

Our Few & Meaningless Days

Ecclesiastes 7:1-8:1



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”

“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...

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

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 a solid solution for life

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

Don't trust in righteousness or wisdom

Don't give up on righteousness or wisdom

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

No one is fully wise or good

Every person has their own inescapable trap and chains

Only God can rescue us

Wisdom & goodness are never enough

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

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!

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

Don't underestimate the importance of human wisdom or goodness

Pursue holiness and goodness

Hold people accountable

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



Fear God: He matters more than anything or anyone else

His view matters most: 1 Corinthians 4:1-4

“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.**”

His action matters most: Psalm 127:1-2

“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.”

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

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

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. How would you describe your chapter of life today? What has brought about this chapter?
2. In what ways do you tend to OVERestimate the importance of human wisdom and goodness?
3. In what ways do you tend to UNDERestimate the importance of human wisdom and goodness?
4. What is a time when God used trouble for good in your life?
5. What does it look like for you to fear God, that is, to recognize that He matters more than anything or anyone else?

Conversation Starters

How would you describe your chapter of life today?

What has brought about this chapter?