

THE MEANINGLESS LIFE

Ecclesiastes 1.1-18 // April 28, 2019

AN INTRODUCTION

- **Author:** Officially anonymous, most likely King Solomon, David's son and heir to the throne after him. Many descriptions of his life match that of Solomon's. **1 Kings 4.29-34, also see 11.1-25)**
- **Date:** Somewhere around 935 BC.
- **Theme:** Reflections on life after living every way possible, and considering the end result and futility of it.

The Preacher begins with a dismal view of life, and admits that having this deeper insight does not change anything (**v. 15**) and actually can make you more sorrowful (**v. 18**). To read these thoughts in God's Word can be challenging, but this style of writing is meant to challenge and deepen our wisdom.

Theology is like wrestling an octopus.
Just when you think you have all the tentacles under control,
there is one waving at you in the air.

THE FLEETING NATURE OF LIFE

- **Vanity:** Mentioned 38 times; means vapor, breath, breeze. *Not necessarily*, but often means empty arrogance and meaninglessness.
- **Wisdom:** Mentioned 53 times, 23 just in this first section.
- **Death:** Mentioned 21 times.
- **Under the Sun:** Mentioned 33 times. A phrase used to describe physical life as we see and experience it. God, however, does not exist and function solely "under the sun," but His ways and thoughts are above.

Despite the shocking subject matter, this writing is not meant to depress. It is meant to be read or listened to in one sitting, like a sermon, and given the whole scope, it aims to give us the right perspective.

MAKING THE MEANINGLESS MEANINGFUL

All of what the Preacher writes about our human existence is true for every single one of us. Except for Jesus.

Ecclesiastes 12.13, 14 // 1 Corinthians 16.58

Our work under the sun is empty and meaningless.
Our work unto and through the Son is rich and meaningful.

Michael Eaton: Ecclesiastes defends the life of faith in a generous God by pointing to the grimness of the alternative.
Jeff Meyers: True wisdom is to fear God and keep his commandments, to receive and use the gifts of God with joy and gratitude.
Sid Greidanus: Fear God in order to turn a vain empty life into a meaningful life which will enjoy God's gifts.

NOTES:

This Week's Scripture to Memorize:

Isaiah 1:18

Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.

ARE YOU NEW HERE?

WELCOME TO LIFE MISSION!

We'd love for you to **fill out a Connection Card** so we can welcome you and answer any questions you may have. You can drop it in the offering basket during the service or take it to one of our teammates at the **Connection Booth** outside. Feel free to grab some coffee and snacks in the courtyard and hang out. We hope you'll **join us next Sunday** and consider making us your church family.

WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS?

Our childrens' ministry, which we call **Kids on Mission**, has classes for **newborns - 5th grade**. We have a great team of volunteers who have all been screened with background checks for extra security. Each week your child will get to **worship** with their class, followed by an **age-appropriate lesson** that points them towards Jesus and helps root them in the Word of God.

Visit our website to read more about the vision of Kids on Mission and a walkthrough of our curriculum. If you have any questions, email **Amber Willis at amber@lifemission.tv**

JUNIOR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL

Our **6th - 8th graders** begin each Sunday by **worshipping with the adults** and then head to their classroom with their teacher and classmates for the rest of service. Visit our website to read more about our junior high ministry and a walkthrough of our curriculum.

Our **9th-12th graders stay in the service** with the adults because we believe that it is crucial for them to not "graduate the faith" when they graduate high school.

For more information about our Junior High & High School ministries, email **Tyler Willis at tyler@lifemission.tv**.

Contact Us

Jobey McGinty

Pastor, Preaching & Vision
jobey@lifemission.tv

Eric Price

Pastor, Community & Discipleship
eric@lifemission.tv

Matt Piro

Worship Leader
matt@lifemission.tv

Amber Willis

Kids on Mission
amber@lifemission.tv

Tyler Willis

Student Ministries
tyler@lifemission.tv

Brian Galloway

Administration
brian@lifemission.tv

Rachel Jobin

Connection Team
rachel@lifemission.tv

Sherry Henry

Finances
sherry@lifemission.tv

CALL OR TEXT:
760-975-4525

MAILING ADDRESS:
Life Mission Church
420 Twin Oaks Valley Rd., #908
San Marcos, CA 92079

COMMUNITY GROUP HOMEWORK

Before group starts, who can share the **Memory Verse**?

Read **Ecclesiastes 1.1-18**. What stands out in this passage, and what stuck out to you most from the sermon on Sunday?

Preaching the Gospel to Yourself

At first glance, this book seems like it wants us to preach the bad news to ourselves. But how do these discouraging insights actually help us to be reminded and excited about the Good News?

Repent and Ask for Provision

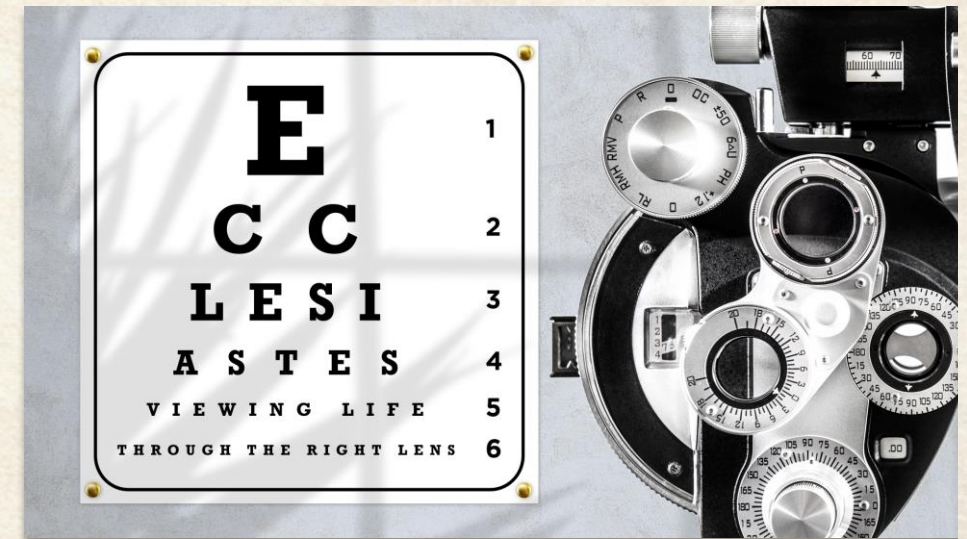
No doubt every single one of us deals with discouragement, cynicism, and apathy. In what ways do you find yourself thinking similarly to the Preacher? Do you live and dwell there, or do you find ways to get past it and rest in the "capital T" Truth? What might you ask God for to help you to get past the lure of sorrow, self-pity, and discouragement?

Your Life Mission

By the end, the Preacher is clear that all of our toil, if done unto ourselves, is truly meaningless. However, when our lives are lived in light of God, and lived unto God, those same things have great meaning, eternal consequence, and give us great reason for joy and celebration. What mundane or "ordinary" parts of life might God want you to consider being more diligent in using for Him?

What conversations or social settings with non-believers are coming up that you could use prayer for? Or which people in your life do you think you should reach out to for coffee or to hang out? How can your group be praying for the people in your life that you love and care for?

End the evening in a time of prayer, praying through the theme of the night using the **P.R.A.Y.** model with your group. Pray for these people you have mentioned and for your heart and plan as you pursue them in love. Make sure to end your time of prayer **Yielding with Thanksgiving** for God's sovereignty and plan for your life.



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SUNDAYS AT 10AM

Life Mission Church Meets at Classical Academy High School
207 E Pennsylvania Ave, Escondido 92025

GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT US ONLINE

LIFEMISSIONCHURCH.COM

