



Your Life: Empty or Full?

Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

Listen: “Life isn’t good right now because...”

- “Life will be good when...”

Questions: “Are you sure?” What if God designed and declared life to be “good” at all times? What if the problem is not that our lives are bad but that our perspectives are bad? What if “Life isn’t good right now.” is actually heresy—or real close to it? What would genuinely make life good?

Basic Tenets from an old, wise, beleaguered, “seen it all”, sometimes cynical man:

#1 Everything disconnected from God (“under the sun”)...is utter and absolute emptiness. (1:1-3)

#2 Everything connected to God (“Fear God and keep His commandments”)...is ultimate and absolute fulfillment. (12:13)

Background: handout at the Kiosk in the Commons.

Neighborhood #1: The endless, durative, wearisome, ineffective, meaningless cycles of life lead to utter and absolute emptiness. (1:1-11)

- **The Stark Reality:** Faithfulness and utter diligence in the cycles of life can sometimes just lead to wearisome emptiness.

Neighborhood #2: The amassing of wisdom only leads to amassed pain and utter and absolute emptiness. (1:11-18)

- **The Stark Reality:** Gaining much wisdom can sometimes just lead to much pain.

The Brutal Question: “In my life—gut level honesty please—are my activities connected with God or am I an “under the sun” person?”

“Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

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- **Today:** Today, what are the main things you want to be different in your life?
- **Monday:** Reflect on, pray about, journal through the text of Psalm 73:25-28.
- **Tuesday:** In what ways have you experienced emptiness in your life? 1:1, 2
- **Wednesday:** In what ways have you experienced fullness in your life?
- **Thursday:** How can you better connect your activities with God?
- **Friday:** Do you need to abandon activities that cannot be connected with Him?
- **Saturday:** Reflect on and pray about Tenets #1 and #2 above.

“Connection Group Papers”

Dialogue questions for helping each other in the Christian walk this week.

- How have you typically finished this sentence: “Life will be good when...”?
- Based on the Book of Ecclesiastes and Psalm 73:25 do you see the “Life will be good when...” statements in a different light now? If so, how?
- What is the answer that The Preacher expects to his question in verse 3? Why?
- Read “Basic Tenets #1 and #2” above. How do you know when something is disconnected from God or when something is connected to God?
- What does “emptiness” feel like and look like and yield in our lives? What does “fullness” feel like and look like and yield in our lives?
- In what ways does much wisdom lead to much pain? (1:11-18)
- What does it mean that activities under the sun are “striving after wind?” (v 14)
- What are the regular cycles in your life? Do you find them to be empty or full?