and drink and just get along.

Eccles. 2:24 Is it not good that he should eat and drink and make his soul see good in his labor? This I also saw, that it was from the hand of God.

Eccles. 2:25 For who can eat, or who can enjoy, apart from me?

Will God give divine good to a man. It is wisdom and knowledge. Joy is inner happiness. People get all worked up singing this. Most who sing this have no idea what it is. However, to the believer out of fellowship, God gives misery or sorrow. A person like this essentially hoards misery and unhappiness. Whatever it is you are doing to be happy, you are just hoarding up misery.

When he has hoarded up enough misery, he becomes totally disillusioned.

Eccles. 2:26 For God gives wisdom, and knowledge, and joy to a man who is good in His sight. But to the sinner He gives labor, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him who is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Solomon now seeks happiness by philosophy. Solomon observed his father's life; David stayed with doctrine, and Solomon departed from it.

Somewhere along the line, Solomon had the 2nd birth. He is now living in time and he becomes aware of time. Time is very valuable. Every believer is a capitalist, whether he believes in it or not. We are all given time. The capital which we have to spend is our time. Let's assume you are given 50 years that God has given you. We can do two things with our time; we can waste it, which causes self-induced misery. This does not mean that every waking moment, we are to be making sounds like *praise the Lord*, etc. it is humanly impossible to think about the Lord every moment in time.

If you are learning differential Calculus, then you might not be able to think about God at the same time.

For Solomon, he thinks of the time that there is for pleasure. Bob does not know what housewives do, but he knows that it is miserable. Bob's father once punished by made him do housework for a day.

Eccles. 3:1 **To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the heavens:**

If you do not learn the principle of doctrine, you can be miserable for most of your life; but God sometimes takes you out with the sin unto death. No matter how much you hold on, there is nothing which keeps you in this life.

The time to plant and to pluck is for business.

Eccles. 3:2 **a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pull up what is planted;**

There is a time to kill. It is your Christian responsibility to be the best killer.

Eccles. 3:3 **a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;**

Life is made up of many contrasts. How can these be all wonderful? Dancing is associated with being happy. This is a time to relax and let down your hair and enjoy yourself. It is an ill-chosen idiom however for this generation.

You can be miserable and happy in military service. Same for college. You need doctrine in order to make it wonderful. You can be in Vietnam or Timbuktu.

When you weep, you can be happy or sad. Bible doctrine makes the difference. You can be happy in mourning or not.

Eccles. 3:4 **a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;**

There is a time to gather up stones and a time to cast them away. You might be building a fence or a house; or you might be clearing out a field.

Bob did not like to weed or cut grass the fiddle around with flower beds. This was the most horrid thing in the world for him. One Bob had to weed all morning and it was not at all pleasant. However, a young man can do this and be happy doing this, just as much as Saturday afternoon at the beach.

There is a time to hug and a time to refrain from it. Some people think all they need is a good love life. Some think, they just need a bf or gf; and they think happiness is found in sex.

When you are unhappy mowing the lawn but happy going to the beach, you are a slave to circumstances.

Eccles. 3:5 **a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;**

People are successful and they fail in business. Both things occur. A lot of men try various forms of escapism. Bob is a poor loser. He cannot stand a losing team and he would work his boys half to death; and some of them would try to cry and Bob would chew them out until their tears dried up.

Every clean out the garage? There is a time to keep stuff and a time to throw them out. You have inner happiness either way.

Eccles. 3:6 a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

Eccles. 3:7 a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

Now we have, there is a time to love and a time to hate; and we all know hatred is a sin. So what do you suppose this means? The principle is Bible doctrine. You should hate communism as a principle, liberalism as a principle, etc. You witness to communists, but you hate the principle of communism.

Eccles. 3:8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Psalm 31:1–9: In You, O Jehovah, I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness. Bow down Your ear to me; deliver me quickly; be my strong rock, a fortress to save me. For You are my rock and my fortress; and for Your name's sake lead me and guide me. Bring me out of the net that they hid for me, for You are my strength. Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Jehovah, the God of truth [doctrine]. I have hated those who take heed to lying vanities [this is again hating the principle and not the person]; but I trust in Jehovah. I will be glad and rejoice in Your mercy; for You have looked on my affliction; You have known my soul in troubles; and have not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; You have set my feet in a broad place. Have mercy on me, O Jehovah, for I am in trouble; my eye has become old with grief, my soul and my belly.

Psalm 31:13–14: For I have heard the slander of many; fear is on every side; because of their plottings together against me, they planned to take away my life. But I trusted in You, O Jehovah; I said, You are my God.

Eccles. 3:9 What profit does One have who works in that in which he labors?

Ecclesiastes 3:10

514_0003

There are 2 types of self-induced suffering. Fear, worry and anxiety is one way to cause one misery; or to seek fun and pleasure for happiness. We manufacture so much of our misery that we throw up a smoke-screen.

No believer can find happiness apart from Bible doctrine. No believer can find happiness by seeking happiness. The believer with Bible doctrine can enjoy everything in life.

We have observed Solomon in his attempt to find happiness. He seeks it through education, then through pleasure; then he tries heritage.

This time, Solomon tries philosophy. Before we are finished, Solomon will have tried everything. Everywhere that Solomon turns, he manufactures a new batch of misery. In the midst of this, he recalls some of the things which he learned from David.

Eccles. 3:10 **I have seen the task which God has given to the sons of men to be humbled by it.**

He is simply looking for happiness in a variety of places and happiness keeps eluding him. God has everything beautiful in its time. Perception is set into their frontal lobes.

The key to all of this is what you are thinking. It is your mental attitude which is the container for your happiness in this life. Your mind is the basis for your happiness in this life. Joy is not overt happiness, but an inner mental happiness. You can have perfect inner happiness at any time. We have a container which we can use to carry happiness, which is our mind. Happiness has a way of leaking out. Bob used to love all of the gauges in the car. Now they are idiot lights.

Eccles. 3:11 **He has made everything beautiful in His time; also He has set eternity in their heart, so that [this should read, *without which*] no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end.**

David was a spiritual giant who had grown because of the Word. He did teach Solomon doctrine and Solomon, for a moment, goes back to that.

Eccles. 3:12 **I know that there is no good in them, but to rejoice and to do good in his life.**

You can make yourself really miserable without even trying. Out of fellowship, there is misery and unhappiness. You can enjoy eating and drinking; and you can enjoy your business.

People are looking through happiness through some system in this life. They fail to believe it; they fail to apply it. The Bible is loaded with doctrine. Even Solomon understood some principles of doctrine. He lacks fear, which is faith or faith rest. He turned to the road that said pleasure. Solomon looks back and he thinks he should have gone another direction.

Eccles. 3:13 **And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God.**

God gives us something which is perfect and it is given to us that we may trust Him. Nations, when they think they are the strongest, think that they are the weakest.

Eccles. 3:14 **I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; and God does it so that they fear before Him.**

Nations have gone down and revived again.

Many of you have taken a philosophy course, but it does not sustain you. You have children, but they do not sustain you.

We learn from the past what has happened, and patterns repeat.

Eccles. 3:15 [That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been; and God requires that which is past](#) [God exacts (seeks out) what is pursued].

At the last judgment, sins will not be mentioned.

The more you work, the more you dig yourself into a hole.

Bobby went to a Sunday School as a boy, and it seemed like school, except more boring. The Sunday School teacher pointed his index finger at Bob and said, "Good little boys go to heaven and bad little boys go to hell." And Bob knew where he was going. His teacher did not know the half of it. It was easy for Bob to figure out what he would do.

We are going to bore a mole hole on the taxpayer dollar.

Rom. 4:4: the more you work, the deeper you dig yourself into a hole.

Eccles. 3:16 [And again I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that wickedness was there.](#)

Time refers to the believer in time. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God has a purpose for your life. God's purpose means divine good.

Eccles. 3:17 [I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.](#)

This doctrine is not applied to his own experience. He has human viewpoint in his frontal lobe and divine viewpoint. In Prov. 22:6, it reads: [train up a boy when he is young, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.](#) Academics did not work; pleasure did not work; so now he is going in for philosophy. Vv. 18–19 is common origin evolution. Men are no different than animals.

Eccles. 3:18 [I said in my heart concerning the matter of sons of men, that God might reveal them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.](#)

Eccles. 3:19 [For that which happens to the sons of men also happens to beasts, even one thing happens to them. As this one dies, so that one dies; yea, they all have one breath; so that a man has no advantage over a beast; for all is vanity.](#)

All people are the same. We all have the divine spark. Universalism. However, brotherhood is false, and just rubbing elbows with anyone else tells you how different people are. Eventually, your brain kicks in.

Eccles. 3:20 [All go to one place; all are of the dust, and all return to dust again.](#)

Agnosticism.

Eccles. 3:21 [Who knows the spirit of man that goes upward, and the spirit of the beast that goes downward?](#)

Finally, he ends up at humanism. When you get to here, just reach out and grab whatever happiness wanders by.

This is the end of the line.

Eccles. 3:22 [Therefore I have seen that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion; for who can bring him to see what shall be after him?](#)

He will eventually recover and recognize that philosophical systems will just bring him misery.

There are two weeks before this class again; and Bob is going to help us out in case you experiment at all at this point. There is an easy way to swing around and to get back.

Here, Solomon rebounds.

Eccles. 4:1 [So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold the tears of the oppressed ones, and they had no comforter! And on the side of those who oppressed them there was power, but they had no comforter.](#)

Hawaii is a great place, but you can go there and be horribly miserable. Even more so than in Houston. Stay there too long and you get rock happy. Only doctrine in the frontal lobe will make you happy.

The believer who seeks happiness by the things of this life, they had no comforter. The systems have power and power over you. Heritage has power over you. Good reputation has power of you. You have no comfort in these things. They do not lead to happiness.

This is why Solomon said he could praise the dead as they had gotten out of it.

Solomon went to the labs for us. He already tried all of this stuff and it did not work. For this reason, we do not have to experiment; he has done the experimentation for us.

Scientists, in order to perfect a particular medicine or dosage, will test this on a number of people over several months or years. So, when we take a medicine, we do not have to

experiment with; we do not have to try a variety of dosages as a particular one for us is prescribed by the doctor or pharmacist. Solomon has gone through this experimentation already so that we do not need to experiment as he did.

Ecclesiastes 4:1

514_0004

We are studying suffering and, at this point, self-induced misery. There are two types of self-induced misery. There is the mental attitude type which comes from mental attitude sins, like envy, hostility, anger, etc.; the other is when the believer seeks happiness apart from phase II. As believers, we are no longer slaves to our circumstances and we do not have to be unhappy when circumstances are difficult.

Review of Solomon. People traveled all over the world to learn from him. From academic success, he went to pleasure. He had the time and wealth to enjoy whatever it was that he wanted. The more that he sought happiness through pleasure, the less happy he was. He manufactured his own misery.

Then he thought that having children would be the key.

Solomon has tried 4 things for happiness, and not a single one has brought him happiness. He will now try money, reputation, sex and the hero-image as his approach to happiness.

Now, he will think on the doctrines which he learned from David. He is not old yet; he begins to delve into philosophy, and he decides to rebound. He has read some of David's psalms which deal with rebound, and Solomon will enjoy an interlude of being in fellowship.

Now he thinks about people; and people, no matter what they have, want happiness, and they are miserable. All of these things together cannot buy them one ounce of happiness. Happiness does not come from success or recognition.

There are oppressors and those who are oppressed. He sees people in these two categories. However, no matter which side of the fence a person finds himself, he lacks a comforter. There is only one type of comfort, and that is from the Word of God.

Happiness is based upon Bible doctrine. The word *purple* is actually *crimson* in the Greek and Hebrew. Happiness lies, with the believer, with Bible doctrine. You understand the sin nature and you can really appreciate people.

Marriage often compounds problems, and married people think that being single is the solution. But it is Bible doctrine which changes everything.

The Communist bloc has conquered 900 million people in the past few decades. A third of the nation's people. They are all about oppression; and the improvements are always just for them. They oppress in many places.

Both people who are oppressed and those who are being oppressed are miserable. They have no comfort; they have no doctrine. There are people who would give their very lives to have what we have.

Some groups interested and some not.

Those in Korea just curled up and died when captured. The same thing with slaves who were captured.

Eccles. 4:1 So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold the tears of the oppressed ones, and they had no comforter! And on the side of those who oppressed them there was power, but they had no comforter.

Solomon praised the dead because they are out of it, but not the living because they were still suffering.

Eccles. 4:2 And I commended the dead who already have died, more than the living who are living now.

Eccles. 4:3 Yea, better than both is he who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

Right work is human good. Sins of the world were poured out upon Christ. Human good was rejected at the cross. Many people look at others who are producing sins or human good and they envy this.

Eccles. 4:4 Again, I considered all labor, and every right work, that for this a man is envied by his neighbor. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

The fool folds his hands together means, he has given up. Some develop a guilt complex and enter into some sort of mental flagellation. People give up everything and are miserable; people have everything, and they are miserable. The principle of self-induced misery. Such a person thinks that there is no happiness anywhere. Eating one's own flesh is an idiom for self-induced misery.

Hawaii is wonderful; but you won't be any happier there than sitting in Berachah Church. The Virgin Islands has the most beautiful water in the world; but, if you went there, you would take your unhappiness with you. You carry your misery with you. The East Germans were oppressed; and they were unhappy and their oppressors were unhappy; and, there is self-induced misery either way. Manufacturing misery here will be the same as manufacturing it there.

you may get something you like very much; a new car, an airplane, a boat and new house; and if you are miserable when you don't have it, you will be miserable when you get it. You cannot run away from yourself.

Eccles. 4:5 [The fool folds his hands together, and eats his own flesh.](#)

It is better to carry around your own happiness in your soul. You manufacture your own misery or your own happiness. It is much better to have your own inner happiness. Better to have a quiet or silent happiness, which is inner happiness.

Windy effort = hot air. Impact for Christ must come from the inner man. Your frontal lobe will overflow to other things. If we have this inner happiness, as His representatives, we will have a great impact on those around us. Better to have a handful of inner happiness than both fists out there grabbing for happiness, which you cannot grab (it is like grabbing at the wind).

There is no power of the Spirit; no doctrine; it is just wind. God intends for us to have a fantastic inner happiness.

Eccles. 4:6 [Better is a hand filled with rest](#) [better one hand filled with quiet happiness] [than two fists with travail and vexation of spirit](#) [then both fists full of labor and windy effort].

Solomon returns to God; he is back in fellowship by naming his sins. He is back into fellowship and he sees that the things of this life cannot provide happiness. At this point of return, he can see that there is no happiness but there is vanity.

Ecclesiastes 4:7

514_0005

Self-induced misery from mental attitude sins. Another form of self-induced misery is seeking happiness from doing stuff to make him happy. Solomon had the wherewithal to gain happiness in whatever way he chose to. Academic success, pleasure, heritage or philosophy; none of these things made him happy.

Solomon has sought happiness and happiness has eluded him. In all of this, he remembers the principle of rebound.

The area of weakness produces sins and an area of strength which produces good. Our righteous nesses were as filthy rags in his sight. Some of the works by which men try to be saved, e.g., walking down an aisle or baptism or weeping great tears of repentance.

Those who stand on human good will be judged on the basis of that human good and thrown into the Lake of Fire. The verb *to believe* is a non-meritorious operation. When we identify the sin, we go back to the cross where that sin was judged. We are forgiven because that sin was judged on the cross. The believer in time gets out of fellowship with a sin, but that sin was judged on the cross, so he names it and it is forgiven. Inside a person is the human spirit and Solomon rebounds and he is back in fellowship.

Solomon returned is rebound. He learned the mechanics from David. David was great because he sinned and always recovered. He did not fall apart because of his sins. He understood and used the principle of rebound.

When a believer is in fellowship, he can have perfect inner happiness, alone or in a crowd. Many single people cannot wait to get married in order to have a new brand of misery.

Eccles. 4:7 [And I returned and saw vanity under the sun.](#)

Vv. 8–16: he laughs at the stuff he thought about before. Through Bible doctrine we get occupied with Christ. Bible doctrine is the answer and that is why Solomon reflects upon this. Are you upset when you are alone? Does it bother you to look at 4 walls or not to have approbation. Then you have yet to discover the secret of inner power. Life is a series of miserable things with interludes of happiness.

If your life depends upon your children or your family, you have had it. If your life depends upon getting out on the town, you have had it. If you have Bible doctrine, then you can be happy in any set of circumstances.

Eccles. 4:8 [There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he has neither son nor brother; yet there is no end to all his labor; and his eyes are not satisfied with riches; and he says, For whom do I labor and take good from my soul? This is also vanity. Yes, it is an evil business.](#)

2 can make more money.

Eccles. 4:9 [Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor.](#)

Eccles. 4:10 [For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he does not have another to help him.](#)

Bob won't tell us about David's electric blanket...it was composed of 2 females.

2 people find it easier to be warm.

Eccles. 4:11 [Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth; but how can one be warm alone?](#)

Now we have friendship. 2 men standing back-to-back in a situation.

Bob got to learn people in a hurry in the air force when he was in charge of 10,000 men. He can tell we are planning of stuff to do after church.

Worship is learning doctrine. Worship is understanding what is the thinking of God. There is no ritual today apart from baptism and the Lord's Table.

Eccles. 4:12 [And if one overthrows him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.](#)

Eccles. 4:13 A poor and a wise child is better than an old and foolish king, who will not be warned any more.

Eccles. 4:14 For out of prison he comes to reign; although in his kingdom he was born poor.

Eccles. 4:15 I saw all the living who walk under the sun, with the second child who shall stand up in his place.

Eccles. 4:16 There is no end of all the people, of all who have been before them; they also who come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

This is going to church, or at that time, to the Temple.

Eccles. 5:1 Guard your feet when you go to the house of God, and draw near to hear, more than to give a sacrifice, as do the fools. For they do not know that they are doing evil.

Triple-compound discipline: discipline for judging, discipline for the sin you mention, and that is put on you, and something else (gossip?). The greatest danger to anyone is getting involved in another person's business and it compounds the discipline against us.

It is measured to you. If Bob does something wrong, and he is judged, the heat is off. This triple compound discipline is why some Christians are so miserable.

Eccles. 5:2 Do not be hasty with your mouth, and do not let your heart hurry to bring forth a word before God. For God is in Heaven, and you are on earth; on account of this, let your words be few.

Solomon gets out of fellowship. Solomon is now going back to work as king of Israel and he has a dream of greatness again.

Eccles. 5:3 For the dream comes through the greatness of the task; and the voice of the fool is known by the many words.

Better to have a real vow.

Eccles. 5:4 When you vow a vow to God, do not wait to fulfill it. For He has no pleasure in fools. Fulfill that which you have vowed.

Eccles. 5:5 It is better that you should not vow, than that you should vow and not fulfill it.

He gets out of fellowship with some sort of maligning.

Eccles. 5:6 Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin; do not say before the angel that it was an error. Why should God be angry over your voice, and destroy the work of your hands?

Eccles. 5:7 For in the multitude of dreams, both words and vanities abound; but fear God.

Eccles. 5:8 If you see the oppression of the poor, or the removing of justice and righteousness in the province, do not be amazed at the purpose. For a high one over a high one is watching; and high ones are over them.

Eccles. 5:9 And the advantage of a land, it is among all; even a king has a field being tilled.

Paying the vow got Solomon thinking about money and he thought maybe he did not have enough money. He probably makes \$100 million/year. \$20 million/year from one source alone and he is still not happy. How much does it take to make you happy.

Before we are through, Solomon will try just about everything. Only doctrine makes a person happy. He who loves silver will not be satisfied with it. The more money he makes, the less happy he is.

Eccles. 5:10 He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; and he who loves abundance does not gain. This is also vanity.

When goods increase, those increase who take them in. The more they take in, the more they are capable of taking in. Wealth produces wealth; money produces money.

Eccles. 5:11 When the good thing increases, those who devour it increase; then what profit is it to its owners, except to see it with his eyes?

For the born-again believer, Bible doctrine is designed to give happiness to all. Then there is the problem of making out one's income tax return, and he is losing sleep over the whole thing.

He housed these 70–90,000 men to do all of this work, and Solomon hears all of the sound sleeping of the laboring man. However, the rich man cannot sleep. "This is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun."

Eccles. 5:12 The sleep of the laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much. But the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep.

Eccles. 5:13 There is a painful evil which I have seen under the sun: riches being kept for their owner to his evil;

Eccles. 5:14 but those riches perish by an evil use; and he fathers a son, and nothing is in his hand.

And he realizes that he cannot take it with him, all of his riches.

Eccles. 5:15 As he came forth from his mother's womb naked, he shall return to go as he came. And from his labor he may not carry anything that may go in his hand.

Eccles. 5:16 And this also is a painful evil, that in all, as he came, so shall he go. And what profit is to him who has labored for the wind?

Eccles. 5:17 Also all his days he eats in darkness, and with much grief, along with his sickness and wrath.

Eccles. 5:18 See what I have seen: It is good which a laborer does to eat and to drink and to see good in all his labor which as a laborer does under the sun, the number of the days of his life which God gives to him, for it is his portion.

Eccles. 5:19 Also every man to whom God has given riches and treasures, and gives him power to eat of it, and to take his share, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

Eccles. 5:20 For he shall not much remember the days of his life, because God answers him in the joy of his heart.

Eccles. 6:1 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it is great among men:

The rich man has all this money and he cannot eat it because of stomach problems. He has ulcers because of his riches.

Eccles. 6:2 A man to whom God has given riches, and wealth, and honor, so that he lacks nothing for his soul of all that he desires; yet God does not give him the power to eat of it, but a stranger eats it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

Untimely birth. The wealthiest person who is unsaved and spend eternity in hell.

If you have little children, they do not belong in this church. Don't bring your little children in here.

Idiots are not bothered by war; they die and spend eternity in heaven.

Eccles. 6:3 If a man fathers a hundred, and lives many years, and the days of his years are many, and his soul is not satisfied from the good, and also there is no burial for him; I say, a miscarriage is better than he.

Eccles. 6:4 For he comes in with vanity, and goes out in darkness; his name shall be covered in darkness.

Eccles. 6:5 Also he has not seen nor known the sun; this one has more rest than that one.

Eccles. 6:6 Yea, though he lives twice a thousand years, yet he has seen no good. Do not all go to one place?

Eccles. 6:7 All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the soul is not filled.

Eccles. 6:8 For what is the advantage to the wise more than the fool? What advantage is to the poor who knows how to walk before the living?

Met for a well-publicized international finance meeting and thought to be the most successful men of their era. 1923 a meeting of 9 of the most successful men in the world at that time. Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. President of the largest independent steel company. President of the NY stock exchange. Member of the president's cabinet. President of largest utility Corinth, largest gas company, greatest wheat speculator, greatest bear on Wall Street, and the head of one of the world's greatest monopolies and the pres of this bank of settlements. Greatly publicized as these were considered to be the most successful men. 25 years later, all had ended up with miserable ends. President of the largest independent steel corporation was Charles Schwab died bankrupt and live on borrowed money for the last 5 years of his life. President of the greatest utility company was Samuel Insul died a fugitive from justice and penniless in a foreign land. He was an extremely miserable man at the end of his life. The president of the largest gas company, Howard Hopsin, was insane. The greatest wheat speculator, was Arthur Cutton who died abroad penniless and miserable. The President of the NY stock exchange was Richard Whitney who was recently released from Sing Sing. The member of the president's cabinet was Albert Fall was pardoned so that he could leave prison so that he could die at home. The greatest bear in the stock market was Jesse Livermore died a suicide, the head of the greatest monopoly was Ivan Kruger, who died a suicide, the president of the bank of international settlements was Leon Frazier and he died a suicide.

Solomon thought of happiness in terms of accumulation of wealth. The secret of happiness for the believer is Bible doctrine in the frontal lobe.

Eccles. 6:9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul. This is also vanity and striving after wind.

Eccles. 6:10 That which has been is named already, and it is known that he is man; and he is not able to contend with Him who is stronger than he.

Eccles. 6:11 For there are many things that increase vanity, and what is the advantage to man?

Eccles. 6:12 For who knows what is good for man in this life, the number of the days of his life of vanity? Even he makes them like the shadow. For who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

Ecclesiastes 1:

514_0006

Bob just starts right in. Self-induced misery comes from mental attitude sins and seeking happiness by seeking happiness. What happiness is, is, how much doctrine do you know and how much do you apply. Ecclesiastes records Solomon's experiments. He began by

building the house of God to chasing after happiness. Self-induced misery. Solomon sought happiness apart from Bible doctrine.

There is nothing to keep happiness standing; it is a house of cards. Solomon turned to education, then to heritage, and then to pleasure. After all of these experiments, he is ready to be a philosopher. He finally came to a point of emptiness.

We studied then Solomon and money; and he figured to be the wealthiest person would make him happy. He was unhappy with all of his money; but one of his workers came home and fell asleep and was happy.

Since he has accumulated all of this money, he is now out to establish a reputation. He wants people to think well of him. He figured that, once people think well of you, that he would feel some satisfaction in that.

Which was worst, going without a bath, as the Greeks did; or taking a public bath, as the Romans did. What they did is, they used ointments. This kept them smelling good. People would walk down the streets when a wealthy Roman had put on some of these ointments. People even followed them down the streets to sniff them. This ointment was a great thing. This made a person attractive to the rest of the human race. These are the things which made a person popular.

Solomon has tried many things. He stayed out of fellowship and became a philosopher (which did not take up the slack for 700 wives and 300 concubines). When you make money, it is hard to let that go, because money tends to make money. He is right back with a new concept. He figures that he needs a reputation second to none. He needs to put his name on every building. A good name is better than a once-a-day shower. If you die and everyone is saying how great you are, he figures he would have it made.

With a reputation, one's day of death is more impressive than the day of one's birth. However, he will end up finding new areas of misery.

Eccles. 7:1 [A good name is better than good ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.](#)

The house of mourning means to take life seriously; the house of feasting means to take life lightly. As soon as you take everything seriously, you are miserable. There is a time to be serious and a time to relax. The end of all men is to have a good reputation. You have to take life seriously. Those who are alive and want to achieve this goal.

Eccles. 7:2 [It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for it is the end of every man; and the living will lay it to his heart.](#)

In order to establish a good reputation, you need to look serious all of the time. Suppose Solomon laughs, then he loses his reputation with one group; but if he is too sad, then there is a problem a different group. You have a variety of attitudes, and if you are going

to one attitude, then that will irritate another. You can be sorrowful most of the time and get away with it. This is necessary to make it. In the process, you will make yourself miserable. This is reputation by hypocrisy. No one can be successful in any business without some measure of hypocrisy.

People may say, "I am not going to church because of all the hypocrites there" but no one says, "I am not going to work tomorrow because of all the hypocrites who work there." In order to get ahead in life, people step on the heads of those below and are kissing the feet of those who are above. Most people with an outstanding reputation have a long chain of self-induced misery.

Eccles. 7:3 **Vexation is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the face the heart is made good.**

If you are going to be wise about getting a reputation, then you need to pursue a serious attitude. The one who is living it up has no way of getting a reputation.

Eccles. 7:4 **The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of the stupid one is in the house of mirth.**

Greater happiness in the rebuke of

Eccles. 7:5 **It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.**

This makes sense if you own a wood stove. They cooked over a fire. Wood with a lot of thorns does not provide much heat, but a lot of noise from crackling. The idea is, you must take life seriously.

Eccles. 7:6 **For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the stupid one. And this also is vanity.**

He finally cracks up in v. 7. It is hard to keep up a reputation. It makes you a little nuts. He is building a great reputation and then you are caught taking a bribe.

Eccles. 7:7 **For oppression makes a wise man mad; and a bribe destroys the heart.**

The patient in spirit is the person who uses doctrine. The proud in spirit looks for a good reputation.

Eccles. 7:8 **Better is the end of a thing than its beginning; the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.**

Eccles. 7:9 **Do not be hasty in your spirit to be angry; for vexation rests in the bosom of fools.**

Eccles. 7:10 **Do not say, Why was it that the former days were better than these? For you do not ask from wisdom concerning this.**

Wisdom is good with experience. The idea of training up a child properly is confirmed in this verse. Here, he recalls what David taught him. He is 40 or 50 years old. He knows that David taught him something. If you persist in teaching Bible doctrine, it will pay off in the end. The primary responsibility of a believer parent is to inculcate doctrine; not a lot of legalism. It may not take now, but inculcate means to go over and over and over.

Eccles. 7:11 [Wisdom is good with an inheritance; yea, a gain to those who see the sun.](#)

Solomon goes down one blind alley, hits his head, and then goes down another blind alley. He decides that doctrine is a wonderful thing. It is a defense; the greatest thing in life. Doctrine is orientation to life; proper use of money is orientation to life. With doctrine, you can enjoy money. Doctrine is a defense. When doctrine is your defense, then money is a defense; if doctrine is your defense, then success, pleasure, etc. is your defense. You can be rich, poor, smart, successful, and be happy. Doctrine is the defense.

Eccles. 7:12 [For wisdom is in a shadow; and silver is in a shadow; but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who have it.](#)

Excellency of knowledge is the learning of doctrine. We are to consider the Word of God. The work of God is what He plans in time and for eternity. What God does is perfect because God is perfect. Salvation is perfect and He did the work. In phase II and III, He has done the work.

While he has been pursuing success, he has found out that it is not working for him.

Eccles. 7:13 [Look at the work of God; for who can make that straight which He has bent?](#)

Eccles. 7:14 [In the good day, be in good spirit, but also see in the evil day, that God has made one along with the other, so that man should not find anything after him.](#)

Eccles. 7:15 [All things I have seen in the days of my vanity; there is a just man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked one who prolongs his life in his evil.](#)

Eccles. 7:16 [Do not be too much righteous, nor make yourself overly wise; why destroy yourself?](#)

Eccles. 7:17 [Do not be very evil, and do not be a fool; why should you not die in your time?](#)

Eccles. 7:18 It is good that you should take hold of this; yea, also from this do not let your hand rest; for he who fears God shall come forth with all of them.

Eccles. 7:19 Wisdom makes the wise stronger than ten rulers who are in the city.

Eccles. 7:20 For there is not a just man on the earth who does good, and does not sin.

Eccles. 7:21 Also, do not give your heart to all the words they speak, that you not hear your servant cursing you.

Eccles. 7:22 For also your own heart knows that you yourself have also cursed others many times.

V. 23 is a transitional verse. 1Kings 11:1–4: And King Solomon loved many foreign women, even the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, Hittites; of the nations which Jehovah said to the sons of Israel, You shall not go in to them, and they shall not go in to you; they shall turn aside your heart after their gods; Solomon clung to these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. And it happened, at the time Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God, like the heart of his father David. God tells there should be no relationship between foreign women and Jews, and it is because they would turn the minds of their lovers.

Solomon has 700 wives. He married anyone who was a princess and he had mistresses who were not connected with the royalty of other nations. Solomon clung to these women in love.

1Kings 11:5–10: And Solomon went after Ashtoreth, goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites; and Solomon did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and did not go fully after Jehovah like his father David. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the sons of Ammon; and so he did for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed to their gods. And Jehovah was angry with Solomon, for his heart had bent away from Jehovah, God of Israel who had appeared to him twice, and had given a charge to him concerning this thing, not to go after other gods; and he did not keep that which Jehovah commanded.

Eccles. 7:23 All this I have tested by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.

Eccles. 7:24 That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

Eccles. 7:25 And I turned my heart about, to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, and the foolishness of madness:

Solomon found that the wives were quite bitter. There were 1000 women who wanted to be in first place, and they were willing to do anything to improve their standing. Solomon is very fond of women, but he cannot find happiness with them.

A psychiatrist might have a field day with Solomon, but he would not be able to suggest that Solomon go out and have an affair (as some have suggest).

Solomon did not please God nor did he escape from the woman.

Eccles. 7:26 and I found more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets; her hands are bonds. He who is good before God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be captured by her.

He goes through these women 1 by 1.

Eccles. 7:27 Behold, I have found this, says the Preacher, counting one by one to find out the sum,

Solomon could not find a woman that was right in all of this 1000.

Eccles. 7:28 that my soul still seeks, but I have not found; one man among a thousand I have found, but a woman among all those I have not found.

Many of you must be equating happiness with dancing girls. But you cannot find happiness apart from Bible doctrine. We can enjoy women with doctrine.

Eccles. 7:29 See, this only I have found, that God has made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.

There is also the hero image. Apparently, some of you read the bulletin, which shocks Bob, so he needs to deal with the subject of heroes. "Heroes are not happy."

Bob likes reading history and reading about the heroes. Our president remarked that he really did not understand the *bombs bursting in air*. However, ever liberal professor that Bob has ever known has skipped all of the battles and covers the heroes. There are various wars throughout the span of time and there are many heroes who come to the forefront. Some might think that it is fun to be a hero. Bob hears that even tennis has its heroes. Every sport has its heroes.

Eccles. 9:13 This wisdom I saw also under the sun, and it is great to me:

here is the illustration. A small city nestled in the mountains.

Eccles. 9:14 There was a little city, and few men in it. And a great king came against it, and besieged it, and built huge siege works against it.

There is a person in this city who figured out how to save this city. He was a great hero for a short time, and when there was peace and quiet, the hero was forgotten.

Our happiness comes from Bible doctrine in the frontal lobe.

Eccles. 9:15 And there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom saved the city. Yet no man remembered that poor man!

Eccles. 8:1 Who is as the wise? And who knows the meaning of a thing? A man's wisdom makes his face shine, and the boldness of his face is changed.

Eccles. 8:2 I say, Keep the king's word, even on the matter of the oath of God;

Eccles. 8:3 do not be hasty to go from before him. Do not take a stand in an evil thing, for he does whatever he pleases.

Eccles. 8:4 Because the king's word is that which has power; who then will say to him, What are you doing?

Eccles. 8:5 Whoever keeps the command shall know no evil thing. A wise man's heart knows both time and judgment.

Eccles. 8:6 Because there is a time and judgment to every purpose, in this the evil of man is great upon him.

Eccles. 8:7 For he does not know what shall be. For who can tell him when it shall be?

Eccles. 8:8 Man is not a ruler over the spirit, to restrain the spirit; nor has he power in the day of death. And there is no discharge in that war, nor shall wickedness deliver its possessors.

Eccles. 8:9 All this I have seen. I gave my heart to every work that is done under the sun. There is a time in which a man rules over a man for his evil.

Eccles. 8:10 And so I saw the wicked buried; and they came and went from the holy place, and were forgotten in the city, these things that they had done. This is also vanity.

Eccles. 8:11 Where sentence on an evil work is not executed speedily, on account of this the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Eccles. 8:12 Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his days are prolonged to him, yet surely I know that it shall be well to those who fear God, who fear before Him.

Eccles. 8:13 But it shall not be well for the wicked; and he shall not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear before God.

Eccles. 8:14 There is a vanity which is done on the earth: There are just ones to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; and there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity.

Eccles. 8:15 Then I praised mirth, because nothing is good for man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be glad. For that shall go with him in his labor for the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.

Eccles. 8:16 When I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on the earth; for even by day and by night he does not see sleep in his eyes.

Eccles. 8:17 Then I looked at all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because though a man labors to seek it out, yet he shall not find it. And even if the wise speaks of knowing, he shall not be able to find it.

Ecclesiastes 11:1

514_0007

This sounds like a suffering special. Most people suffer from causing it themselves. A sign of maturity is when the individual is willing to take responsibility for his own actions. Self-induced misery often tries to find a scapegoat.

Solomon was very wealthy, and he could check out for himself to find out that there was no way to have happiness apart from Bible doctrine. All happiness depends upon the divine operating assets.

God the Father supplies what we need for phase I and phase II. We are under operation grace. God does the doing and man does the receiving and man gets all of the benefit; and God gets the glory.

We will face a variety of circumstances; every life is composed of certain experiences. Happiness and suffering does not depend upon our circumstances. Our happiness depends upon the Word of God. People will make us miserable and cause us difficulty unless we understand pertinent doctrines.

Our subject today is old age, and Bob does not know how to teach this, as this does not apply to anyone. When Bob was a boy, he thought old age was 30. However, as he gets older, he changes his opinion. Old age seems to be a mental attitude.

People shudder when old age is discussed. People try to do what they can to postpone old age. Ponce DeLeon looked for the fountain of youth so that he could regain his youth.

Actually, as a believer, the older one becomes, the better off a person is, the better off you are and the greater is your capacity for happiness. In old age, people are naked with their faults, habits, and nasty characteristics. The best and worst people are older people. The worst are probably old believers who never bothered to grow. Older people with mental attitude sins are the absolute worst.

The old people have a great advantage in life

Eccles. 11:1 [Send out your bread on the face of the waters, for you shall find it in many days.](#)

Eccles. 11:2 [Give a share to seven, or even to eight; for you do not know what evil may be on the earth.](#)

Eccles. 11:3 [If the clouds are full of rain, they empty on the earth. And if the tree falls in the south, or in the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it shall be.](#)

Eccles. 11:4 [He who watches the wind shall not sow. And he who looks at the clouds shall not reap.](#)

Eccles. 11:5 [As you do not know what is the way of the wind, as the bones in the pregnant woman's womb, even so you do not know the works of God who makes all.](#)

Eccles. 11:6 [Sow your seed in the morning, and do not rest your hand until evening; for you do not know what shall be blessed, this or that; or whether they both shall be good as one.](#)

Eccles. 11:7 [Also the light is sweet; yea, it is good for the eyes to behold the sun.](#)

Eccles. 11:8 [But if the man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all, and remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that may come is vanity.](#)

Many young people in Berachah Church are not here by choice, and the parents are hoping that something will rub off. Bob did not hear much preaching in his youth, so there was not much for him to unlearn.

A young person can learn a lot and make his life better as he gets older. Happy people are those who have Bible doctrine in the frontal lobe.

Bible doctrine means individual happiness, but it needs to be in your right lobe and you need to apply it.

Do you know, young people, that your parents mean it when they tell you to have a good time? As long as it is in accordance with the norms and standards they have taught you. Otherwise, a good time can end up screwing you up.

Many young people are miserable. A roommate of Bob's would go out and get drunk, giving up to pressure. Youth is a misspent type of thing. These wide emotional swings are what you find with youth.

Whatever Bob is, he does not want to go back and recapture his youth. Bob enjoyed his youth and had a wonderful childhood and he is not bitter about anything. His college experience was fabulous, and he was glad that he took every college course that he took. Youth is a time for wide emotional swings. It is not a time to be happy, for the most part.

Joy is not thumping African music. Joy is not the psycho stuff found in some youth groups which is people working each other up or self-hypnosis.

Joy is being occupied with Christ. Joy is carrying around Bible doctrine in your soul. The idea here is to learn these things while you are young. However, you will never be upset at getting older. You will not be concerned turning 30 or 40 or 50 etc. You will have your most effective service for the Lord as you get older. Older people are the salt of the earth. They are the aristocrats of Christianity.

Walk in the ways of your heart means to think Bible doctrine in your life. The old sin nature produces human good.

People develop a phoney front, but you are not surprised or shocked.

Bob would rather spend time in Berachah Church than anywhere else. The most relaxed mental attitudes. However, Bob would not spend 5 minutes here if he was lacking doctrine. Bob looks out there, and he is smiling and we are smiling, and he knows whatever snotty thing that we said last week. But we all have sin natures. However, with doctrine, people cannot frustrate you or break your hearts, etc. The point is, under one roof, there will be all kinds of things going on. Bible doctrine does not give you the right to judge, and malign, etc. You have your eyes on the Lord and you have inner happiness. If you are young, it gives you more time to spend in inner happiness.

Times are always bad here or there; some empire is rising and some empire is falling. There is no way to solve this apart from regeneration and Bible doctrine. You can have great inner happiness and great peace, and life gets better as you get older and older. It is not because you have your head in the clouds or in the sand or you are wafting around in some place of unreality. This is why Caleb, at age 85 was ready to go out and conquer the giants.

You cannot do something unless you know how to do it. We have a lot of doing today. People think there there is all of this sincerity in them, but that has no impact for Christ. You cannot substitute human power for divine dynamics.

God's plan for our lives begins at the cross, and you cannot execute the plan of God apart from spiritual growth. The filling of the Spirit is not emotional, but it is as normal to the life as breathing. But you need to have doctrine and to know techniques.

If the production came from human good then there will be loss of reward. If it comes from divine good, then it will be rewarded.

Every time you gossip, you are disciplined. Every time you have a mental attitude sins, you are disciplined; and in both cases, you suffer because of the sin itself.

Eccles. 11:9 **Rejoice, O young man, in your youth [i.e., rejoice while you are young]. And make your heart glad in the days of your youth, and walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.**

Children hear roast preacher for dinner, and they simply reflect what their parents have said. Then end result is the children phase out the preacher. Children learn to ape their parents and if the parents are vindictive, then the children are vindictive.

The command to young people is to remove their mental attitude sins. Childhood and youth are vanity or emptiness. Reflect on your own youth and what you did; and where is all your things stand up now? You were a beauty queen or the head of the football team; and these things are meaningless and they do not sustain you.

That party or that doll that stimulated you so much and all of those good times; what do they do for you in Vietnam? When that pressure hits you, whatever they said about in a high school annual won't carry you for 5 minutes of pressure. But will carry you is Bible doctrine. It is Bible doctrine which will do that job. It is Bible doctrine which prepares you for old age. How popular you are or whatever you have is meaningless as a young person, and these things will not carry you 5 minutes under pressure.

Eccles. 11:10 **So then remove vexation from your heart, and put away evil from your flesh. For childhood and prime of life are vanity.**

Let's go back to Eccles. 9:4:

Eccles. 9:4 **For one who is chosen to be among all the living, there is hope. For a living dog is better than a dead lion.**

If you are still alive at the end of the sermon, then there is hope for you. There is still the plan of God for your life. You may not be much in your own eyes, and maybe you need to think of yourself in whatever.

No matter what your life has been in the past, and no matter how you have failed; as long as you are still alive, God has a purpose for your life.

Eccles. 9:5 **For the living know that they shall die; but the dead do not know anything; nor do they have any more a reward, for their memory is forgotten.**

Eccles. 9:6 **Also their love, their hatred, and their envy has now perished; nor do they any longer have a part forever in all that is done under the sun.**

Eccles. 9:7 [Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God now is pleased with your works.](#)

Ecclesiastes 1:

514_0008

This is mother's day. It was suggested that a woman, once she becomes a mother, becomes old.

When a young person gets old, he runs out of gas. Some realize they are getting old and they often have a miserable old age. There is a mental attitude + physical decay. Some are old at 30 or 40 or 50; and then there is 60 or 70, and apart from a 2nd childhood, you are old then.

God has a plan for every person of the human race, and it begins at the cross.

Life is divided into living and dying.

Classifying life as being in old age or not, one day, you wake up and you are old and alive. God's plan is greater than any person's sufferings or difficulties. A perfect God can only perform a perfect plan. There can be no place in the plan of God for man's imperfections.

In the state of California, there is all kinds of legislation to take care of old people. The state figures, if they provide food and shelter for older people, then they will be happy; but people are happier in Texas than in California.

Old age is when the cardio-vascular system breaks down.

Youth is preparation for old age, as long as youth is used to take in doctrine. If the believer is oriented to Bible doctrine, and they understand and apply Bible doctrine, then they realize that happiness does not depend upon a set of circumstances. It does not depend upon how you feel or upon good health or upon general approbation. It all depends upon the utilization of Bible doctrine.

This is addressed to all young people; to those before you get old. Remember Jesus Christ, because He is the key to your life. To believe in Jesus Christ begins that perfect solution to old age. Preparing for old age is the same as preparing for life.

The wrong kind of youthful life leads you to a lousy old age. Bible doctrine and the plan of God divides people between a good old age or not.

In 146 B.C., the Romans conquered Greece and they completed the 3rd Punic War where Carthage was destroyed as a guarantee for safety, etc. for years to come. They also conquered Corinth and there were millions of dollars of oil paintings there, and there was fantastic artwork; but the Romans destroyed all of their artwork.

Some Romans used these paintings as tables, which destroyed the painting. Some beautiful pottery was stored in Corinth. Great statues in Corinth.

One Roman broke into a palace and he found a very large red bag and he pulled open the bag and emptied the contents, wherein were some of the most marvelous emeralds and diamonds of the ancient world. He dumped those and kept the red bag that they were in. He left behind a fortune in precious gems. He had no true scale of values and illustrates what believers are like today.

We learn in Berachah to mind our own business. So, answer to yourself, *what makes you happy?* Do you depend upon status symbols, success, Jesus Christ? If you cling to the wrong thing, you will be miserable. So along comes old age and you are not ready for it.

Most old people who are married are living miserably together. They get a break and have grandchildren, and one brags about the grandchildren and the other goes off somewhere to seek out happiness there. Most marriages are just 2 people sticking it out.

Old people who are single are also miserable and have no family.

One manifestation of pride is thinking that you can commit a sin which takes you out of the plan of God. This is someone who thinks that they can do something greater than the plan of God. The most self-righteous and most sinful person cannot outdo the plan of God. No matter how you fail, you are still in the plan of God if you are still alive and God is greater than we are. God in His grace has a plan that is greater than any of us.

There is actually a place for every believer where they become so hysterical, they ask for everyone to pray for them; and of course, they are out of fellowship. God's plan is greater than that.

If you reach old age as a believer, you may suffer many kinds of maladies, God still has a plan for you and His plan is greater than our old age.

V. 1 be occupied with Jesus Christ. The average person in old age has no pleasure in it. The believer has self-induced misery. God's grace is greater than any pressure or problem in life.

Eccles. 12:1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days do not come, or the years strike when you shall say, I have no pleasure in them;

Old age, without doctrine, cannot take bad weather. God's plan is greater than the weather.

Eccles. 12:2 while not yet the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, are darkened, or the clouds return after rain;

He tried to find happiness apart from doctrine.

Eccles. 12:3 **in the day when those keeping the house shall tremble** [his hands are trembling], **and the strong men are bowed** [his legs are not as strong as they were], **and the grinders cease because they are few** [the teeth are falling out and he now has to have soft boiled eggs; and he does not like to smile because of his teeth]; **and those looking out the windows are darkened** [his eyesight is going];

Eccles. 12:4 **and the doors shall be shut in the streets** [he will not open his mouth in public], **when the sound of the mill is low** [indigestion], **and one rises up at the voice of a bird** [he has insomnia], **and all the daughters of music are silenced** [his hearing goes bad];

Eccles. 12:5 **also they shall be afraid of a high place** [you become more concerned over phobias], **and terrors in the way** [they are frightened and security conscious]; **and the almond tree shall blossom** [idiom for white hair], **and the locust makes himself a burden** [loss of physical strength]; **and desire breaks** [a reduced libido], **because man goes to his eternal home** [they become morbid about death], **and the mourners go about in the street;**

Eccles. 12:6 **while the silver cord is not yet loosed** [back trouble], **or the golden bowl is crushed** [cerebrum; the mind begins to go; if you know, study, and use Bible doctrine, you will not be a vegetable], **or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain** [this is a heart attack], **or the wheel broken at the cistern** [lungs?];

Eccles. 12:7 **then the dust** [the worn out body; these are the chemicals which the body is composed of] **shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it** [absent from the body and face to face with the Lord].

Old age involves a lot of suffering. Solomon lived it up in many ways, and his body went to crap.

Eccles. 12:8 **Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher** [the man with the message], **all is vanity.**

There is some hope.

Eccles. 12:9 **And more than that, the Preacher** [the man with the message] **was wise; he still taught the people knowledge** [Solomon got back into fellowship and he taught doctrine to the people; which could refer to what he wrote]. **Yes, he listened, and looked, and set in order many proverbs** [he did a lot of writing; each message is short; each message is in capsule form].

He put these things down in a book.

Eccles. 12:10 **The Preacher sought to find out pleasing words, and words of truth written on uprightness.**

The words of doctrine stimulate and motivate us. We are led to a place of occupation with Christ. If you stick the animal with a goad, then he moves. Bible doctrine causes us to move.

Bible doctrine is something upon which you can hang your life. The one shepherd is the Lord Jesus Christ. Nails are used to hang things on. Even in his old age, Solomon woke up.

Eccles. 12:11 The words of the wise are as goads; yea, as nails driven by the masters of collections, they are given from one Shepherd.

Eccles. 12:12 And more than these, my son, be warned: The making of many books has no end, and much study is the weariness of the flesh.

Eccles. 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this applies to every man.

Eccles. 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with all that is hidden, whether it is good, or whether it is evil.

Psalms 37 gives us the other side of old age. For a person with doctrine, the happiest time of their life is old age. They reach old age with great happiness and great blessing.

Gideon hiding in a pit trying to get some oatmeal for breakfast. He would throw the wheat up to blow off the chaff and Jesus Christ came up to him and said, "Hello, mighty man of valor." Judges 6, Gideon admits to being from the worst tribe, and his family is the lowest family, and he is the worst from his family. David understood rebound and had a wonderful old age because he understood rebound.

Psalms 37:23: The steps of a good man are established from Jehovah; and He will delight in his way.

Psalms 37:24 Though he falls, he is not cast down; for Jehovah upholds his hand.

David was young and now he is old. However, David has never seen God forsake a believer. God has never forsaken a believer and put him in a place where he cannot function in the plan of God.

Psalms 37:25 I have been young and am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread.

David has seen many times when God's plan works in our lives. God has provide fantastic capital. His seed is blessed.

Psalm 37:26 All the day he is gracious and lends; and his seed is for a blessing.

Rebound and turn away from evil and produce divine good.

Psalm 37:27 Turn away from evil and do good and live forever.

God love justice and He does not forsake His saints. God's plan for believers includes old age.

Psalm 37:28 For Jehovah loves judgment and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever; but the wicked's seed shall be cut off.

The righteous will inherit the earth. The meek and the righteous.

Psalm 37:29 The righteous shall inherit the earth and live on it forever.

The righteous man communicates wisdom and justice.

Psalm 37:30 The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks judgment.

Psalm 37:31 The Law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slide.

Psalm 37:32 The wicked spies on the righteous and seeks to kill him.

God does not desert anyone.

Psalm 37:33 Jehovah does not leave him in his hand; nor does He allow him to be found guilty in his judgment.

Psalm 37:34 Wait on Jehovah and keep His way; and He shall exalt you to inherit the earth; you shall see when the wicked are cut off.

Psalm 37:35 I have seen the wicked ruthless, even spreading himself out like a luxuriant, native tree;

Psalm 37:36 yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; and I looked for him, but he could not be found.

Psalm 37:37 Watch the perfect and behold the upright one; for the end of that man is peace.

Psalm 37:38 But the transgressors are destroyed together; the end of the wicked is cut off.

Psalm 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is from Jehovah; He is their strength in the time of distress.

Psalm 37:40 [And Jehovah helps them and delivers them; He shall deliver them from the wicked and saves them, because they trust in Him.](#)

There is another description in Psalm 92:12:

Psalm 92:12 [The righteous shall flourish as the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.](#)

This is being spiritually mature.

Psalm 92:13 [Those planted in the house of Jehovah, in the courts of our God, shall flourish.](#)

You can have great inner happiness in old age; and you can produce a great deal in old age as well.

Psalm 92:14 [They shall bear fruit in old age; they shall be fat and fresh,](#)

The old age of the believer is designed to glorify God. God does the doing and man does the receiving. A believer in the plan of God through the utilization of Bible doctrine will glorify God.

Psalm 92:15 [to declare that Jehovah is upright, my Rock! And in Him is no evil.](#)

Ecclesiastes 1:

514_0001