

1 **THE GOADS AND NAILS OF GOD**

Ecclesiastes 12:11

Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

2 **EVER FELT LIKE THIS?**3 **SOMETHING HAPPENS TO THAT FEELING..**

- Women have a “significance crisis” in their early to mid 30s
- Men have a mid-life crisis usually in their mid 40s (a decade later)

4 **THE GOADS OF GOD**

Ecclesiastes 12:11

5 **BACKGROUND**

- Solomon was given a blank check at the age of 18 and told he could have whatever he wanted
- He asked for wisdom and God gave it
- At the end of his life – a life lived to the extremes – he repents of the wrong use of his earthly wisdom and talks about the true meaning of life.

6 **A CULTURAL APOLOGETIC**

- Solomon was a “wise man.”
- Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah were wise men
- Often, these “wise men” would defend their world view to others in their writings – called a cultural apologetic
- The Queen of Sheba was one who sought to know wise men and their views

7 **ECCLESIASTES WRITTEN TO GENTILE AUDIENCE**

- No mention of Jehovah or Abraham or covenants
- Lots of Gentiles in Solomon’s court (all the Gentile brides / concubines he had along with their staff)
- Jerusalem teaming with Gentiles; Jerusalem is a world trade center

8 **ECCLESIASTES 12:11**

- *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.*
- Goads to motivate oxen = Ideas to motivate you to an important movement
- Nails (tent pegs) = principles that anchor a person

9 **WHAT’S THE POINT?**

- You die; your dog dies. You both turn to dust, so what’s the point?
- You work hard. You makes lots of money. You die and leave your money to someone who doesn’t appreciate it. What’s the point?
- This is why most of us despair of life at some point?

10 **DESPAIR IS PROLIFIC**11 **DESPAIR ORIGINATES IN THINKING THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE GOD**

12 **WHAT'S THE POINT?**13 **THE POINT IS...**

- The point is that there is no point to life unless there is something that transcends this life.

14 **1 CORINTHIANS 15:19**

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

15 **THE CONCLUSION**

- The way you are living is not worth living unless you are investing into eternity.

16 17 **ECCLESIASTES 3:1-9**

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; A time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; A time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; A time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; A time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; A time of war, and a time of peace. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

18 **14 POSITIVES**

1. Be born
2. Plant
3. Heal
4. Build up
5. Laugh
6. Dance
7. Embrace

19 **14 NEGATIVES**

1. Die
2. Reap
3. Kill
4. Tear down
5. Weep
6. Mourn
7. Refrain from embracing

20 **DO THE MATH!**

$$14 - 14 = 0$$

(vanity; emptiness)

21 **GOD'S LIMITATIONS ON MAN**

And why we have these limits...

22 **LIMITED IN CONTROL**

- God limits our control of life
- We don't even have a lot of control over our pets
- We don't control weather, stock market, sometimes our career
- The older you get and the older your children are, the more you will realize that you are not in control

23 **WE TRY TO CONTROL**

- Deception
- Manipulation
- Rationalization
- Arguing

24 **WHEN YOU ARE FRUSTRATED BY LACK OF CONTROL**

- We hate not being in control
 - Of our environment
 - Of our children
 - Of our finances
 - Of our future
- This is a goad from God to actively seek Him to control the aspects of your life ... to put Him in charge.

25 **LIMITED IN OUR COMPREHENSION (3:11B)**

- God puts a desire for eternity in our hearts
- It is natural that we want to understand the end from the beginning – the WHY of life
- But God did not give us the ability to understand His reasons and the logic behind life
 - Why a loved one gets cancer
 - Why my Dad had a stroke
 - Why are there so many unsolved mysteries

26 **THE GRAND CANYON**

- Imagine that you could only look at it with a telescope and could only see 1 square foot at a time
- But this is what our life is like? We cannot begin to see the big picture.

27 **WHEN WE DON'T UNDERSTAND IN SCHOOL**

- Attack the teacher
- Attack the subject
- Attack ourselves

28 **GOD FILLS OUR LIFE WITH MYSTERY**

- So that we realize our dependence – that we need God
- So will humble ourselves and become recipients of His grace

29 **WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW**

- "I don't like not knowing the answer to this problem"

- This lack of comprehension is a goad from God to seek His wisdom!

30 LIMITED IN OUR ENJOYMENT

31 ECCLESIASTES 3:12-13

- *I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God.*
- Enjoyment is the gift of God

32 ECCLESIASTES 5:19

- *Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.*
- God gives us riches.
- God gives us the rejoicing of our labors.

33 THEMES OF ECCLESIASTES

- "Life is supposed to taste like cardboard if you insisted on eating the box!"
- "You can collect all of your toys, but God dispenses the batteries. And without the batteries, your toys won't work"
- Dr. Jim Berg

34 SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

- EMPTY MART – Can't find in:
 - Materialism department
 - Power & prestige department
 - Entertainment department
 - Lust & sensuality department
 - Friendships and relationships

35 WHERE CAN YOU FIND SATISFACTION?

- You will never find satisfaction in the components of life...
- You will only find satisfaction in the Creator of life!
 - When you cannot find satisfaction, it is the goad of God to move you to find your satisfaction in Him!

36 THE NAILS OF GOD

- God limits our lives to teach us eternity... that the answers are not found in the present!
 - My best friend died 3 weeks before our 17th birthday
 - But Richard Dawkins and other godless people are still alive
- Every limitation we have is to teach us eternity and humility.

37 ECCLESIASTES 3:14

- *I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.*
- Only our worship to God and our service to God will last forever.
- Our salvation is secure forever (see Hebrews 10:14)