



Joy Summarized in Six Words

Ecclesiastes 12:8-14

Question: If you had a life time to research the meaning of life and summarized your findings in six words what would you say?

Without God life is utter and superlative emptiness. (v 8)

- Under the sun:
- Vanity of vanities:
- Pick a pursuit, pick any pursuit:

The vanity of life under the sun demands a diligent search for truth. (vv 9-12)

- Wisdom:
- Knowledge:
- Proverbs:
- Delightful words:
- Words of truth:
- Wise words that goad:
- Wise words that bond:
- Wise words from the Shepherd:
- Wow! God shepherds us with words!!!

At the end of the diligent search the superlative fullness is this: Fear God and keep His commandments.

- **Fear God:**
- **Keep His Commandments:**

Big Idea: In the face of life's utter and superlative emptiness without God...fear God and keep His commandments.

A Watershed Decision about six words: "Fear God and keep His commandments."
Or, "Use God and keep my pursuits." Romans 12:1, 2.

“Walking Papers”

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

Big Idea: In the face of life’s utter and superlative emptiness without God...fear God and keep His commandments.

- **Today:** Have you experienced life under the sun as vanity of vanities? Explain.
- **Monday:** What are your favorite “pursuits” in life? Have any of these taken too much time, energy, love, or allegiance in your life?
- **Tuesday:** What is the evidence that you in your life have pursued “wisdom, knowledge, proverbs, words of truth, and delightful words?”
- **Wednesday:** Why does God place so much emphasis on the “word?” According to The Word how has God spoken to us?
- **Thursday:** What would you be willing to do in order to be more profoundly shepherded by the Words of Jesus?
- **Friday:** What would you be willing to do in order to cultivate your fear of God?
- **Saturday:** What single command of God do you need to obey better? Will you?

“Companionship Papers”

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

GETTING STARTED:

- Have you ever seen a person pursue something in a search for joy and meaning only to fail in that pursuit and then redouble their efforts in the same pursuit?
- Have you experienced life under the sun as vanity of vanities? Explain.
- Describe the life of a person whom you feel is “fearing God” with skill.

LOOK AT THE TEXT:

- Verses 9-13: Why does God place so much emphasis on His Word?
- Verses 9-13: What all has God done with His speaking?
- Verses 9-13: What does God’s use of words and commitment to words mean for us in our use of words?
- Verse 13: What does it mean to fear God and how do we cultivate an ever growing fear of God in our own lives? In the life of CBC?
- Verse 13: What does it mean to obey God’s commandments—beyond just doing them—and how do we cultivate an ever growing obedience in our own lives? In the body at CBC?

LIVE DIFFERENTLY—you can also use questions from the Walking Papers above:

- What would you be willing to do in order to be more profoundly shepherded by the Words of Jesus?
- What would you be willing to do in order to cultivate your fear of God?
- What single command of God do you need to obey better? Will you?