

June 7, 2020

BETTER (Week 1 of 12)

Ecclesiastes 1:1-18 NLT

These are the words of the Teacher, King David's son, who ruled in Jerusalem (v. 1).

Life seems...

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"Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless!" What do people get for all their hard work under the sun? Generations come and generations go, but the earth never changes. The sun rises and the sun sets, then hurries around to rise again. The wind blows south, and then turns north. Around and around it goes, blowing in circles. Rivers run into the sea, but the sea is never full. Then the water returns again to the rivers and flows out again to the sea" (vv. 2-7).

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Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content. History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new. Sometimes people say, "Here is something new! But actually it is old; nothing is ever truly new." (vv. 8-10).

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We don't remember what happened in the past, and in future generations, no one will remember what we are doing now. I, the Teacher, was king of Israel, and I lived in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to search for understanding and to explore by wisdom everything being done under heaven. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race. I observed everything going on under the sun, and really, it is all meaningless—like chasing the wind. (vv. 11-14).

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What is wrong cannot be made right. What is missing cannot be recovered (v. 15).

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I said to myself, "Look, I am wiser than any of the kings who ruled in Jerusalem before me. I have greater wisdom and knowledge than any of them." So I set out to learn everything from wisdom to madness and folly. But I learned firsthand that pursuing all this is like chasing the wind. The greater my wisdom, the greater my grief. To increase knowledge only increases sorrow (vv. 16-18).

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