

## Passage Study Guide - Ecclesiastes 12:8-12:14

Series: Ecclesiastes



### Part 1: Getting to the Big Idea

*Questions get to the Big Idea of the passage*

1. Read 12:9-10. How does the point of view change in the book? Is the Preacher viewed positively or negatively?
2. The narrator says that the wisdom in Ecclesiastes is like “goads and nails” given by God the “Shepherd” (11:1). What is the intended purpose of the Preacher’s wisdom?
3. Consider the Preacher’s conclusions throughout the book of Ecclesiastes:
  - a) Life is incomprehensible, unpredictable and fleeting
  - b) Wisdom apart God is powerless in the face of brokenness and death
  - c) Life is a gift given by God that we should enjoy to the fullHow do the Preacher’s above conclusions throughout the book show us that true wisdom is to “fear God and keep his commandments?”
4. Optional activity to conclude Ecclesiastes: In pairs or small groups, create a graphic or mind map that connects together the following key ideas from Ecclesiastes – vanity, wisdom, toil, under the sun, life, death, enjoyment, God.

### Part 2: Takeaways & Applications

*Applying the passage to our lives to grow in Christlikeness*

#### Fallen Condition Questions

*Considering our idols and temptations; how we are both sinners and sufferers*

1. Throughout the book, vanity takes on different shades of meaning: incomprehensible, futility, absurdity, and fleeting. Consider these different meanings of vanity and the different areas of our lives – work, relationships, health, possessions or suffering. Where can we most strongly locate a sense of vanity? (Hint: It might be helpful to consider which area you find yourself grumbling or complaining about the most).
2. Ecclesiastes says that making meaning for ourselves and pursuing anything apart from God leads to vanity (v12). How does the way we approach what we identified above create for ourselves a sense of restlessness and vanity?

#### Personal Renewal Questions

*Considering how we can be renewed and transformed in Christlikeness*

3. The book's conclusive exhortation is for us to "fear God and keep His commandments." How does the person and work of Jesus reveal to us that "fearing God and keeping his commandments" is the true wisdom for this life?

4. How does fearing God change the way we view the vanity and felt restlessness we've identified in our lives above?

### **Shaping Church Culture Questions**

*Considering how the gospel shapes and permeates the culture within our community*

5. As we conclude this book, take some time to reflect on and share what God has been impressing on your heart from studying the book of Ecclesiastes. Commit to God in prayer for what we have learnt through this series.