

Sermon Outline

“MEANINGLESS, MEANINGLESS, UTTERLY MEANINGLESS, EVERYTHING IS MEANINGLESS” | Geoff Lin

Bible Reading: Ecc 1:1-18; 2:17-26

Ecc 1:2 “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

1. Who wrote Ecclesiastes?

Ecc 1:1 The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem:

- “the Teacher” vs “the narrator” (1:1-11; 7:27; 12:8-14)

2. What’s the meaning of “meaningless”?

- “hevel” (Heb) = “meaningless” (NIV) = “vanity” (ESV) = “futility” (HCSB) = “useless” (GNT)

- “fleeting” or “fading” or “passing away”

- 3 interpretive keys in Ecclesiastes:

- the passage of time (1:3-11)
- the inevitability of death (11:7-12:9)
- the reality of judgment (12:9-14)

i. 4 observations about life (against the passage of time)

- Planet Earth keeps turning, unaffected by humankind (vv3-7)
- You never finish your to-do list (v8)
- There is nothing “new” under the sun (vv9-10)
- Everyone will be forgotten (v11)

ii. 4 ways we’re all “chasing after the wind” (1:12-2:26)

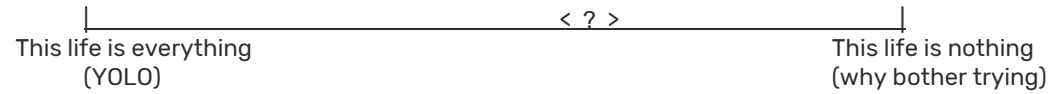
Ecc 1:14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

- Wisdom is meaningless (1:12-18)
- Pleasure is meaningless (2:1-11)
- Wisdom and folly are meaningless (2:12-16)
- Toil is meaningless (2:17-26)

3. Where is God in all this?

- “meaningless” = fleeting/fading/passing away ≠ futile/pointless/worthless

Ecc 12:13 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.



Q. How can we live with confident optimism?

Ecc 1:12 I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! 14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Ecc 2:24 A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God. 25 for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment? 26 To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

- “this world in its present form is passing away” (1 Cor 7:31)
- “treasures on earth” vs “treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:19-21)
- Deep Dive (730-9pm, Thu 14 Nov)

1 Tim 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

For discussion: what treasure are you storing up for the coming age?

“Chasing after the wind”	
1. Meaningless, meaningless, utterly meaningless, everything is meaningless	1:1-2:26
2. A time for everything	3:1-4:16
3. Draw near to God ...	5:1-6:12
4. Better to go to a funeral than a wedding	7:1-8:1
5. Where can I find a wise king?	8:2-17
6. Are you ready to meet your maker and your judge?	9:1-12:14