

WHAT IS THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER? (Ecclesiastes 12:8-14)

- A. LIFE Can Be SWEET, So ENJOY IT While You Can, but Remember GOD WILL JUDGE!
(11:7-10)**
- B. LIFE Will Be More STRESSFUL the OLDER You Get, So REDEEM the Time NOW! (12:1-7)**
- C. LIFE is VANITY Unless You LISTEN to the PREACHER, So LEARN HIS LESSONS WELL!
(12:8-12)**

1. **What have you learned in Ecclesiastes? “_____ of _____,” says the Preacher, “_____ is _____” (12:8)** - from a human perspective everything is temporal & transitory with no lasting gain apart from an eternal relationship with the Lord and a correct understanding and application of His Word. {1:2, 14; 2:1, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 26; 3:19; 4:4, 7, 8, 16; 5:7, 10; 6:2, 4, 9, 11; 7:6, 15, 8:10,14; 9:9; 11:8,10} What does this remind us of regarding man?
2. **Who taught you this principle? “And moreover, because the _____” (12:9a)** How does Ephesians 4:11-12 connect with 1 John 2:27?
3. **Why did the Preacher do this? “because the Preacher was _____, he still _____ {kept on teaching} the people _____”, as his desire was pastoral, not professional. (12:9b)**
4. **What process was involved to teach the people? “yes, he _____ {weighed out through thought with balance} and _____ {through a deliberate & diligent search or study} and _____ {to arrange in order with great care} many proverbs.” (12:9c)**
Observe 2 Timothy 2:7, 15.
5. **How did the Preacher, Solomon, do this? “The Preacher sought to find acceptable {just the right, gracious} _____” with needed _____.** (12:10a) Consider 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 Peter 1:12-15; etc.
6. **What was accomplished through this process? “and what was written was upright {accurate, correct, sincere without pretense} -- words of _____” in a world of lies.” (12:10b)** Consider John 8:30-32, 17:17; Proverbs 30:5.
7. **What literary tools did Solomon utilize? “The words of the wise are like _____ {which were designed to prod you to frustration & despair}, and the words of scholars are like well-driven _____ {divine viewpoint perspectives that stabilize your thinking and life}.” (12:11a)**
8. **Where did the words ultimately come from? “given by one _____.” (12:11b)** Who is this? Consider Psalm 23:1; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
9. **What is a closing warning about writing and study? “And further, my son, be _____ {warned} by these. Of making {acquiring} many books there is no end, & much study is wearisome {exhausting} to the flesh.” (12:12)**

Warren Wiersbe writes, “On the surface, verse 12 seems to be a negative view of learning; but such is not the case. The statement is a warning to the student not to go beyond what God has written in His Word. Indeed, there are many books; and studying them can be a wearisome chore. But don’t permit man’s books to rob you of God’s wisdom. Don’t test God’s truth by the “many books” written by men; test men’s books by the truth of God’s Word. {Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Satisfied, “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 134.}

10. *How does this apply to you?*

D. LIFE is SUMMED UP in SIX WORDS and Remember that GOD WILL JUDGE. (12:13-14)

1. **The conclusion:** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter {in light of all that you have heard leading up to this}:

- a. **The response:** _____ - {3:14; 5:7; 8:12, 13} – this means to recognize & factor in the greatness and power of God and His attributes so as to stand in reverential awe, trust, and submission to Him. William Garrett writes, “The insignificance of all that is done under the sun leaves him awestruck and silent before God. His inability to control or predict the future provokes him to dependence on God. The futility of attempting to secure his future through wisdom or acts of religion (e.g., making vows) leads him not to impiety but to an understanding of the true nature of obedient trust. {Duane A. Garrett, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, vol. 14, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 345.}
- b. **The result:** and _____ - His commandments express the moral standards, plan, and will of God for one’s life. Thus, Ecclesiastes ends where the book of Proverbs begins (1:7).
- c. **The reason:** For this is man's _____. What does this mean?
 - How would this instruction translate for the church age believer in the dispensation of grace in light of Calvary?

2. **The coming judgment:** “For _____ every _____ into _____, including every _____, whether {it is} good or evil.” See 3:17; 11:9.

Richard DeHaan: “The Book of Ecclesiastes was written by a man who truly believed in Jehovah {Yahweh}. It depicts in graphic detail the dead-end streets of attempting to solve life’s deepest problems in one’s own wisdom. Writing from personal experience and observation, Solomon has demonstrated the futility of trying to arrive at final answers through the study of nature or human philosophy. He has depicted the blind alleys of pleasure, fame, and material accomplishment. Man’s best efforts, he has proven, fall short of achieving happiness.

Since God has revealed Himself and His way in the Bible, however, a true believer can view the perplexities, injustices, and sorrows of life without despair, for He knows the Lord has a good plan. He realizes the peril of wealth and fame, and avoids these avenues by which many became enmeshed in tangled webs of dishonesty and deceit. He can enjoy to the full the zestful, vibrant days of youth for he is confident that the fear of God and obedience to His commandments bring the joy of divine approval.

The writer of Ecclesiastes has clearly revealed that two contrasting roads lie before man. One is a dead-end street, for it takes man into the labyrinth of his own futile efforts. The other is the way of perfect wisdom. It follows the truth of God as revealed in the Bible. The choice is yours! {The Art of Staying Off Dead-End Streets, pgs. 155-156.}

- Some closing applications: