

Life has different chapters

How would you describe your current chapter of life?

What is a good way to live through the whole journey?

Especially when "the bottom drops out"



1

For who knows **what is good for a person in life**, during the **few and meaningless days** they pass through like a shadow? Who can tell them what will happen under the sun after they are gone?

Ecclesiastes 6:12

**LORD, teach us how to live
Especially in the storms...**



2

Our Few & Meaningless Days Ecclesiastes 7:1-8:1

ref.ly/Ec7;niv



3

What is good for a person in life?

7:1-12: To understand life (or anything)
you have to understand the whole thing

The end tells us more than the beginning
Trouble teaches us more than pleasure

7:13-22: Recognize human limits and
God's limitlessness: **goodness, wisdom, power**

7:23-8:1: **Wisdom & goodness can't rescue us:**

No one is fully wise or good

Wisdom & goodness are never enough

4

Ecclesiastes 7:1-12

To understand life (or anything)
you have to understand the whole thing

The end tells us more than the beginning

Trouble teaches us more than pleasure

5

Ecclesiastes 7:1-12

A good name is better than fine perfume,
and the day of death better than the day of birth.

² It is better to go to a house of mourning
than to go to a house of feasting,
for death is the destiny of everyone;
the living should take this to heart.

³ Frustration is better than laughter,
because a sad face is good for the heart.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.

⁵ It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person
than to listen to the song of fools.

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⁶ Like the crackling of thorns under the pot,
so is the laughter of fools.
This too is meaningless.

⁷ Extortion turns a wise person into a fool,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸ The end of a matter is better than its beginning,
and patience is better than pride.

⁹ Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit,
for anger resides in the lap of fools.

¹⁰ Do not say,
"Why were the old days better than these?"
For it is not wise to ask such questions.

7

¹¹ Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing
and benefits those who see the sun.

¹² Wisdom is a shelter
as money is a shelter,
but the advantage of knowledge is this:
Wisdom preserves those who have it.

**To understand life (or anything)
you have to understand the whole thing**

The end tells us more than the beginning

Trouble teaches us more than pleasure

8

There are times that are...
pleasant and pretty easy to
manage
especially at the beginning



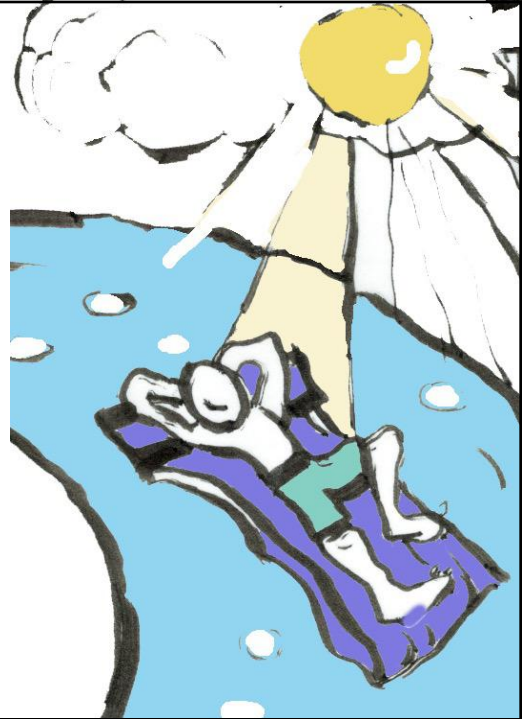
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There are times that are...
frightening and
overwhelming



10

There are times that are...
filled with pleasure and ease



11

There are times that are...
storms and chaos



12

And then the end comes



13

No one can see around
the next corner

An approach to life is only helpful
if it works in all parts of life

Unless we have a solid solution
to death, we don't have have
a solid solution for life



14

Ecclesiastes 7:13-22

Recognize human limits and God's limitlessness:

- Goodness
- Wisdom
- Power

15

Ecclesiastes 7:13-22

¹³ Consider what God has done:

Who can straighten

what he has made crooked? → **a mystery**

¹⁴ When times are good, be happy;

but when times are bad, consider this:

God has made the one

as well as the other.

Therefore, no one can discover

anything about their future.

16

15 In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these:

the righteous perishing in their righteousness,
and the wicked living long in their wickedness.

16 Do not be overrighteous, **Don't trust in righteousness or wisdom**
neither be overwise—
why destroy yourself?

17 Do not be overwicked, **Don't give up on righteousness or wisdom**
and do not be a fool—
why die before your time?

18 It is good to grasp the one **these two**
and not let go of the other.
Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.

17

19 Wisdom makes one wise person more powerful than ten rulers in a city.

20 Indeed, there is **no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins.**

21 Do not pay attention to every word people say, or you may hear your servant cursing you—

22 for you know in your heart that many times you yourself have cursed others.

Recognize human limits:

Recognize God's limitlessness:

Goodness

Wisdom

Power

18

Ecclesiastes 7:23-8:1

Wisdom & goodness can't rescue us:

- No one is fully wise or good
- Wisdom & goodness are never enough

19

Ecclesiastes 7:23-8:1

²³ All this I tested by wisdom and I said,
 "I am determined to be wise"—
 but **this was beyond me.**

²⁴ Whatever exists is far off and most profound—
 who can discover it?

²⁵ So I turned my mind to understand,
 to investigate and to search out wisdom
 and the scheme of things
 and to understand the stupidity of wickedness
 and the madness of folly.

20

²⁶ I find more bitter than death
the woman who is a snare,
whose heart is a trap
and whose hands are chains.

The man who pleases God will escape her,
but the sinner she will ensnare.

**Every person has their own
inescapable trap and chains**

Only God can rescue us

21

²⁷ “Look,” says the Teacher,
“this is what I have discovered:
“Adding one thing to another to discover
the scheme of things—

²⁸ while I was still searching but not finding—
I found one upright man among a thousand,
but not one upright woman among them all.

²⁹ This only have I found:

God created mankind upright,
but they have gone in search of many schemes.”

Profound perspective on humanity

22

8:1 Who is like the wise?
Who knows the explanation of things?
A person's wisdom brightens their face
and changes its hard appearance.

Wisdom & goodness can't rescue us:

- **No one is fully wise or good**
- **Wisdom & goodness are never enough**

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The Big Idea

Humanity can't solve humanity's trouble
Only God can bring true good

Everything human is a mixture of good and bad
And it all comes to an end

24

We imagine that humanity is responsible for the stage of the river we're in

Rather:
 Humanity contributes
 But life is in the hands of God

**Once sin entered the world
 our only true hope is God!**



sin = anything that is less than perfectly good

25

The Big Idea

Humanity can't solve humanity's trouble
 Only God can bring true good

26

Application

Don't overestimate the importance of human wisdom or goodness

- Be humble
Our stumbles and faults,
and our good works,
don't fundamentally change things
- Be calm
Others' stumbles and faults,
and their good works,
don't fundamentally change things



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Application

Don't overestimate the importance of human wisdom or goodness

Don't underestimate the importance of human wisdom or goodness

- Pursue holiness and goodness
- Hold people accountable



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Application

Don't overestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness
Don't underestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness



Learn from times of trouble by God's hand

- **"The Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son"**
Hebrews 12:6
- **Not anything "in all creation, will be able to separate
us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our
Lord."**
Romans 8:39

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Application

Don't overestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness
Don't underestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness
Learn from times of trouble by God's hand
**Fear God: He matters more than
anything or anyone else**

30

This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. **It is the Lord who judges me.**

1 Corinthians 4:1-4

31

Unless the Lord builds the house,
the builders **labor in vain.**
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
the guards **stand watch in vain.**
In vain you rise early
and stay up late,
toiling for food to eat—
for he grants sleep to those he loves.

Psalm 127:1-2

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Application

Don't overestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness

Don't underestimate the importance
of human wisdom or goodness

Learn from times of trouble by God's hand

**Fear God: He matters more than
anything or anyone else**

- His view matters most: 1 Corinthians 4:1-4
- His action matters most: Psalm 127:1-2

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The Big Idea

Humanity can't solve humanity's trouble

Only God can bring true good

And He does through Jesus Christ!

34

The Son of God in human form changes everything

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth.**

No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, **has made him known.**

John 1:14, 18

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Life has different chapters

What is a good way to live through the whole journey?

➤ *Especially in storms*

Put our hope in Jesus Christ

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" 2 Corinthians 5:17



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