

LIFE WITH A CHRIST-CENTERED FOCUS  
Ecclesiastes 4:1-16—Overview  
Sermon 7

**Prop:** True satisfaction in life will only come when we reject self-centered thinking and embrace a Christ-centered lifestyle.

**Inter:** How will we respond to the truth when our sinful attitudes are revealed?

**Trans:** Solomon addresses four self-centered attitudes that all human beings struggle with.

**I. We should reject a self-centered attitude toward suffering and embrace Christ-centered thinking (4:1-3).**

- A. Situation #1: People are being treated so unfairly that life is absolutely awful.
- B. Problem #1: The natural man wants to escape from suffering but God's plan will always include it.
- C. Question #1: How do you respond to painful trials?
- D. Biblical truth #1: God is committed to your holiness not your happiness.
- E. Choice #1: You can choose either escape or God.

**II. We should reject a self-centered attitude toward work and embrace Christ-centered thinking (4:4-8).**

- A. Situation #2: We are going to spend most of our lives working.
- B. Problem #2: The natural man seeks satisfaction from work in ways that are sinful.
- C. Question #2: What is your motivation for work?
- D. Biblical truth #2: Satisfaction from work will only come when we seek to glorify God rather self.
- E. Choice #2: You can glorify God or yourself through your work.

**III. We should reject a self-centered attitude toward relationships and embrace Christ-centered thinking (4:9-12).**

- A. Situation #3: A man on a journey can travel alone or with a friend.
- B. Problem #3: The natural man uses relationships for his own benefit rather than as an opportunity to bless others.
- C. Question #3: How much do you value godly relationships?
- D. Biblical truth #3: Life offers no rewards if you live for self rather than serving God and others.
- E. Choice #4: You can serve others and experience satisfaction or serve self which will feel hollow like grasping at the wind.

**IV. We should reject a self-centered attitude toward suffering and embrace Christ-centered thinking (4:13-16).**

- A. Situation #4: God used Joseph's painful suffering to bring about good.
- B. Problem #4: The natural man's will is to escape all suffering while God's will is to use suffering to grow us and bring about good.
- C. Question #4: Do you realize how much of a difference our response to trials makes?
- D. Biblical truth #4: Life with God in miserable circumstances is better than life without God in any circumstances.
- E. Choice #4: You can choose a self-centered plan with a goal to do what it takes to return to happiness or submit to God's plan to use your suffering to produce godliness.