



Ecclesiastes Part 17 - “The Whole Duty of Man”

Introduction: Two Fundamental Questions

1. _____? (_____)

Three ways identity is developed: (1) It is _____ →

(2) It is _____ →

(3) It is _____ →

2. _____? (_____)

Understanding that our lives have purpose is vital for being able to deal with the _____ and _____ of life.

Key Point: While much of Ecclesiastes deals with the complexities of life, Solomon’s conclusion is rooted in the most _____ teachings of Scripture.

The Epilogue— Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

The Work of Qohelet Summarized (12:9-10)

Ecc. 12:9-10—⁹ Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. ¹⁰ The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth.

1. The Teacher endeavored *teach* people knowledge. (12:9)

⇒ In order to teach the people, he first examined and tested various wisdom both from _____ as well as the ANE.

“weighing” —

“studying” —

⇒ The result his work was a compilation of wisdom _____.

2. The Teacher worked to convey this wisdom in a way that was both *understandable* and *enjoyable*. (12:10)

Key Point: The most significant work of Solomon’s life was the _____ of God’s wisdom to His people.

The Significance of Wisdom Literature (12:11-12)

Ecc. 12:11-12—¹¹ The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. ¹² My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

1. The wisdom writings are intended to provide both *guidance* and *stability*. (12:11)

The Imagery: (1) Goads —

(2) Nails —

One Shepherd It is possible that Solomon is referring to _____.

In all likelihood, however, he is referring to _____.

2. People must beware the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge *beyond* Scripture. (12:12)

“beware” —

“beyond” —

Key Point: While embracing the fact that wisdom and knowledge about life can be found outside of Scripture, the people of God must always recognize the Word of God as their primary _____.

The End of the Matter (12:13-14)

Eccl. 12:13-14—¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

I. The conclusion of Solomon's life quest was the realization that man's primary purpose was to *know* and *worship* God. (12:13)

"fear"—סָרַיָּ (yā-rā')—(v.) to fear; morally, to revere; causatively, to frighten, to be put in fearful reverence.

⇒ In the OT, this imagery is associated with the worship of God, describing the proper _____ of the worshiper toward Him.

Key Points: (1) To fear God is to recognize the _____ - _____ distinction.

Job 42:2-6—²"I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ³*Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?* Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. ⁴*Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.*" ⁵I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; ⁶therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Isa. 6:5—And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

(2) To fear the Lord is to properly _____ Him.

Deut. 6:4-6—⁴"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

"keep"—שָׁמַר (shā-mar')—(v.) properly, to hedge about. To guard, to protect, attend to (take heed, observe.).

⇒ The proper attitude of worship should lead to the proper _____ of worship.

Key Points: (1) To keep the commands of God means to _____ and _____ the Word of God.

Gen. 2:15—The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

(2) This involves guarding what has been _____ to us.

"the whole duty of man" →

2. The reality of future *judgment* should serve as the motivation for present *worship*. (12:14)

⇒ All of who we are and what we truly love will be laid bare before us in God's _____.

Key Point: Mankind should properly _____ God in life before being made to do so in judgment.

The Words of the One Shepherd are the Words of the Good Shepherd

• Jesus identified Himself as the True Shepherd of God's people

John 10:11—"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

John 14:15—"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

• Jesus came into the world to identify with mankind so that we might find our ultimate identity in worshipping Him and our ultimate purpose in obeying Him.

1 Pet. 1:14-19—¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.