

Ecclesiastes - Chapter 2

Pleasure/the Good Life (2:1 - 2:11)

Solomon next turns his attention to pleasure, living the good life. He concludes that this also is vanity. This section is important, because the world believes that just getting a bit more is an appropriate goal in life. We may face criticism, as if we aren't earnest enough, if we don't make it our absolute priority as well. The world does press us into the idea of keeping up with friends and neighbors.

- What type of pleasure is he discussing (v4,5)?
- Was Solomon qualified to discuss this?
- How can laughter be madness (v2)?
- What does pleasure accomplish (v2)?
- In this search, did he understand there are guiding limits (v3)?
- Did he explore both possessions and activities (v4,8)?
- Did he rejoice in what he found (v10)?
- Did it have any lasting meaning or value (v11)?

- Does labor provide any absolute meaning (v22)?
- Where does the good come from (v24)?
- Can we enjoy the good without letting it become our absolute goal (v24)?
- For all the pride we take in our accomplishments, who really determines the results (v26)?

Wise vs Fool (2:12-2:16)

In chapter 1, Solomon discussed that knowledge/wisdom couldn't be the absolute meaning of life goal. Here he returns to the subject, but balances that conclusion by comparing the wise to the fool.

- Can anything really new be done (v12)?
- How does light exceed darkness (v13,14)?
- Under the sun, what happens to both (v15)?
- Is much remembered after we're gone (v16)?

Despair Under the Sun (2:17-2:26)

Looking deeply at it, from an "under the sun" approach, Solomon examines the result of our toils in this world.

- Under the sun, can this life be depressing(v17)?
- What is the result of all the earthly treasure we accumulate (v18-19)?