

ETERNITY IN THE HEART

Ecclesiastes...The Search for a Christian Worldview



SUNRISE...SUNSET *Ecclesiastes 1*

"Only as man brings his life into harmony with God does that life have balance and meaning. Then man finds that he is not simply a mass of dancing dirt, coming from nowhere and going nowhere."

—Henry J. Schmidt

In this first chapter, Solomon confesses his view of life in a broad declaration of its meaninglessness. This is straight human viewpoint, of course. Its source is the wise, though soulish assessment of the writer. This is not the over-all witness of the Bible. God looks beyond the brief span of human experience and reveals true, meaningful, and eternal destiny.

From a human outlook, there is much gritty realism in Solomon's philosophizing. If our earthly time is all that there is, the worldview can only digress to despair. From the Divine outlook, we are able to see beyond time to eternity. A balanced *worldview* is only possible through a balanced *Godview*.

I. "EVERYTHING IS MEANINGLESS" (Ecclesiastes 1:1-11)

- A. Introduction of the wise commentator (vs. 1)
- B. The despair of humanity (vs. 2-4)
- C. The undeniable cycles of nature (vs. 5-7)
- D. The grinding wheels of time (vs. 8-11)

"It is impossible for that man to despair who remembers that his Helper is omnipotent. "

—Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667)

II. "CHASING AFTER THE WIND" (1:12-18)

- A. The teacher's principality (v. 12)
- B. The teacher's perspective (v.13)
- C. The teacher's pragmatism (vs. 14-18)
 - 1. Viewing life in the observable...empiricism.
 - 2. Viewing life in the theoretical...rationalism

"The Christian belief system, which the Christian knows to be grounded in divine revelation, is relevant to all of life."

—Carl F. H. Henry



FOR REFLECTION...

1. With a view to understanding the entire text of Ecclesiastes, what do we see in this first chapter that reveal Solomon's true purpose in writing it? How do we line up the many observations and viewpoints with the belief that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3:16, 17)?

2.

RESOURCES: C. S. Lewis & Francis Schaeffer, Burson and Walls; *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament*, Walvoord and Zook; *Ecclesiastes Study Guide*, Irving L. Jensen; *A Time to Mourn and a Time to Dance*, Derek Kidner; *Ecclesiastes: The Total Life*, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.; *Exposition of Ecclesiastes*, H. C. Leupold; *Exposition of the Whole Bible*, G. Campbell Morgan; *Old Testament Commentaries*, Keil and Delitzsch; *Thru The Bible Commentary*, J. Vernon McGee;