

**“The End of the Matter”**

*Sermon Notes*

- **All of life is absolutely meaningless under the sun... until or unless all of our lives come under the Son**

*\*So...come under the Son...by trusting and treasuring his **words*** (John 4:41, 50; 5:24; 6:63, 68; 8:31-32, 37, 43, 47; 8:51; 12:48; 14:23-24; 13:3, 7; 17:8)

1. His words are altogether wonderful (vv.9-10; Romans 11:33)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. His words are exceedingly wise (vv.11-12; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:6-10; Colossians 2:1-4)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. His words are waiting for us (vv.13-14; John 12:48; Hebrews 4:11-13; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

**Next Sunday:** “Calling on the Name of the Lord”: *A Summer Sermon Series on Prayer*

## Community Group Study Questions

For the Week of April 25th-May 1st

### Getting Started

1. Seven months of preaching, study, and application of the book of Ecclesiastes are now in the rearview mirror. What you have learned? Are there any truths in particular that have been shaping for you? If so, which one(s)? Please share chapter and verse. Would you say that you have a better grasp of this book now than you did before? Why or why not?

### Digging Deeper

2. In his wonderful commentary on Ecclesiastes from 1859, British pastor Charles Bridges writes that: "Many learned men have not hesitated to number it among the most difficult books in the sacred canon. Luther doubts whether any exposition up to his time has fully mastered it."<sup>1</sup> While none of us would have claimed to have fully mastered Ecclesiastes, it is true that it's a challenging book. How come? What was the toughest sledding for you as we studied this book as a church? What parts are still unclear? What practical encouragement do Paul's words to Timothy provide us along these lines in 2 Timothy 2:7?

### Open Your Bible to Ecclesiastes 1:1...

3. The great theme of Ecclesiastes that we sought to understand and apply to our lives is that: *All of life is absolutely meaningless under the sun...until or unless all of our lives come under the Son.* Is this a helpful way of thinking about the book for you? If so, why? If not, why not?

4. When the preacher says in 1:2 that "All is vanity", he's fully prepared to provide evidence for that claim. Consider the following verses in Ecclesiastes: 1:2, 14; 2:1, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 26; 3:19; 4:4, 7, 8, 16; 5:7, 10; 6:2, 4, 9, 11-12; 7:6, 15; 8:10, 8:14; 9:9; 11:8, 10; 12:8. After seven months of study, do you think this way about life? Which specific truths ring true to you? Which ones (if any) still cause a degree of struggle or tension in your heart?

5. One of the central themes in Ecclesiastes is the certainty of death. Read through these Scriptures together as a group: 3:2, 20; 6:6; 8:8; 9:2-3, 11-12; 12:1-8; 5:15→ 1 Timothy 6:7. How much has Ecclesiastes shaped your thinking about death? How much do you think the Lord wants for us to think about death (whether our own, that of other believers in our lives, or that of unbelievers in our lives)? Explain. Here are some other passages of Scripture to stir into the discussion as you ponder the answer to that question: Psalm 116:15; John 5:24; Romans 5:12; 6:23; 8:38-39; Philippians 3:9-10; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:4.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Bridges, Ecclesiastes. Geneva Series of Commentaries. The Banner of Truth Trust: Carlisle, PA. (1859) 1998. p.iii.

6. Another clear theme in this book is the sovereignty of God. Take a look at the following verses together: 3:1-18; 7:13-14; 8:16-9:1; 1:2→Romans 8:20; 11:5→ John 3:8. Did this seven month study challenge or confirm your convictions about the sovereignty of God in any particular ways? Why or why not?

7. One of the most fascinating and important questions we can ask about this book is: *what is the gospel according to Ecclesiastes?* Or (to put it more pointedly): *where is* the gospel in Ecclesiastes? Or (again): how does Ecclesiastes make us “wise for salvation which is through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15)? Walk through the following passages. How do they help you to answer this question? Imagine the truths in the left hand column to be issues with which those of your ‘List of 5’ identify or struggle. How do the truths in the left hand column provide you with gospel-shaped answers that address their questions and concerns?

2:1-11→ John 15:11; 16:22, 24; 17:13

2:12-17→ Colossians 2:3;

2:18-23→ Colossians 3:23;

5:1-13→ James 1:19-21;

7:20→ Romans 3:10-26;

12:8→ John 10:10

12:11→ John 10:1-18;

12:13→ Galatians 2:15-16;

12:14→ 2 Corinthians 5:10-15

8. Close your time together as a group by praying for lasting fruit from our preaching series in Ecclesiastes. One idea might be to pray your way through a passage like Luke 8:4-15, asking the Lord would create good soil in our hearts for the seed of the Word.