

Sermon Outline

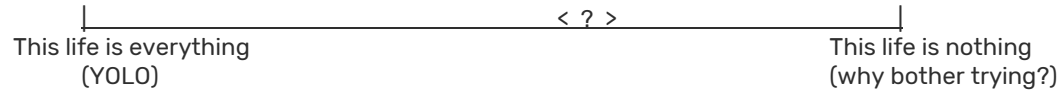
“DRAW NEAR TO GOD” | Geoff Lin

Bible Reading: Ecc 5:1-20

1. The story so far ...

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

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



Mt 6:19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Deep Dive (Nov 14)

- 2 diagnostic questions: (i) your diary/to-do list
(ii) your wallet/bank account

Ecc 1:16 I said to myself, “Look, I have increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge.” 17 Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind.

2. Speak less, listen more [to God] (5:1-7)

i. going to “the house of God”

ii. “guard your steps”

iii. “go near to listen”

2 practical suggestions

Jas 4:13 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

3. Case study: why am I so busy (how do we use our limited time)?

(Adapted from Tim Chester, *The Busy Christian’s Guide to Busyness* (2006))

A1. Because I’m trying to make the most of what this life has to offer

What we (rightly) think ...	What we need to hear ...
1 Tim 4:4 For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.	1 Pet 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

A2. Because I worry about having enough to survive

What we (rightly) think ...	What we need to hear ...
2 The 3:10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” 11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.	Mt 6:25 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

A3. Because I feel like I’m indispensable

What we (rightly) think ...	What we need to hear ...
Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.	Is 55:10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

A4. Because I care too much about what other people think about me

What we (rightly) think ...	What we need to hear ...
1 Pet 2:12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.	1 The 2:4 ... We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed--God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.

A5. Because I think God will be more pleased with me if I’m “successful”

What we (rightly) think ...	What we need to hear ...
Mt 25:21 His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”	1 Cor 3:6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.

For discussion: why are YOU so busy? Which of these reasons speaks to you? Are there other reasons? What truth from God’s Word might cause you to change?