

When Our Labors Seem Useless

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[0 : 0 0] know that's one of those songs when I was a kid that I didn't get I just didn't you know it was an oldie then and I'm an oldie so it's really oldie um sorry because I didn't get it because Christ wasn't in my heart I didn't understand that I didn't know what that meant it just seemed like you know that's one of the songs we sing in church um does he live in your heart you know what that do you know that he lives you haven't seen his risen body but you know that he lived he is risen all right well let's go to Easter message turn to the book of Ecclesiastes yes Ecclesiastes you will find it you can find Psalms right you open up to the middle you find the Psalms Psalms is pretty big so you open the middle you buy we get Psalms keep going to the right you get to Proverbs and after Proverbs you'll find Ecclesiastes right before the Song of Solomon which I'm sure you all know where that is so Ecclesiastes Ecclesiastes why Ecclesiastes we just finished a mammoth study in the book of Revelation and saw the incredible applications that go there so now we go to Ecclesiastes why do we do that well um it is my desire our desire to preach the whole counsel of God not just preach my favorite books not just preach my favorite themes to preach the whole counsel keeps me honest and keeps us honest to hear all of scripture when I first became a pastor I preached exclusively from the New Testament because that's the word to Christians right well then lo and behold I found out that when the apostles preached and when Jesus preached they didn't preach from the New Testament because it didn't exist they preached from the Old Testament they preached from the Psalms they preached from Ecclesiastes they preached from Moses and the prophets etc etc so I've been on a journey for many years now since I've come here to flip-flop so we preach New Testament then we go back to the Old Testament then we go back to the New Testament we go back to the Old Testament so we're going back and forth to preach the whole counsel but preaching the whole counsel doesn't just mean going back and forth the Old Testament New Testament it means switching literature too so it's it's easier to preach the stories and the narratives and the gospels it's harder to preach revelation it's harder to preach uh some of Paul um it's harder to preach Ecclesiastes what in the world so uh I haven't done wisdom literature for quite a while I've

I keep track of what I've done and and and uh we've been in prophecy we've been in poetry we've been in we we were in Isaiah we were in Ruth we were in um uh Exodus we've been in where were we just lately Psalms huh no but I mean the Old Testament yeah I haven't forgotten revelation yet I got give me another week okay but anyway so we're back but I haven't been in wisdom literature for a long time okay it's a little tricky so that's what we're doing I believe God has committed us to that kind of pattern so that really just left Ecclesiastes because we've done Proverbs before if some of you were here way back in 06 or so you might remember that it's been that long since we've done wisdom so here we are Ecclesiastes so I struggled with that Lord okay Lord that's what we're doing that's what we're doing okay okay okay reading through it uh have you read how many have read through Ecclesiastes have you read the Ecclesiastes not just kind of the popular you know not just the time to live and a time to the but just the you know okay what's the message you come away first reading you think okay here's his message life is hard and then you die that's it that's pretty much what you take it's like yeah thank you very much happy Easter so but it's deeper than that it's not quite that glum but it is valuable this is a book that has been universally accepted as as canonical it is part of the Old Testament canon that the Jews have always accepted some have doubted but never rejected it it's universally accepted by

Jews and Christians as God's authoritative word okay so others have struggled with it but found tremendous value in it so all that to say here we are in Ecclesiastes how do we do why why didn't my wife even ask me are you pausing for Easter right you're not going to go to Ecclesiastes yet for Easter because we need an Easter message so at least you got a break here so you can do something and I said everything everything relates to Easter even Ecclesiastes it's kind of an off quote from one of her favorite movies which is called Mom who said everything everything comes from a cow come to that wisdom you get from your mother right so everything relates to Easter okay so let me show you how so first let's read the text we're just going to look today at the first 11 verses in chapter 1

I just want to introduce the book with this because that is the purpose of these first 11 verses to kind of set the theme and set the ground for what's ahead okay I'm going to read that and then we're going to pray and then we're going to dig in so if you're able please stand and read from as I read from Ecclesiastes chapter 1 verse 1 through 11 the words of the preacher the son of David king in Jerusalem vanity vanity of vanities says the preacher vanity of vanities all is vanity what does a man gain by all the toil that he toils under the sun a generation goes and a generation comes but the earth remains forever the sun rises the sun goes down and hastens to its place where it rises the wind blows to the south and it goes around to the north around and around goes the wind and on its circuits the wind returns the streams run to the sea but the sea is not full to the place where the streams flow there they flow again all things are full of weariness a man cannot utter it the eyes not satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing what has been is what will be and what has been done is what will be done and there is nothing new under the sun is there a thing of which it is said see this is new it has been already in the ages before us there is no remembrance of former things nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after happy

Easter let us pray Father show us show us your truth in your word reveal to us Lord the hope that we have because Christ has risen from the dead this we pray in Christ's name amen please be seated sociologist Jonathan Kozel met Mrs.

[8 : 37] Washington in the South Bronx where she and her young son David were living at a homeless hotel the mother and child lived in a first floor room with three steel locks on their door Mrs.

Washington was dying and each time the doctor came for a visit she was visibly weaker but oh the story she could tell about life on the underside of urban America stories about poverty and injustice violence and drugs Mrs.

Washington told Kozel about children in her building born with AIDS and about the 12 year old at the bus stop who was hit by a stray gun fire and paralyzed she told him about the physical abuse that she herself had suffered from Mr.

Washington and about all the difficulties poor people had in getting medical care in the city but Mrs.

Washington and her son also talked about spiritual things young David said I wonder how powerful God is he must be wise and powerful to make the animals and trees and give them organs and a brain to build complex machineries but he doesn't seem powerful enough to stop the evil on earth and to change the hearts of people on a subsequent visit the doctor looked down at Mrs.

[10 : 23] Washington's bed and saw her Bible there open next to her on the quilt so the sociologist asked her what part she liked to read in the Bible immediately she said Ecclesiastes Ecclesiastes!

she said if you want to know what's happening these days it's all right there if Ecclesiastes!

could help Mrs. Washington face her challenges as a single mother living in a homeless hotel in the Bronx and perhaps Ecclesiastes could teach us a thing or two Mrs.

Washington was poor dying homeless she faced life realistically but she also read Ecclesiastes for understanding her times and for hope for hope so this is Easter what is our message what is Easter message what are we expecting to hear on Easter what does Easter tell us he's risen okay he's risen but what what does that tell us why is that good for us there's hope hope hope meaning it's not pointless there's more to life than here and we know because God Jesus died he bore our sins on the cross so he died and paid that price but the resurrection shows us that God accepted that sacrifice that that sacrifice was good that it actually did what he intended it to do so raising him up exalting him shows that he accomplished forgiveness and payment and transfer it's an exchange remember we give him all our sins he takes all our sins but then he gives back to us his righteousness his holiness his cleansing so that we have his standing before the father we are saints we are holy don't you feel holy no we don't feel it but that's what he says you are so do we believe it no I don't feel it

I haven't earned it but it's a gift not only my forgiveness but my holiness I'm a holy person that's my identity so he's given us all of that he's freed us from our sins from our shame and guilt that's a great message so we live in the real world because after Easter Sunday comes what Monday Monday back to life back to reality back to drudgery back to okay work 8-5 or whatever you work in my case you know Sunday mornings no those preachers got to get only work half a day so but we go back to you know gotta make a living gotta pay the rent whatever whatever whatever however maybe you love your job but back to reality so how now so Sunday

[14 : 05] I learn I remember okay yeah yeah yeah meaning beyond I have hope great I need that reminder but then on Monday morning I gotta live real life I gotta do the issues I gotta deal with the issues and the struggles and wrestle with the problems and the questions and the people and etc etc etc and I lose that focus how do I find meaning in that how do I find meaning in the regular week how do I find meaning now not just okay it comes later how do I find meaning now okay so that's what we're seeking to answer Ecclesiastes gives us a perspective in which to view life's most difficult questions so the first question I want to answer is why Ecclesiastes besides the fact that yeah okay we're going New Testament Old Testament gotcha okay gotcha now we gotta do wisdom letter okay gotcha so we're stuck with Ecclesiastes but if you're taking a kind of okay got it okay make it quick though through Ecclesiastes!

so but why is Ecclesiastes part of the canon why is it valuable what is it that it really has to offer us right so here it wrestles with life's hardest questions it's very realistic and very honest it's very realistic very honest that's why a lady dying in the Bronx can relate to it yes that's what life is really like so it's and it asks the question is there any point to it all is there any meaning in all of this why are we suffering does God care ask all the hardest questions in life does it pull any punches and so by our in encountering this it forces us to evaluate our own worldview because this presents to us a worldview so evaluate now our worldview is that how

I see life is he right is this true have I understood him right and do I agree with him or is there something more okay so we all get when somebody says yeah you know that's life life is hard and then you die that's it and sometimes we and even believers we say yeah yeah I got it yeah Mondays Fridays so Ecclesiastes is not satisfied with the easy answers doesn't give you the Sunday school answer gives you a real struggle with the difficult issues what really satisfies what's really lasting got it that I can eat drink and be married because tomorrow you die got it if there's nothing beyond this world then that's really the realistic view even Paul admits that right

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 hey if there's no resurrection if Jesus didn't raise from the dead what's the point right he even admits if there's no resurrection if we have no hope beyond this life then let's eat and drink and be married because tomorrow I die this is it is it it's a rational view so what is there any but so if I if all I got is eat drink and be merry is there anything in that eating drinking and being merry that satisfies if that's all it is is there anything really meaningful there's certainly temporary pleasure we seek we seek pleasure possessions buy a new car love it it's great isn't it month later how's your new car it's okay three months later how's your new car yeah I don't know

I like it you were so excited yeah yes no I like it I got my truck a year ago it's not new but new to me yeah it's red got a scratch some more scratches I still like it it's not as exciting anymore novelty wears off so where's real meaning in life yeah things can give us temporary pleasure things can give us temporary fulfillment but what really lasts because when we do those things we realize yeah it kind of fades doesn't it kind of fades and it's not there anymore and now if you're a Christian where's your passion for Christ this isn't a shame message okay just asking a real question have you had passion for Christ in your past have you been real excited about Jesus have you been real excited about your faith what happens when that fades because it does where's the meaning now when it's not exciting well pastor don't misunderstand that I still believe it

[19 : 22] I know it's still it's still at the end of the day my great hope yeah where's your passion I don't know what do I do it's asking this kind of question too okay all right so we're going to see in this book that the preacher the guy named the preacher here is going to search through everything he's going to search every common place for fulfillment he's going to try wealth he's going to try pleasure he's going to try knowledge he's going to try accomplishments he's going to try power at the end of all of them and he does all of them at the end he says they're all empty they none of them give lasting fulfillment they temporary okay new great but then what's next always looking for something new that's the reality of life in this earth so let's look at Ecclesiastes how it begins so the struggle that he expresses here in these first 11 verses one there's two frustrations he brings up verse 2 is the theme of the book vanity of vanities everything's vanity life is so fleeting that I can't find any true lasting fulfillment okay that's struggle number one and then number two we'll see beginning of verse three he raises a particular question see what does man gain by all the toil that he toils under the sun at the end of his life when he's done all of this what does he get what's left okay so that's the question big questions what's the point why bother okay so this is where he's going are you excited you looking forward to this happy

Easter all right so first of all first frustration it's the theme of the book verse two vanity of vanities says the preacher vanity of vanities all is vanity five times he says vanity right life is so fleeting life is so like a puff of smoke life is so fleeting where can I find true fulfillment that lasts so let's break this down first of all who's speaking says it's the words of the preacher the preacher that's actually not the Hebrew word but I do want you to notice that he doesn't give a name he gives a nickname whose message are we hearing he doesn't say Solomon we think of Solomon no king of Israel right son of David king and as he goes on to describe I had all the wealth I had all the wisdom oh that's Solomon but when you read Solomon's actual writings like Proverbs 1 1 it says the words of

Solomon son of David king of Israel here it says words of the preacher who's the preacher who's this who's this who's this persona he makes a persona wisdom literature does that by the way wisdom literature makes up other voices that we hear Proverbs talks about lady wisdom we listen to her she calls on the streets Proverbs also talks about another woman that calls on the corners that we should not listen to right book of Job has other voices in it doesn't it book of Job has other voices in there that later we find out we're not right okay so it's kind of like that wisdom literature kind of giving us a voice here that we're hearing okay now we have to evaluate that so he's nicknamed he delivers words of wisdom he identifies himself as son of David king in Jerusalem it's most likely not

Solomon himself it's possible but it's most likely it's not Solomon himself but someone who wants the Solomon persona he's like Solomon could be Solomon possibly at the very end of his life you know when he went apostate when he ditched it all for the women right first kings chapter 11 good man ended very badly and no hope is mentioned at the end of his life that he repented so it could have been that stage where he's writing this okay possible we'll get into that next week so what's his concern verse 2 is the main problem main theme all is vanity what's this word vanity that's probably not a good translation because we kind of read into vain what's that mean the Hebrew word literally means vapor breath illustrate sermon there we go if I can open this how's this work okay how does this wait wait wow life is a vapor puff of smoke where'd it go that's the word that's the word picture it's fleeting it's elusive!

it's empty it's there but it's really insubstantial it's futile it's useless so what's the point of this word and to understand whatever he means by this word is the key to understanding the whole book so if you misread this word if you read into this word vapor as oh it means meaninglessness well if we get if we're honest with this author he doesn't say everything is meaningless he doesn't mean everything's meaningless but everything is vapor and whatever that picture is implying okay and we'll kind of go through it so look with me how he uses it he uses it by the way 38 times so it's a major theme in his book right he begins and ends the book with this statement vanity of vanities all is vanity so go to chapter 2 verse 11 look down here he has a conclusion here's one of his conclusions verse 11 chapter 2 he said

[25 : 51] I considered all that my hands had done and the toil that I expended in doing it and behold all is vanity and striving after wind and there was nothing to be gained under the sun so what does vanity mean there all that I did all my accomplishments all my work all vapor and striving after the wind so there he adds another metaphor another picture how did he catch the wind it's elusive isn't it it's unfulfilling I never get it seems to be the idea there then go down to verse 15 215 he uses it again he said then I said in my heart what happens to the fool will happen to me too that's not fair I'm the wise man he's the fool he's wasted his life I've invested my life but what happens to the fool will happen to me why then have I been so wise what was the profit what did

I gain by wisdom when what happens to the fool and the wise man is the same end I said in my heart this also is vapor it's absurd it's senseless it's what is it it's frustrating one more place chapter 6 verse 12 now he uses like I said he uses this word 38 times so it's all through the book but let me just use a couple examples to kind of see the flexibility of this word chapter 6 verse 12 the last verse in chapter 12 for who knows what is good for a man while he lives the few days of his vain vaporous life which he passes like a shadow for who can tell man what will be after him under the sun who knows what's good while we live the few days of our vapor life our smoke life our elusive fleeting life right what's the point if that's it if life's a vapor what are we doing if life's so short how can

I live it with meaning is there any possibility of living it with meaning under the sun okay so that's his picture then the perspective notice down verse 3 his theme is vanity everything's vapor everything's elusive everything's fleeting life is so fleeting you know where can I find real fulfillment where can I find something that really lasts so what's his perspective I want you to note that in his perspective his actual viewpoint that he's looking at it from notice verse 3 what does a man gain by all the toil at which he toils where under the sun this is the perspective so what's under the sun what are talking about water water okay earth horizontal secular we're not looking at this from above the sun we're looking at this from under the sun we're looking at it as every other human man and woman views life okay there's a physical existence under the sun okay that's his viewpoint horizontal it's a restricted scope it's a secular kind of view not an eternal view that's why we'll get frustrated with him in some of his conclusions because you'll kind of say the best you could do is eat drink and be merry and enjoy the gifts that God has given you he totally believes in

God but he doesn't say anything about anything afterwards he doesn't give any hope of it so best you can do is get the meaning out of life now well it's the same thing Paul said as for there's no resurrection so we gotta evaluate this right so David wrestled with the same thing believers wrestled with the same thing look at Psalm 39 I want you to listen carefully what David wrestles with in his own frustration very aware of his fleeting life okay and that's important for us to recognize we do have life is short especially the older you get how's that work right what did they say youth is wasted on the youth or something I mean if you wait to live life till you retire then some people do right you save up for retirement by the time you retire what's happened

I'm too tired I'm too old I can't ski anymore especially water ski I haven't got the energy I haven't got the yeah anyway sorry so listen to David Psalm 39 Psalm of David David says I said I will guard my ways why that I may not sin with my tongue tongue oh he's well meaning isn't he good old David he's not going to sin with his tongue you ever made that vow you ever made that intention of course you have if you're a believer of course you have how'd you do all right watch David I'm so encouraged by this so I guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue I will guard my mouth with a muzzle so long as the wicked are in my presence so I was silent I was mute and silent

[31 : 56] I held my peace to no avail and my distress grew worse my heart became hot within me you know when your heart becomes hot you know you get angry something bad happens and how do you not say something right and as I mused the fire burned then I spoke with my tongue how's that muzzle doing David and I spoke what is it so he's going to pray now what's he going to say what's he going to ask for what he asked for when you can't muzzle your tongue listen curious what he asked he says oh lord make me know my end and what is the measure of my days let me know how fleeting I am hmm he wants to know more consciously more acutely that my life is short that

I have only so much time interesting isn't it I would have just said hey shut my mouth lord shut my mouth but David's a deeper thinker he goes on he says behold you have made my days a few hand breath it's fleeting my life time is as nothing before you surely all mankind stands as a mere breath see love surely a man goes about as a shadow surely for nothing they are in turmoil that's the same thing this this ecclesiastes writer saying I mean do all this work it's for nothing surely a man goes about as a shadow for nothing they are in turmoil a man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather it what's the point if I gather all of this all my life and at the end of my life I can't take it with me what's the point why did

I gather so much who's going to say at the! life I should have I I'm a shadow things are insignificant compared to you you work hard and then you die so how does David deal with it he prays make me know how short my life is so that I appreciate the moments that I have and then secondly my focus isn't going to be on what I toil and work for my focus is going to be you you you're my hope because my accomplishments my pleasures my possessions those aren't meaningful really at the end of my life it don't mean anything so frustration one life is so fleeting where do we find real fulfillment now frustration two now he's going to pick up his first sub theme so to speak verse three he's going to ask the question verse four to seven he's going to make some observations verses nine to eleven he's going to make some conclusions so he's going to pose the question feel it out and then draw some conclusions and his frustration can be summed up this way if all our toil leaves us nothing in the end why bother with all the toil what's the point what are we doing right what's all our toil doing we strive really hard what are we doing it for that's really the question why am

I doing it okay so the question verse three what gain what gain by all the toil what advantage do I have this word gain really means what's left over what remains after I've done all my work and I've gathered all this what what's left what remains what lasts what endures what true security do I have after all I've done I toil all my life what what's left what he's asking what's left is there anything left there's stuff but does it have any point to it is it useless so then he's going to make some observations verse four through seven he's going to make some observations okay let me show you that there's no gain nothing has profit nothing has gain look at the world look at nature so verse four a generation goes a generation comes what's left the earth then comes another generation and then they go then comes another generation and they go so there's change but no real progress just repetition another generation verse five the sun rises the sun goes down he's speaking from a under the sun perspective remember he's not talking astronomy here wait a minute the earth the sun no just speaking under the sun the sun rises sun goes down then what does it do it haves back to the place where it rises same old same old so there's a lot of activity sun rising sun setting but next day here we go again next day here we go again right so then what else verse six the wind oh the wind a lot a lot a lot of activity with the wind winds doing all kinds of stuff the wind blows to the south it goes around to the north around and around goes the wind and in its circuit the winds return so it's a job of a meteorologist right to watch the wind try to predict the wind of course

Jesus said who can predict the wind well they're watching patterns right they have patterns they can kind of why can they predict the patterns because seen them before seen them before this is what it typically does and once in a while it changes up it slows down we thought it was going to be faster thought you were going to get snow yesterday sorry okay yeah especially in Colorado they can't you know they tell you what's going to happen in four days do you plan on that really no they don't have a clue but according to patterns it looks like it might do that if you live in LA it's a whole different what's it going to be like in LA smoggy no rain but smog all right so that's the wind and then verse 7 the streams the streams think of this all this water have you ever watched you go up in the mountain you watch these waterfalls you watch all this water tons and tons and tons of water

[39 : 42] I always go up there thinking where's all that coming from I mean it's just gallons and gallons and gallons and then it all goes down to the sea so he knows kind of his geography he knows so water goes all the way down Arkansas begins up here and then it goes all the way down Arkansas Colorado goes you know but it all ends up in the sea and is the sea getting bigger I mean all that water where's the water going it's filling up the sea but it never fills it up what's the deal and then it starts over now he's not talking about evaporation and all the water cycle all that kind he's just making a point that there's a lot of activity but nothing really happens in the end nothing has changed there's little changes because the wind changes direction there's little changes but no real significant change at the end all this activity and nothing meaningful right so what's the purpose and then verse 8 all things are full of weariness

I'm tired of watching it all because I keep hoping something new will happen nothing new happens the the eye cannot utter the eye is not satisfied with seeing what's that mean the eye is not satisfied with seeing so if you've seen the one sunset you've seen them all right how come you want to see another one because they're spectacular and God loves color he really loves color because he just keeps changing you know oh that's just like yesterday I remember that one how come we like rainbows same thing I've seen a rainbow before yeah yeah have you seen that one look how bright that one is you never usually see the green as much as you usually so our eyes are never satisfied our ears are never satisfied we want more we crave more and particularly we crave something new right he ends up saying right verse 9 what has been is what will be what has been done is what will be done there's nothing new we crave something new we want novelty why because it's interesting because it perks our interest we want novelty we want something that lifts us up again how do you get excited about the same old thing when we first moved to Illinois you know we lived in California first right so we had lots of weather there right

I think it rained once in a while we didn't know weather we moved to Illinois all of a sudden there's weather right there's like real thunderstorms I remember the first thunderstorm I heard in Illinois I shot out of my chair because it was right there I mean in California it's like that's over the ocean or something I don't know I can hear it distant in Illinois and maybe you guys have different experiences man it was like right outside the window somebody was coming in the door it was cool then I looked forward to it because it's like that'll get the heart pumping a little bit then they had these tornado things they had a lot of exciting things out there snow this high that never melted 100 foot driveways that took a long time to shovel so it was exciting so his conclusions verse 9 right same old same old what has been is what will be what will be what has been done is that which will be done there's nothing new is there anything new which is is there a thing of which it is said see this is new it's already been done in the ages before there's no remembrance of former things nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after now we say wait a minute it's not true that there's nothing new there's new discoveries all the time you live in the last century there's new discoveries is there there's new technologies there's new advances but is it really a new discovery and do those new discoveries new advances do they help us well things are faster yeah and it also adds more problems too our problems are still the same have we solved any problems with our technology we've solved how to get things faster we've solved making the world smaller now I know what's happening on the other side of the world right now instead of for months and months and months and months and months before the ship sails and they bring the news you know like in the old days when Jesus lived so what's really new think that through what's really new it's the same old same old it's monotony history just repeats itself we're going nowhere and by the way if you don't read history you think you're discovering something new oh Columbus day right

Columbus yeah he found something new didn't he no been there in fact lots of people been there in fact people from his own generation had just been there and he knew it what are you talking about I found a new land he didn't so anyway what's new so okay so is this true is he true is this right is this right is there really nothing new is everything really the same is history simply cyclical is it simply cycles is it simply over and over again now we can say oh yeah there are things that you know we keep repeating the same errors keep repeating the same mistakes we keep falling for the same false teaching because we're not aware that it already happened back in the second century because we don't read our history we don't figure out oh the church has already dealt with this it's just got a new name so is it true does God bring nothing new in history no how about this was this new yeah that was pretty new how about when God took on flesh is that new yeah that's pretty new that had never happened and all through the

Old Testament he promised that he promised that we read several texts Friday night he would bear our iniquities right and has God promised anything else new so when Jesus came he was new did he bring a new message what was new about it he remember he's sitting at the Passover meal and there's the old message right we're remembering the Passover remembering God redeeming us from slavery we're remembering that with the bread and the wine and Jesus takes the bread which was the manna and now he says the bread is what my body for you what no that's not what the rabbis teach what are you talking about yes my body which is in your place then he takes the cup with the cup of redemption that was supposed to be about the lamb's blood that was you know for the

[48 : 08] Passover door and now he says now this is my blood and it's about a whole new covenant that was the old covenant the old covenant you couldn't keep the old covenant said thou shalt do as I do thou shalt be holy as I am holy thou shalt not do any of these things and what does David do our best shot David breaks half of those our best man truly the best heart so what's God do so God's obligation is you don't keep the covenant I gotta kill you that's the deal so he sends his son to keep the covenant and give us a new one that does actually give forgiveness the old covenant doesn't give any forgiveness oh it does atonement it covers those sins that you know you didn't mean to do it covers the sins that were unintentional read your

Leviticus unintentional no you don't want to read Leviticus well if you want to David said Psalm 51 if there was a sacrifice I would bring it but there's no sacrifice for intentional rebellious sin so all I can appeal to is mercy so what's new there's a new Messiah there's a new covenant and we just read about another thing he promised that's going to be new there's going to be a new home there's going to be a new city there's going to be a new body that's what we live for your best life isn't now this is not our home that doesn't mean we don't find meaning doesn't mean we don't find meaning Jesus spoke about this okay too I was surprised how much Jesus actually addressed these kind of issues in Ecclesiastes and why does he address these kind of issues in Ecclesiastes about how our world view is how we look at life because it's been the world view since the time began till the time will end

Ecclesiastes is how we tend to live it's what we tend to believe it's what the Jews believed in the wilderness it's what David fought with it's what Solomon believed if this is Solomon it's what Jesus' contemporary struggled with so what does Jesus say Jesus spoke to this issue and he warned about this kind of under the sun world view if that's all your view is just what's under the sun you're in trouble here's what he says Luke 12:15 he said to them take care be on your guard against all covetousness you know the desire for more for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions now reread that sentence one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions what does he mean that's not all there is to life if your life is all about accomplishments and getting things and possessions and power and I mean you've lost what life is about one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions that's not all there is that's very superficial and so he told them a parable here we go saying the land of a rich man produced plentifully and he thought to himself what shall I do for I have nowhere to store my crops and he said I will do this

I will tear down my barns and build larger ones and there excuse me and there I will store all my grain and all my good and I will say to my soul here's a self accomplished man here's a man who's achieved his goals I will say to myself what soul you talk to yourself like that soul you have ample goods and laid up for many years relax eat drink and be married you've made it you can retire now you can enjoy life Jesus says but God said to him you fool this night your soul is required of you and the things you have prepared whose will they be what good are they what's the point what do you really accomplish and

Jesus gives the summary here's his answer here's his point so is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God so is the one if I live life under the sun I try to find meaning in the things of this earth I'm living life for myself and if that's how I live that's it he says on the other hand he's not rich toward God what does that mean how do I make meaning out of life what's rich toward God Jesus talked about right don't put your treasures on earth put your treasures in heaven right where the heart is that's where your treasure is what's treasure in heaven what does it mean to be rich toward God what is that what's about the kind of things Jesus calls us to love the Lord your God with all your heart soul mind strength love your neighbor as yourself love one another those are the meaningful things you invest in people not in myself so

[54 : 14] Jesus also said he asked the same question by the way the Proverbs writes in Matthew 16 he says what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world forfeits his whole what do you gain if you gain the whole world Solomon if you gain the whole world you get everything you get all the wealth you get all the wisdom you got all the women you got all the wine you got all the what's another W word you got all the woohoos whoop-de-doo vineyards so how you do it we hear stories all the time don't we about those that win the lottery and they have all this money and that's going to answer all the problems right well it answers some I mean it does pay the rent that's kind I mean it does I mean it wouldn't be a temptation if it didn't actually do something it does but it doesn't solve my problems are still the same my heart is still the same my soul is still the same so Jesus is saying are you really willing to forfeit eternity for some temporary things really now that's a bad world view see the false world view this kind of short sighted world view says this life is all there is gain all now live for yourself before you die that's all you got eat drink and be merry life is harder than you die so better make the most of it but if you only lay up treasure for yourself on earth that's all you got to have and what if

God takes you early I was planning on retirement what if he takes me early I been planning for finally rest and relaxing and traveling and all this kind of stuff and all of a sudden now I'm too sick to do anything I mean that's like that's like that's it that's pretty disappointing here's the true worldview the true worldview says takes God into account understands that Jesus says there's more to life than the abundance of riches and possessions and power and pleasures and accomplishments God promises a much richer life in eternity this life is just a vapor real life will be lasting and fulfilling That's what Revelation 21 and 22 is trying to describe.

Rise up. Rise up. I once was blinded, but now I see it. I've heard about the power, and now I believe it. Rise up. Rise up.

I thought that I was too far gone. For everything I've done wrong. Yeah, I'm the one who dug this grave. But you called my name.

[61 : 00] You called my name. And all at once, I came alive. This beating heart. These open eyes.

The grave let go. The darkness should have known. You're still rolling stones. You're still rolling stones. That's Easter. By the way, she sung that on Ellen.

What a great song. I don't think Ellen knew what she was asking for. Has he called your name? Has he called your name?

Makes all the difference. If you don't think he has, ask him. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the hope that we have. We thank you, oh God, for the message, Lord, that we can evaluate and see.

Is that true? Is that what I believe? So help us through this process, Father, that we see the true, we struggle and wrestle with the true hard questions. And then we come to the end of it by seeing where your hope is.

[62 : 05] How we as believers look at these things. And we thank you, oh God, that in Christ you give us the wisdom. In Christ you give us the answer. In Christ you give us the hope. In Christ you give us the life to rise up.

This we thank you in Christ's name. Amen.