

# Proverbs & Ecclesiastes

Sunday 9/19/2010

Oh, what a wonderful day it will be. Jesus is coming again. Standing before Him at last, child and trouble all pass. Hounds at His feet we will cast. Jesus is coming again.

Last week we saw the first two of our wisdom books. As we lay these books out, we are coming through a couple of three or four books of the Bible every week. We are looking at how Christ is portrayed. Christ is the center of your Bible. In fact, there are two figures that are the center of your Bible that the whole Bible is built around. One of them is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the other one is the devil. Most people do not know this, but the devil is a Christ also, and that is why he is called the Antichrist. That is why in Revelation, in certain places, it will talk about it. It makes it because the devil and the Antichrist and the Lord are so close together, doing battle and going back and forth. That is why in the book of Revelation, you will find a couple of times that the Bible makes the reverence talking about Jesus Christ, it calls Him His Christ because there are two Christs. The word Christ means "anointed one." Christ was anointed, and so is the devil anointed. So you find those two characters are really what the Bible is built around.

The theme of the Bible is a kingdom, if you have been around here any length of time. That kingdom is going to be established someday when Jesus Christ comes back, and He is crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. So all of the Bible, basically, if you want to get the Bible down to a real basic understanding, it is simply this: the theme of the Bible is a kingdom, and there are two Christs that are after that kingdom. One of them is the Lord's Christ, and the other one is the devil's Christ. One of them is the Lord's Christ, the other one is the Antichrist. They do battle all down through the Bible for one thing: for the kingdom. Of course, we know that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to be crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords when He comes back.

We started to look at these five books, and I told you how the wisdom books are really the key to your Bible. They are right smack dab in the middle of your Bible, and they carry with it all of the aspects that you need to know about the Lord Jesus Christ and seeing Him as He really is and portrayed in the Bible. I told you that these five books go together as a set. Some of the books stand independently. We saw some of those. Some of the books work together in two or three sections. Here is a section that has five books with it. Once we finish these five, we are going to get into the prophets, and we are going to see that those represent a very large representation in the Bible, and you get it all broken down as we go through it.

I told you last week that these five wisdom books really deal with all of the things that you and I have to struggle with in life. They basically cover the five missing elements that I find in God's people's lives today. God's people are very problematic. They have many, many emotional issues, physical issues. They have gotten themselves in all kinds of circumstances and situations, and they are about as defeated a bunch of people as you ever saw in your life, and yet we should be the victorious ones in our relationship, but we are not. The reason for that is five missing elements, and I gave you these last week, and all of these five elements are represented by each one of these wisdom books.

1. The first one is the book of Job, and it represents the things that we do not know about the sufferings of God. I talked to you about how we go through the things that we go through and become victorious based on our understanding of what Christ went through and His suffering.
2. The second one was the book of Psalms, and that is the heart of God. We talked about how the heart of God is so key to understanding what God wants you to do. When you get God's heart, then you know exactly what God wants you to accomplish. I have had people ask me all the time, young Christians that are just getting plugged into the Bible, and they will always basically ask me the same thing: "How do you know what God wants you to do with your life? How do you know what God wants you to accomplish? Does God just tell it to you at some point? How do I find that out?" The answer to that is very simple. The answer is that as you get God's heart, God reveals to you what He wants you to do. It is a lot like finding a guy or a gal that you fall in love with. You have a period of time where you date, and while you date, you kind of find out if that person is potentially somebody that you could want to get more involved with or maybe even get married and spend the rest of your life with. What happens through that relationship on a daily basis, through the contact that you have, through the things that you do, the things that you talk about? You get each other's heart, and you find out what this guy wants in life, and does it line up to what you want? He finds out what you want in life or what you are about in life, and he makes a decision, "Do I want that in my life?" The two hearts basically get knit together, and then in marriage, the two become one. Well, it is the same situation with you and me in Christ. We ought to have a love relationship with Him every day that you talk with Him, that you communicate with Him, just like any couple, and you build that relationship. In time, you find out exactly what God wants you to do, just like in marriage. You will come to a point in your life where you will find exactly what your wife wants you to do: cut the grass, take out the trash, do all the things that you need to get done, and that is what makes a marriage work.
3. The wisdom of God, we are going to talk about that today in the book of Proverbs, and I told you how the wisdom of God really matches up to the mind of God, knowing what God's mind is.
4. Then we talked about the book of Ecclesiastes, and that is God's standpoint as He views the world, and that will be the mind of the Spirit, understanding the world scenario that you and I have to live in.
5. And then the Song of Solomon, the church from God's standpoint, and this will be the mind of Christ. This is how this lays itself out.

We talked about how all of these things form the completeness of a child of God. That is what we are really after in life. People say, "I want to be happy." No, you are not saying it right. Pamela Helminy says, "Well, I just want to be happy in life." No, that is not really what you want. That is not what you think you want, but that is not what you really want. What people really need in life and really want in life is not to be happy; it is to be complete. When you are complete, then you will be happy. The word "happy" is based on the word "happenings," and whatever happens is good, we are happy. When it happens bad, we are not happy. But when you understand that the key to real true happiness in life is not being happy but being complete, and that completeness has to do with God. This is why an unsaved man will never be happy. If you

are an unsaved man or woman sitting here this morning under the sound of my voice, and you are not sure you are saved, and you do not know for sure if you would die today you would go to heaven, you will never be happy. You know why you will never be happy? Because you are incomplete.

That is why, growing up in life as a young man or a young lady, the older people in your world start to tell you and encourage you into doing things that they tell you will make you feel like a man or make you feel like a woman. By the time you get to be a sophomore in high school, probably even earlier than that now, probably by the time you get to the second grade, you are introduced to cigarettes. You are introduced to booze. You are introduced to sex. You are introduced to all of these things that the older crowd wants you to buy into, that this is really going to make you happy. It is going to make you complete. You are not a real man or a real woman if you do not do this. So you buy into it, and then four, five, six, seven, eight years later, your life is a mess. You went from one thing to another. The cigarettes did not do it for you after a while, so you went to booze. The booze did not do it, so you went to marijuana. The marijuana did not do it, so you went to meth and amphetamines. It did not do it for you, so you went to heroin, and pretty soon, your life is a mess. The key is not to be happy; the key is to be complete.

If you are a saved person here this morning, you will never be complete until you find out what God wants you to do with your life and do it. Saved people are always busying themselves with things that they think are going to make them happy. I am not saying you should not have nice things in life. I think everybody deserves to have a nice life, and I hope the best for you. But that is not what makes you complete. God saved you for a purpose, and that purpose is not to fulfill the career you are trying to pursue. That job that God gave you is nothing more for you to support the means for you being a missionary to Him and this local church where you operate from. That is all. God gave you a temporary job to keep you, that you could pay the bills and do this and do that, so God could use you and put you where He wanted you to be to do what He wanted you to do, and in that, you are going to be complete.

So we find the completeness in a Christian. I told you last week, in the book of Job, we find the unhappy man. In the book of Psalms, we find the happy man. In the book of Proverbs, we find a wise man. In the book of Ecclesiastes, we find a worldly man, and in the book of Song of Solomon, we find a heavenly man. You take all five of those things and put them together, put them in your life, get them working for you, and you are going to be complete. We looked at the great concept of your life being like a season, like a tree or a piece of wheat growing or corn or whatever, and that you go through a process that you are going to bring forth fruit, the Bible says, in His season.

Today we are going to look at the next book, and that is going to be the book of Proverbs. Before we do that, though, let us stand up and take our Bibles and let us recite our little creed here to the Word of God that we love so much. I will lead you off with it. Here we go: "This is God's holy Word, divinely inspired by God, infallible and inerrant. It is my sword to fight the devil and his temptations. It is my comfort in times of trouble. It is my compass for my life journey. It is God's love letter to me personally and my companion every day of my life." Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Bless us now as we open up Your Word, and we will be careful to

give You all the honor and the praise. Teach us and guide us and lead us in all that we do, that we may be pleasing as a church to You, and we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it, amen.

Now we have looked at the suffering of God last week, and we looked at the blessings of God in Psalms, and now we are going to look at the wisdom of God found in the book of Proverbs.

## I. The Wisdom of God: Proverbs

In the book of Proverbs, Christ is typified, as you might have guessed it, as our wisdom. The New Testament verse on this is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 30.

*1 Corinthians 1:30*

*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

There are four things there that he talks about that Christ is made unto us by God.

6. The first one is wisdom. That is what we are going to talk about today.
7. The second one is righteousness.
8. The third one is sanctification.
9. And the last one then is redemption.

In this life, you are going to find that basically there are two kinds of wisdom. You are going to find that the Bible lays out that there is a worldly wisdom. That worldly wisdom can be good at times. It can help you. There is wisdom about things. Mechanics understand about cars. They have a wisdom about that. When I look at an engine, I just see an engine. When they see it, they see it as it operates and know how to make it work. There are good things for that.

*1 Corinthians 2:13-14*

*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Man's wisdom can be good, but man's wisdom will always lack the great ingredient that only God can give us through understanding God's wisdom, which is over man's wisdom. It is the basic word down here in verse 14 of 1 Corinthians 2, where it says "spiritually discerned." Discernment will bring with it understanding. In the book of Proverbs, as the book of Psalms, you are going to find three terms:

10. You are going to find the word knowledge.
11. You are going to find the word wisdom.
12. And you are going to find the word understanding.

When you look at Proverbs, you are going to find that basically Proverbs runs like this:

- The first seven chapters are basically definitive chapters.
- Then in chapter 8 to chapter 30, you are going to find in that deal you have all of the different issues of life.
- And then in chapter 31, you have a story that everybody knows this; they just do not know how the thing applies to them.

So you have three aspects laid out. You have facts. You have knowledge. Knowledge is the facts of things. Knowledge will be the basic truth or understanding of anything. When you have knowledge, you have facts. When you take that knowledge and you apply it and you learn from it, then you have wisdom. Wisdom is basically knowledge applied. You take a guy who is a great fisherman. We used to think of fishing with just going out and getting you a cane pole, digging up some worms, and then going out and sitting by the riverside with a cork bobber and putting a worm on it and catching fish. It is way past that point now. You can buy a bass boat or a fishing boat that looks like a PT boat in World War II. It has sonar. It has radar. It will tell you where the fish are. It beeps off things on the bottom, and you can see the fish. It is incredible. Of course, you get a fishing pole and all that stuff, and you lay it out there with a bass boat trimmed to the hilt, and you say, "Yeah, this does this, this does that, this will do this. Here is a whole bunch of lures. This will catch this kind of fish." That is facts. That is knowledge. But you put me with all that stuff in a boat, and I would not be able to figure out what was going on at all because I do not know how to use it. Once you learn how to use the tools that are there, now you have got wisdom. I look at that screen, and all I see is that thing going up and down on the screen, and you are saying, "No, that is a school of fish." Why can you see fish, and all I see is a squiggly line? Because you have got wisdom to use the facts of what that machine does.

So in life, you find facts, knowledge, and you find facts applied gives you wisdom. So you watch the 6 o'clock news, and you listen to the weatherman. The weatherman tells you, gives you a five-day forecast. He is telling you what the weather is going to be. He looks at a satellite map. He sees the storm developing over here. That is why they can look over here and see a tornado or a hurricane out there off the coast of Florida, and that thing is swirling around, and they can make a computer-generated model and show you which way it is coming so you have got three or four days to get ready for it. That is facts, knowledge, and then that is wisdom, how to use it.

What the world does not have is the third ingredient, and the third ingredient only comes by God, and that is the ingredient of understanding. Understanding will always be how God fits into the overall equation. Understanding in the Bible is discernment. Being able to see any circumstance in life, whether it is the 6 o'clock news, whether it is the situation you are dealing with in your own marriage or your own family, or what you are dealing with in some scenario at work, and seeing it not as it appears but as it really is through the discernment of God's understanding.

I will give you an example of that. Right now in the Middle East, we have tremendous problems in the Middle East, and it did not get any better. Iran just went online with a nuclear reactor last week, and things are heating up pretty good. Yet when you watch 60 Minutes or CNN or Fox News, what you basically get is you get knowledge, and you get knowledge applied, you get

wisdom. You get somebody going on there telling you who is doing what politically, what nations are against this nation, and then you get somebody coming on and giving you a dialogue about, "Well, these nations have clashed for hundreds of years and for centuries, and I do not know why we cannot get peace in the Middle East. I do not know why we cannot bring this together and this together. We are going to have more peace talks." For the last 40, 50 years, there have been ongoing peace talks, on and off, between the Palestinians and the nation of Israel and all those groups of people, and they go for a while, then they break down, and they go for a while, then they have another summit, then they break down, and then some little skirmish comes out, and it breaks down, and this country is always trying to get it together, and the whole world wants those two nations and all of those nations to get along. That is knowledge, and that is wisdom trying to get it together, but they have no understanding. The understanding of it is that they are not ever going to get along. The understanding of it is that what you are seeing in the Middle East right now is the prelude to the second coming of Christ when Jesus Christ comes back. You know that from Galatians chapter 4 verse 22, where God clearly tells you that the land of Palestine that right now is run by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, the Iraqis, Afghanistan, that is all Israel's land in the millennium. That is their land, and it does not matter what CNN says or Fox News says or who tries to make it work. Understanding tells you, discernment tells you, it is not ever going to work, and that thing is going to boil over and explode. People in America get worried about that because the Muslims hate Christians, and they hate Westerners, and they are going to try to kill us and wipe us all out, and you get afraid of those kind of things when you do not understand that that is just the way it has got to go. We are right moving into right before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I just finished a book called *Dreadnoughts*, and it is a book that deals with English history based on the latter part of the 1800s going into the early part of the 1900s when Queen Victoria was the great queen of England. She was probably next to Elizabeth, she was probably the greatest queen. I think she reigned like 89 years or something like that. She was a great queen, and everybody to this day in England references her for her greatness, and they have never had one after her. Elizabeth probably was close to her before her, but Queen Victoria was a great queen, and the book talked about how the English had empires all over the world: in the Middle East, in China, in Singapore, in Japan, wherever you go. Out there in the South Pacific, there is a chain of islands called the Solomon Islands. You know why they are called the Solomon Islands? Because they were founded by the British way back in 1800 who were believing the Bible, and it was like paradise, like they thought, and so they called it the Solomon Islands after King Solomon. You see their footprint everywhere in the 1900s, and this guy went on to write about the fact that the reason the British Navy or the British Empire was so vast was because they could put all of her ships in a line, and those ships that were in her Navy, she had the greatest Navy on the face of the planet, and he said that you could put their ships in a line, and those ships would stretch out for a hundred miles behind her. They were called huge, vast warships, and they were called dreadnoughts, and he went on to say that the reason England had all that she had and all of the kingdoms that she had and all of the provinces was because of her great Navy. I thought to myself, "Now there is a man who has a lot of knowledge, and there is a man that has taken that knowledge and based it into some wisdom, but he has no understanding." The reason why the nation of England, the little island nation of England, was so vast in the 1900s and the 1800s was

not because of their Navy. It was because she had embraced a book that the King James 1611 Authorized Version got birthed in England, and for 400 years, she was the greatest nation and ruled the seas because everywhere she went, she took that book and preached it. The very word "dreadnought" that they gave for their great battleships was based on the term "dreadnought for God is with thee." The guy did not even know that. He had facts and he had wisdom from a worldly standpoint, but he did not have any understanding. Understanding, discernment, is the missing element. It is the missing element in any equation on life on planet Earth, and of course, it is the thing that works in every aspect, absolutely necessary.

I deal with a lot of marital issues and a lot of marital problems. They all vary themselves with all kinds of different problems, but they all come down to a basic root problem. It is the fact that people had a knowledge about marriage, and they got some wisdom about marriage, but they never got any understanding about marriage. They got into something called marriage, never understanding it from God's standpoint. Raising children is the same way. Understanding is the discernment that you get out of the book of Proverbs because the Bible says it is spiritually discerned, and you get it by comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, and that is the key. The book of Proverbs, there is no way around it, the book of Proverbs is God's mind, no question about it. The book of Proverbs is built on a couple of themes. In my opinion, the rest of the Bible, and this is just my own opinion based on 40 some years of being in the book, in my own humble opinion, the rest of the Bible with all of its principles that we talk about all the time, all stem from the book of Proverbs. I think that every principle that you are going to get into anywhere else in the Word of God has its base root in the book of Proverbs. It is the greatest book for me personally in the Bible as far as understanding God's mind. It is a book that God wrote that almost from chapter 8 to chapter 30, He gives you His opinion on just about everything in life, and He will tell you what will work for you and what will not work for you.

We all can say this, I know it is true in my life. When I was a young man growing up, when I was 18 years old, I thought my dad was the dumbest guy in the world. I thought he did not know anything about anything, and I thought I knew it all. When I got out of the army later on, when I was about 21 or 22, I could not figure out how smart my dad got so fast. Of course, we are all that way. Young men and young ladies have a tendency when you hit 16, 17, 18, or 19 that your parents cannot tell you anything. Now if you have raised your children right, brought them along right, and given them the Word of God, of course that is a different story, but in most cases, it is that way. You are going to raise kids up, and they are going to get about 15 or 16, and they are going to get their own ideas and their own thoughts the way things grow in life and the way they work in life, and you are not going to be able to tell them anything. Of course, that is exactly what we have with our own relationship with God. We get saved, God wants to tell us some things, God wants to show us some things, we always think we know better. The outcome is the same outcome in my life as I am sure it was in yours. You make big messes. My dad told me I could not drive the car because I did not have proper insurance, and all those things, and I used to get mad at my dad because I thought I was a great driver right up to the point that I was in a bowling alley one night with a bunch of guys shooting pool, and my car just got a brand new car. Back then, the thing to do was to, and I look back on it now, I am almost embarrassed to tell you how you do these things. It is the stupidest stuff in the world. Back then, what you did, and I

guess they do it now, I do not know, but back then, you get to the point where it was a big deal to get at a stoplight, and when the light turned green, you punched it. I had a '67 GTO and then I had a '64 GTO and a '67 GTO, and the key was to smoke the tires and burn the tires off of it and drag race down the street. Everybody thought they were hot, and I remember going past a high school where I used to go after I graduated, and sitting at the light going to work in the morning, and all the kids would be out there, and I thought it was so cool for me to, when that light turned green, just to smoke them tires. The great thing was to have positraction, that means that both wheels pull instead of one. If you were a sissy when you burned the rubber and only one tire burned, you want both tires smoking, and I mean you smoke them suckers. Now, I look back on it today, and I think that is the stupidest thing in the world. Those tires were \$100 a piece, and there I am burning the rubber off of them just so, and I am thinking everybody up there is going, "Wow, he is a race car driver." Now they are sitting up there saying, "Wow, what an idiot he is." But I remember my dad tried to tell me, I was not going to listen, and I was in a bowling alley one night, I even have friends to tell you this, I was in a bowling alley one night, you talk about feeling stupid. I mean, to this day, I look back at this, and I try to blot this out of my mind, and I was not even drinking because I did not drink. If I was drinking, I would be better because I could blame it on drinking, but I was not even drinking. I was stone sober, idiot-wise, and I was in a pool hall with a bunch of guys shooting pool, and I had my car parked out there, and we got out to get in our cars, and I thought, and the guys were coming out, and there were girls coming out, and I thought, "I will show them how fast this car is." I was going to smoke my tires right out of the thing, and just show them whatever I thought I was trying to show them. Whatever happened, I got the car in reverse. When I popped that clutch, there was a big light pole about five feet behind me, and I burned right into that light pole, and I tell you when I got out, and then the thing is try to get everybody to believe that that is what you intended to do. Yeah, right. I was an idiot. I would not listen to my dad. I paid the price for it, and we all could say that, and that is what the book of Proverbs is all about. It is your Heavenly Father in the first seven chapters telling you what is best for you, telling you what to avoid, telling you what is not good in your life, and then telling you from chapter 8 on that this is what you need to do. He tells you in the first seven chapters, "Watch out for this," and "This is how you get what I want you to get," and then He gives it to you as you go down through there, and the book of Proverbs is God writing to me, His child, of what God wants me to do and wants me to know.

The book of Proverbs is built around two kinds of people. You might think that those two kinds of people are saved and lost, because most of the Bible is written to saved people or lost people, but that is not true in Proverbs. No, the book of Proverbs is not written to saved and lost people. The book of Proverbs is written to wise people and foolish people. Now, we might think right off the top of our head, "Well, the wise people are saved people, and the foolish people are unsaved people." That may be true in a doctrinal sense, but that is not true in a practical sense. Some of the biggest fools I ever met in my life were saved people, me being one of them at times in my life. It is a thing where being a fool is not relegated to just being lost. A Christian can make the biggest fool and a mess out of his life and make a fool of himself if he does not follow what the Father tells him to do. The Bible is filled with concepts in the book of Proverbs about a wise child and a foolish child. Saved people can be just as foolish as unsaved people. It does not make any difference.

The second thing the book of Proverbs does, it basically is written around two dangerous people. You are going to find this in the book of Proverbs, and you need to mark it whenever you find it. I would go through and every time you find it, I would reference this out.

13. You are going to find the first one you are going to find is a strange woman. She is first talked about in Proverbs chapter 2, way before we get into chapter 8, and then again in chapter 5, I believe, and then again in chapter 7. The strange woman is always going to represent religion. This strange woman here is relegated into a picture of a prostitute, a streetwalker. In Proverbs 5, it even gives the whole scenario where some little guy devoid of understanding, a simple one, is walking down the street past her corner, and she has got her face all painted up, and she seduces him. He falls for it because he has no discernment. He is foolish. That strange woman, you are going to find there, is always a picture of false religion wherever you find it. That is why Revelation chapter 18 talks about Babylon and mystery religion, the mother of harlots. False religions in the Bible are likened to prostitutes, and they all come from one main religion that is the mother of all those harlots. Of course, the whole job is to seduce you, and they seduce you by telling you what you want to hear. A woman that wants to take advantage of a man will tell him, she knows the man is vulnerable, so she will tell him he is good-looking when he is as ugly as a stump. She will tell him what she wants to hear. We are so stupid. We fall for it just like that. Of course, this is what the picture of this strange woman is in Proverbs. You find her defined for you in the first seven chapters, and then you find her throughout the whole Bible, really. That is why Jezebel, when she winds up with King Ahab back there in Kings and Chronicles, that is why Ahab is the king, and Jezebel is his wife, and she is a prophetess, a religious prophet of Baal worship, and she is a harlot. That is why even to this day when somebody wants to call somebody a terrible name with another woman, they will call her a Jezebel. My old grandmother used to say, "She is all painted up like Jezebel." I did not know who Jezebel was until I was 15 years old. But that is what it runs right back to that.
14. The second one in there is the evil man. An evil man is found in Proverbs chapter 2 also, and you will find it relegated out through the whole Bible. The evil man, where the woman will always be a religion, the evil man will always be the man-made concepts, the philosophers of life, the science aspect of it, everything that man comes up with that takes it away from God. Specifically, there are two warnings in your Bible, and one of them is in Colossians chapter 2 verse 8, and the other one is in 1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 20. The one in Colossians chapter 2 verse 8 has to do with philosophy. The one in 1 Timothy chapter 6 has to do with science falsely so-called. There is a science and a true science, but the true science is in the Bible. The science that is out there today is science falsely so-called, and Colossians chapter 2 talks about philosophy, vain deceit, and all of that. Those are your two warnings in the Bible. Of course, the strange woman will always be religion. The evil man will always represent the philosophy of life and man-made concepts that under no circumstances ever fit into the Bible or anything that has to do with God.

We find today that in the early church, and those of you who went through church history with me on Tuesday night, we saw this at the very beginning. When the Bible began to get formulated in the first century, while God was doing His business of putting the Bible together and

establishing the churches, the devil was doing his part in destroying what God was doing. We know how we talked about it before, how the first church that is a model church in your Bible is found in Acts chapter 11 there in Antioch, where they were first called Christians. Antioch is the hotbed of New Testament Bible Christianity. That is where it is all moving from. That is where it all centers at, and it moves out to the world from there. But at that same time, we also know that down in Alexandria, Egypt, what was going on down there was that some Christian philosophers, these were men, and Alexandria, Egypt, at this time was the known seat of all worldly knowledge in the world. The library at Alexandria that got burnt down at some point later than that was the greatest literary library of the day. It stands today as one of the great things that man had amassed the writings of this time. Down there were guys like Philo, guys like Clement of Alexandria, guys like Origen, guys like Pantanaeus. These guys were in that organization in Alexandria, and they were steeped in pagan, Greek, Roman, Babylonian mythology. They worshiped Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, and they built their whole concept around their idea. While God was doing what He was doing up there in Antioch, they were taking the Word of God as it came into Egypt, and they were taking the Bible, and they were sitting down with it, and they were looking at what the Bible said, and then they were weighing it up against the philosophy that they believed in. They changed the Bible in almost 80,000 places where they did not agree with it, and then they added their philosophy to it. So my point is this: while God was doing what He was doing, the philosophers always do what they do. They destroy God's truth.

That was in the first century at the beginning of Christianity. We see those same philosophies creeping back into the churches today. We are going to find that in this Laodicean church period that we live in, Christian philosophers are a big deal today. You are going to find that there are actually people out there that think that you can mix Bible truth and philosophy and make the thing work. I had a philosopher guy one time, and he never liked me, and I really never liked him. But we existed for a while, and he told me one time in a conversation, and his thing that he did not like about me was the family. He liked me as a person. He did not like me as a pastor of what I taught because he was a doctor of psychiatry, and he was in the philosophy and all that stuff. He told me this one time. He said, "You know what? You misunderstand. I believe the Bible is truth. I believe the Bible is truth." He says, "I just do not believe the Bible is all truth." In other words, there are other truths out there that are not in the Bible that you have got to add to the Bible to get the whole complete concept of truth. That is a philosopher. Let me just say something, and I am sure most of you already know this and believe this. I do not believe there is any truth outside the Word of God. If there is any truth outside the Word of God, it is because it is already found in the Word of God. There is no other truth. If the Bible is not all truth and everything that it needs to be, then there is not any truth that is worth having. If man had anything to do with anything that God did as far as making it to be true, then we are in trouble. We are in trouble, and you are going to find that Christian philosophy always does that. "Oh, I do not believe the Bible is truth." They just will not believe the Bible is all truth, and they will put the two together, and you cannot be a Christian and be a philosopher, nor can you be a philosopher and never be a Christian without first rejecting the philosophy. In Bible history, and we will talk about this a little bit later when we get into Ecclesiastes, they fall into three basic categories as you study them through.

The whole key to this understanding and seeing Christ as our wisdom and you getting that. The book of Proverbs defines a number of things.

15. The first thing it defines in the first seven chapters, it tells you what a fool is. It lays it out for you. It will give you eight or nine things that a fool is.
16. The second thing it will define for you is what a wise man is. It does not leave it to your imagination. You do not have to wonder, "Am I a fool or am I a wise man?" It will tell you what a wise man does, and it will tell you what a fool does. All you have to do is read them and then line yourself up. "Do I do these things or do I not?" And then you just grade yourself. It is just that simple.
17. And then it defines for you what understanding is.
18. And then it shows you how to get the wisdom of God and the discernment and the understanding that goes with it.

I personally believe that the key to the whole book of getting understanding. Remember now, he goes through a lot of things in the first seven chapters. But chapter 2 is very important. I want you to turn to Proverbs chapter 2, and I want to walk you through this here very quickly so you can at least get this short outline down. If you want to get the wisdom of God and you want to get Christ as your wisdom, then here is the formula for it. This is found very early in chapter 2. He is defining everything. He is getting everything laid out for you. But then he is giving it to you here as we go.

*Proverbs 2:1-7*

*My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;*

*So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

*Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;*

*If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

*Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

*For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

While you have it right there, look down to verse 12. You see what you have in verse 12? You have the evil man. See him showing up down there? What does he say that this stuff is going to do? It is going to deliver you. They show up right down through there. Then you have verse 16. You have the strange woman. Everything is in there. Now this is what he is giving you. There are six things here. I am going to break it down for you very quickly so you can get this little outline in your Bible. This is a great devotion. It is a great sermon. I have preached it many, many years. But I basically call it the six things you need to put into your life to get the understanding of God in your life.

Look at verse 5. Once you do these things, and the things are listed in verse 1, 2, 3, and 4. Look at verse 5. "Then," and I might say "only then," after you do the things in the first four verses, "then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." Notice it did

not say "find the knowledge about God." It said "find the knowledge of God." In other words, when you do these things in the first four verses, you are going to find everything out that God knows. Not the knowledge about God, not the knowledge concerning God, the knowledge of God, the same knowledge God has, you will have. That is why this passage is so important.

Now let us look at it for a moment.

19. The first thing he says there in verse 1, he says, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words."

20. Then the second thing in verse 1, he says this, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee."

## II. The Mind of the Spirit: Ecclesiastes

Then we move into the book of Ecclesiastes. The book of Ecclesiastes, where Proverbs shows you God's mind, how God looks at things, the book of Ecclesiastes shows you the mind of the Spirit. The Spirit of God is probably, I have heard this all of my life, and it is so true, the Holy Spirit of God has been called the great unknown person of the Trinity. If you would ask the average Christian what was the greatest chapter in the New Testament to define the work of the Holy Spirit of God and what He does, they could not tell you. Most of God's people have no clue what the Holy Spirit of God does. He is some vague form that is part of the Trinity, but in reality, they have no understanding of what He really does and what He accomplishes. Well, the book of Ecclesiastes shows you the mind of the Spirit. I told you last week that the first time the Spirit of God shows up is in Genesis chapter 1.

*Genesis 1:2*

*And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

That is the first time you find the Spirit of God in your Bible. It says that it is moving, and yet down through the history of the Bible and the history of man, that Spirit of God has never stopped moving. It has a pattern. It has a flight plan. He filed that flight plan in Genesis, and anybody paying attention and understanding the book of Ecclesiastes can follow the Holy Spirit of God and understand His work and exactly what He does.

Now Christ is typified in the book of Ecclesiastes as a great concept, the end of all living. The New Testament verse for that is Colossians chapter 1 verses 16 and 17. I will start in verse 15.

*Colossians 1:15-17*

*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:*

*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

This book deals with a couple of themes along that line. The book basically lays out for you and for me what the Spirit of God is doing and shows you how it is in relevance to life on planet Earth. You are going to find that the first thing that is typified is the fact that Christ is the end of all living. That is one of the main themes, that without Him, life means absolutely nothing. Without Christ in your life, there is no purpose, there is no perspective, and there is certainly no passion. You are going to find that the great verse over there in Haggai chapter 1 verse 6 says:

*Haggai 1:6*

*Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*

That is a great verse. Have you ever tried to, everything you get, you put in a bag, and you are going through life, and you keep making money and putting it in, and you keep getting this and putting it in, and then you get down to the end of your journey, and you think, "Boy, I have got a lot," and then you realize when you look it up, the bag is empty. You had a hole in your bag, and everything you were throwing in that you thought you were keeping, you were really losing along the way someplace. So you get to the end of life, and you have nothing. You know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of a life without God. A life without God is life with a bag with holes. Everything you get is not enough. Everything that you have, you cannot keep, and you wind up at the end of life thinking you have everything. In reality, you have nothing. That is life without God. Why? Because Christ is the end of all living. Christ is the end of all living.

The next thing you find is that he talks about in the book of Ecclesiastes that everything on this planet is vanity. Let me give you a little understanding of the book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes is one of your wisdom books, and the reason why it is is because this: Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived, and what God allowed him to do was He allowed him to experience everything that man was going to come up with on this planet. He allowed him to experience everything that an unsaved man is going to be able to experience, and then at the end of the book, Solomon wrote his conclusion about it, and the book of Ecclesiastes forms for us an incredible concept. It not only shows that life without Christ is hopeless, it also shows us that just about everything in life that we put value in, it is vanity as far as God is concerned.

Ten is the number of the Gentiles in the Bible. The first Gentile Kingdom is found in Genesis chapter 10. Noah is the father of Gentiles, and his genealogies from Adam, he is the 10th, and you are going to find that the last Gentile Kingdom is represented by 10 toes of Daniel's image, and 10 is the number of Gentiles. The gospel going to the Gentiles is in Romans chapter 10, and all the way through that, you find a 10. So in this book, you find 10 vanities, and these are the things that we put so much stock in that we carry with us in life, but when we get to the end of that life, it is a bag with holes, and we have lost everything because Christ is the end of all living.

- In Ecclesiastes 2:13, it talks about wisdom. This will be worldly wisdom. This will be wisdom without God, and man goes his whole life, going to college and learning everything he can, and I am not against that at all. I am just telling you, a life without God and His wisdom, and all you get is worldly wisdom, it is vanity.

- In Ecclesiastes 2:19, it talks about the vanity of labor, working all your life, making a living for what? So you can die, and your kids can fight over it? Like I told you last week, you can have the greatest life in the world with all of the boats and all of the campers and all the cars and all the boats and everything that you want in this life, but when you die, that hearse does not have a trailer hitch on the back of it, and it is not going anywhere. But that is what we think. We do not realize that the reason why you have a job, the only reason you have a job if you are a saved person, is so that you can support yourself to do what God has called you to do and support the work where God has put you as your own missionary. So it is Ecclesiastes 2:19, it is the vanity of labor.
- In Ecclesiastes 2:26, it is the vanity of purpose. What is your purpose? What purpose do you serve? I know when you first get saved, you have got to work through the process, and you learn some things, and you grow. But it is through that that you find your purpose. God has something that He wants you to do. It is no accident that if you are in this church, and this church is your spiritual home, that God puts you here. You are here because God, this is your base of operation. This is where God has a purpose for you. You are not here haphazardly. You just did not accidentally walk in here. God structured the organizational tables of your life to bring you right where He wanted to be. Many times God brings people into churches like this to find out if they want to do right or not. They come here, and they say, "Nope, that is not for me." And they go find them someplace that they are happy. But they will never point back at God as the jubilant seed of Christ and say, "You did not put me in a place where I had all the tools that I needed to be what You wanted me to be." So there is a vanity of purpose.
- Ecclesiastes 4:4, there is a vanity of ambition.
- Ecclesiastes 7:6, this is a good one. There is a vanity of fun. Most people do not spell fun, F-U-N, they spell it S-I-N. There is a vanity in fun. But fun in a worldly sense. I like to have fun like everybody. You just have to look a long time to find somebody that does not enjoy life, people, and the things that we do more than I do. Nobody likes to have fun more than I do. I have fun in everything I do. I am looking terribly forward to going down to Joplin next week just because it is fun. We all get together down there. It is outside. It will probably be nice and cool, and it will be fun, and it will be a great time down there. Watch, it will probably rain and snow and a hurricane from a thing will come up. But anyway, that will be fun too. Fun things are fun. But there has to be a purpose behind it. Fun in a worldly sense is vanity.
- Then Ecclesiastes 4:16, the vanity of fame.
- Ecclesiastes 5:18, the vanity of money.
- Ecclesiastes 4:7, the vanity of selflessness.
- Ecclesiastes 6:9, the vanity of covetousness.
- Ecclesiastes 8:10, the vanity of reward.

The whole book is built on the great principle of Psalms chapter 39, verse 5, where it says:

*Psalms 39:5*

*Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.*

That is us. That is why if you do not get transformed from what you are to what God wants you to be, your life becomes absolutely worthless. These are the things that without God makes life like a bag with holes. The book shows you based on these ten vanities. You can probably see it now. This is why movie stars, multi-million dollar athletes, multi-millionaires, rock stars, people who put their trust in things, who have the great notoriety and have all these things. They have the fame, they have the fortune, they work hard, they have the ambition, they have fun, they have money, they never have enough, and they are always on it. That is why they are always in tragedy. Always in tragedy. You are going to find that great movie stars, their lives are always a wreck. They are always checking in a drug rehab someplace or somewhere. They are coming to the point where they just have to, some of them have, you look at them on TV, and they have it all together. They have to go to four psychiatrists in the week just to hold it all together. Most of them are alcoholics. Most of them are in a drug. Most of them have just tried to escape the reality because you think that, "Wow, if I had all of that, I would be happy." No, all of that without God is a bag with holes. That is the truth in reality. Money, fame, possession, just like cocaine and heroin. They are going to kill you, and they destroy you because Christ is the end of all living. Those things will never satisfy. Those things will never make you happy. They will never solve your problems. Nor will they fix anything. The Bible says they are altogether, all together, all of them, all ten of them, altogether, vanity. That is why the book of Ecclesiastes shows you from God's perspective what the world is.

### III. The Cycle of Life and Man's Devices

Then it shows you this: in this world system, God is doing something. I have found something over the years that, of course, this is no great revelation, but we do not think about it very much, that God is completely opposite of the world. I am going to show you how that, at the end of this book here, I will show you how that works. The book also teaches one of the great teachings that you will ever learn in life, if you learn it. You find 25 times the concept, "nothing new under the sun." The first time you find it is in chapter 1, verses 9 and 10. "Nothing new under the sun." I find that term 25 times. You know why it does that? Because it shows you that the book of Ecclesiastes is dealing with the things under the sun on planet Earth the way man tries to figure it all out. The book of Ecclesiastes does not have much in it about God on the surface. But underneath, it shows you the cycle by which everything runs out, man never figures out. Man never figures it out. The book teaches that all things run by a cycle, and that cycle repeats itself. Man just gets so occupied with his toys and all of the things in life that he never figures it out. The Bible says there is nothing new under the sun. It tells you that everything that somebody says, "Look, this is brand new," that it has already been a long time ago that people have just forgotten it. It is an old saying, an old axiom that is so true. You see it in our own country. You see it in every aspect of life. It goes like this, and it is very familiar with most of you because we say it a lot: "The only thing that man never learns from history is the fact that man never learns anything from history." Therefore, he is doomed and damned to repeat the mistakes of history,

and he has the problems that he has. You are going to find that this book teaches that all things run by a cycle, and that cycle repeats itself. But man can never get it.

In chapter 1, let me read this for you here. The book of Ecclesiastes shows this. It shows you basically that everything that man is doing, everything that man comes up with, every philosophy is put together to get you and me around what God is doing. But it is showing you that underneath, God is always doing something, but man never sees it. The cycle. Let me read Ecclesiastes 1:1-7 for you.

*Ecclesiastes 1:1-7*

*The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.*

*Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.*

*What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?*

*One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.*

*The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.*

*The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.*

*All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.*

You know what you have? He just showed you the cycle. In chapter 5, he told you the cycle of the solar system. "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose." Why did he call the sun "his"? Why does it say "his place where he arose"? I will tell you why, because the sun is a type of God the Father. He just showed you that the whole plan of God from where the sun arises and where the sun goes down is the whole cycle of history by what God is doing, what He is going to do. He rose one place, and He is going to set someplace else. The whole cycle of that day is a picture of life on planet Earth by what God does. Look at verse 6, "The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits." Wind in the Bible is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. He just showed you that the Holy Spirit of God operates on a circuit as a picture of the wind. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full." The Bible is likened to water in the Bible. He says there, he just gave you in verse 5, he showed you the cycle of God. In verse 6, he showed you the cycle of the Spirit. In verse 7, he showed you the cycle of the Word of God. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full." All truth runs in His book, and yet this book will never be full because it is the mind of God, and it is eternal. Just like all the rivers run into the sea, and the sea will never get full, all truth runs in His Bible, and it will never be filled up because it is eternal, an eternal book.

Ecclesiastes is a great book. It sets the cycle of not only the solar system, it shows you the cycle by which the Holy Spirit of God is going to work. It shows you Christ and all the aspects of it. In chapter 3, you are going to find the cycle of life on Earth under the sun. You find 28 issues. I

always thought that was instructive. One day I was thinking about that, and I came up with a concept that, "Wow, 28 issues." When we read them down through here, these are all the issues of life, and he said 28 issues under the sun. 28 issues. The issues of life on planet Earth, 28. The same time, the same amount of numbers that it takes the moon to go through its revolution as it goes around the Earth, 28 a month, solar month, 28 days, 28 days, life on planet Earth. These things are life, these 28 things are life on planet Earth.

- Ecclesiastes 3:2 says, "A time to be born."
- Ecclesiastes 7:2 says, "A time to die."
- Jeremiah 18:9 says, "A time to plant."
- Jeremiah 1:10 says, "Then there is a time to pluck up."
- Genesis 9:6 says, "There is a time to kill."
- Hosea 6:1 says, "There is a time to heal."
- Jeremiah 1:10 says, "There is a time to break down."
- Jeremiah 1:10 says, "There is a time to build up."
- Psalms 126:2 says, "There is a time to weep."
- Ecclesiastes 3:4 says, "There is a time to laugh."
- Luke 19:41 says, "There is a time to mourn."
- 2 Samuel 6:14 says, "There is a time to dance."
- 2 Kings 3:23 says, "There is a time to cast away stones."
- Genesis 31:46 says, "There is a time to gather stones."
- John 17:17 says, "There is a time to embrace."
- Proverbs 5:6-7 says, "There is a time to refrain from embracing."
- Revelation 3:11 says, "There is a time to keep."
- Isaiah 31:7 says, "There is a time to cast away."
- Matthew 27:51 says, "There is a time to rend."
- Proverbs 31 says, "There is a time to sew."
- Proverbs 26:4 says, "There is a time to keep silence."
- Proverbs 26:5 says, "There is a time to speak."
- Psalms 119:97 says, "There is a time to love."
- Psalms 119:113 says, "There is a time to hate."
- Revelation 19 says, "There is a time to war."
- Revelation 20 says, "There is a time to peace."

See that thing? Every issue that you are going to face in your life says there is a time to do it and a time not to do it. They are all laid out. Every one of those things, we could run through the Bible and run through your life and make the spiritual application. Every one of those references I gave you was a doctrinal issue on it. It shows you how it fits into the overall doctrine. If you notice, it starts out with a time to be born and a time of peace. That will be dealing with Christ's birth and then the millennial reign of Christ. That is how it works, doctrinally and in everything in between. You find the tribulation in there, you find the second coming in there, you find the millennium in there, you find it all in there. But in a practical sense, it is what you and I experience. It is what we go through. There is a time to be born, there is a time to die, there is a time to mourn, there is a time to weep, there is a time to laugh, there is a time to dance. They are

all referenced in the Bible that shows you the definition. Each one of these means something in the Bible that applies to the things that we have to deal with in life. They are the issues of life on planet Earth. A time for all of these and a time not to do these things. How do you know the difference between the two? You get the Bible principle that tells you when and when not to. The wisdom of God, understanding of God. These are the Bible principles that balance out your life.

Now the book keeps saying, "under the sun." So its primary emphasis will be on man, under the sun on planet Earth, and how he lives his life on planet Earth from a worldly standpoint. You are going to find that the one word that is absent in here is the word "understanding." You only find it in one chapter, Ecclesiastes 9:11, and it is talking about not in a biblical sense, but in a worldly sense. You do not find the word "understanding" in the book of Ecclesiastes from God's standpoint. You know why? Because this is the worldly perspective, and the worldly perspective may have facts, and it may have knowledge, it may have wisdom, but it has no understanding.

I will tell you another great thing.

*Proverbs 19:21*

*There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

Man is always going, this is where your philosophy comes back in. Man is always going to come up with devices, things that he is going to bring into his life or your life or this world that is going to take man away from the Bible. So it is no wonder that what Solomon does, he critiques all of that. In this book, there are 34 or 36 of the great philosophers' ideas. Most people never figure it out. You come through there, and you will find where Solomon goes through what we know as existentialism. He goes through pragmatism. He goes through socialism. He goes through communism. He goes through epicureanism. He goes through liberalism. He goes through fatalism. He goes through and defines in each chapter three or four at a time where he just lays out all the "ologies" or the devices of man that he comes up with to get man around believing the Bible, and it just does not work.

You are going to find, as I told you earlier, when it comes to philosophy, you are going to find three or four classes. The first ones you find were all the way back to the Greeks. The Greeks were noted to this day for their knowledge. The world was a Greek-speaking world when Christ showed up, and even though Greece had been gone now for 400 years, the impact of the Greeks and their wisdom to this day. When you go to a college, any college in this country, you will have what they call sororities. Those sororities are based or supposed to be places that are connected where a person can go and stay and are conducive to learning. Of course, every one of them is named after the Greeks: Alpha, Kappa, Beta, whatever you want to call it, it goes back to the Greeks because the Greeks were synonymous in the worldly sense with wisdom. The Greeks impacted the world so much that even in the Roman Empire, they sculptured like the Greeks. Even in the great Renaissance period, they sculptured like the Greeks. Everybody wanted and rivaled the Greeks because of their knowledge. Three Greek scholars that put out their philosophy were Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato. They formed the basis of the big three that formed the basis for philosophy that was going to carry it all down the line.

When you get into the early period of church history, like we talked about, then you find guys like Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Philo, from which comes philosophy. We find those guys, and we find the early ones, Thomas Aquinas, Augustine. Then it moves into the Europeans in about the 1600s and the 1700s. It comes to the point where it is called by guys like Will Durant, who wrote secular history, "the age of reason," "the age of enlightenment." All of the things that now man has come up in, the age of enlightenment, now we are enlightened in the age of reason where man now begins to reason about truth. Of course, you see that is knowledge and wisdom. When you have understanding, you know that the devil raised up these guys in the age of enlightenment and the age of reason to counter the great reformation that was taking place in Germany when the Word of God was going around the world. You see, that is understanding. You go to college, and the guy says, "Oh, this was a great time when man was stepping forth, and man was coming about, and we see it in music. We see it in art, we see it in sculpture, and now we see it in the literary. Men were writing, they were beginning to reason about themselves, they were beginning to look at all the great depths of who they were, and this was the age of enlightenment and the age of reason." No, it was God's Spirit going around the world to win the world to Christ, and the devil was bringing up the counter to it. God versus man, that is called understanding.

The great European minds were Thomas Hobbes, George Berkeley, from which in California we have Berkeley University. David Hume, Christian Wolff, Nietzsche. Nietzsche was the one that said God was dead. He came up with that great conclusion. It was Nietzsche who around the 1800s came up with a great context. This is where the age of enlightenment, the age of reason does. Nietzsche came up with the idea when he announces his great thought on it, the whole world just clapped and applauded. He got up, and he said, he made a great statement, "I have come to the conclusion after all my studies and reasoning in man that God is dead." The world went ballistic because they thought, "Wow, what a great man, God is dead." So, "I guess who will take over God? Oh, I know I will." That is human nature. God was dead, so you are going to become God now. That is how the thing was. About six months after Nietzsche died, they went by here to put some flowers on his grave, and Nietzsche came up with the idea that God was dead. Somebody had wrote on his tombstone, "Nietzsche is dead. God is not." You just know it was some Bible-believing Christian over there that just had an axe to grind. So they are going down there, and he all around and said, "God is dead, Nietzsche." On his tombstone, the old boy wrote, "Nietzsche is dead. God is not." And he was dead. So those are the great European minds, an endless mass of garbage to take away from the truth of God's Word. The Bible says it is all vanity.

#### IV. Conclusion: Fear God and Keep His Commandments

The whole book of Ecclesiastes needs to be viewed in the light of the last chapter in verses 13 and 14. Remember I told you what Solomon did? He came to the point where God allowed him to go through every "ology" that man would come up with. Everything that man put on a table to take away from God. Underneath it, church, it shows you the cycle by which all life goes. It shows you that life without God is a bag with holes. It is vanity. It lays out everything that man does to try to get around God without God under the sun, and it always ends in a disaster. At the

end of the book, Solomon writes his great conclusion in chapter 12 verses 13 and 14 when he says this:

*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

That was the end of the book of Ecclesiastes. "Hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments." It is the whole duty of man because God is going to bring every work. God is going to bring into judgment every work and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. In other words, at the end of the day, no matter what man does, what man tries to do to counterfeit God, God is still on the throne, and God is running by a cycle. That sun started in the east, and it sets in the west. So you are going to find that every move in the Bible that the Holy Spirit of God goes is from east to west. You are going to find that the Spirit of God started in Genesis and has been moving down through history, and you should know right where the Spirit of God is right now and what He is doing. It will answer why there are no more great revivals in America. Then "all the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full." God gave you the greatest book that you could ever have that is eternal, and it is inexhaustible, innocent, and unsearchable. According to the Bible, according to the world, two different aspects. Because he says, "under the sun." Of course, you watch tonight at six o'clock news, it will be news, something new, Newsweek, something new. Yet the Bible says there is nothing new under the sun.

You see, the difference between when God looks at things and man looks at things, man looks at all the things on this planet that cannot satisfy, cannot solve problems, cannot make anybody happy, and he thinks that is where life is at. The truth of the matter is, the real happiness and the real things that God is not the old things. No, it is the new things. Somebody said one time, "That which is called new is not true. And that which is true is not new." What is really new is not under the sun, it is above the sun. It starts with a new birth. That is new. Because the old one is no good anymore. Then it goes with a new Jerusalem. Because the one on Earth will not be any good anymore. Then it goes to a new heavens because the old one has to be purged out. Then it goes to a new Earth because this Earth is corrupted. Then God gives a new covenant, which puts a new song in my heart, which gives me a new nature to walk with God. What is really new, that is really real, is above the sun. What is under the sun only gives the illusion of being new.

That is the book of Ecclesiastes and the book of Proverbs. Next week, we are going to look at probably as far as you are concerned and I am concerned.