

WALK AND TALK

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Ecclesiastes 1:1-3, 12:13-14

1. The book of Ecclesiastes is part of what is referred to as Wisdom Literature in the Bible.
2. The other wisdom books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and the Song of Solomon, although some commentators disagree as to whether or not all five books represent wisdom literature.
3. Personally I would not include Psalms since the Psalms deal with absolutes, while the other books contain principles that are usually, but not always, true.
4. Solomon is the author of most of Proverbs, and all of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.
5. In Ecclesiastes Solomon examines life from different perspectives and records his observations and conclusions.
6. We need to embrace his conclusions.
 - a. Eccl 11:9-12:1
Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. **Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.** 10 So, remove grief and anger from your heart and put away pain from your body, because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting. 12:1 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, **"I have no delight in them"**
 - b. Eccl 12:13-14
The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. 14 **For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.**
7. The problem with Solomon is that his walk did not correspond with his talk.
8. He did not fully live life the way that he taught life should be lived.

I. The desire for wisdom. 1 Kings 3:3-9

Text: Now Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. 4 The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place; Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, "Ask what you wish me to give you." 6 Then Solomon said, "You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. 7 "Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 "Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are

too many to be numbered or counted. 9 "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

A. Some definitions.

1. "To fear God is to have an awesome respect of who He is and a reverential trust in His Word and His character, and to live accordingly."

2. "To have knowledge is to have understanding or information about something. To have wisdom is to have the ability to apply knowledge to daily life.

B. Notice that Solomon's prayer focused on the wisdom that would enable him to be a wise and discerning king related to his government of the people.

C. There are two kinds of wisdom available to us: the wisdom of the world, and the wisdom of God. 1 Cor 1:20-25

Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the **wisdom of the world**? 21 For since in **the wisdom of God** the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

D. The wisdom of the world equips us to accomplish things in the flesh, but it cannot bring us to the knowledge of God.

E. The wisdom of God leads us to repentance and faith, and it also equips us to make right use of the wisdom of the world.

F. Solomon began well in that his love for God motivated him to obey God in some essential areas of life.

II. The acquisition of wisdom. 1 Kings 4:29-34

Text: Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. 30 Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was known in all the surrounding nations. 32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. 33 He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even to the hyssop that grows on the wall; he spoke also of animals and birds and creeping things and fish. 34 Men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

A. The ability to obtain wisdom, knowledge and understanding is a gift from God.

B. He created us as intellectual beings; capable of obtaining and retaining all sorts of information.

C. Any person with normal intelligence is capable to acquiring and using the wisdom of the world, but the wisdom of God is another matter. 1 Cor 2:6-16

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the

ages to our glory; 8 the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 9 but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

D. Solomon's ultimate undoing was his failure to apply and incorporate God's wisdom into the governing of his personal life.

III. The application of wisdom. 1 Kings 11:1-13

Text: Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." **Solomon held fast to these in love.** 3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. 4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and **his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God,** as the heart of David his father had been. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. 6 **Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not follow the Lord fully,** as David his father had done. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. 8 Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. 9 **Now the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, 10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods;** but he did not observe what the Lord had commanded. 11 So the Lord said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant. 12 "Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 "However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

A. Solomon's problem was not a lack of knowledge; rather his love for women triumphed over his love for God.

B. Multitudes of professing Christians are in the same boat; they may have some level of devotion to God, but the love of self and this world is uppermost in their lives.

NOTE: Anyone who is paying attention knows that many high-profile, Christian leaders fail God, their families, their churches, and their ministries on a regular basis. It is not that they do not know right from wrong; rather at some point they began to allow thoughts and behavior patterns to overrule and silence the Spirit of God within them. We read about such people because of their high positions, but there are many professing Christians, who are not known beyond their local setting, who fail in the same way.

APPLICATION

1. We would do well to pay attention to Solomon's final words in Ecclesiastes; words he did not apply in his own life. Eccl 12:13-14

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. 14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

2. If we are genuine followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we can rejoice that our sins, past, present, and future are atoned for.

3. That precious reality should not be an excuse to be careless in our daily walk knowing that God will discipline those who belong to him.

4. On the other hand those who have refused God's command to repent and to embrace Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will have to answer for every single act.