

How Do You Look at Life?

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

I. Looking at life from the wrong perspective:  
*under the sun.*

Two keys to understanding the point of Ecclesiastes:

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1. The phrase *under the sun* in v.3

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1. The phrase *under the sun* in v.3
2. The word *vanity* in v.2

A bleak picture of life in this world (vv.4-11):

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Life is fleeting and elusive (v.4)

“Remember When”

“Old ones died and new were born  
Life was changed, disassembled, rearranged”

A bleak picture of life in this world (vv.4-11):

Life is fleeting and elusive (v.4)

Life is repetitive (vv.5-10)

“The Preacher focuses on a threefold pattern in the world that is matched by a threefold pattern in human experience. The activities of sun, wind, and water (vv.5-7) follow the same course as the activities of speaking, seeing, and hearing (v.8).

The point is that the world itself doesn't seem to go or get anywhere . . . so why should humans get anywhere?

The sun chases its tail. The wind goes to the south and comes back around again to the north. Streams flow into the sea, and the water evaporates, and then streams flow into the sea again and it is never full. So is the world, and so it will always be.

So is humankind, and so we will always be. People are like the insatiable sea. Just as water pours into the ocean again and again without ever filling it, so the things of the world pour into human beings via their eyes and ears and back out through their mouths, and yet they never reach a point of complete satisfaction. . . .

Humans never finally think, “This is it. I’m full. I have seen it all, said it all, and heard it all. I have given out and taken in all that I can.”

- David Gibson

A bleak picture of life in this world (vv.4-11):

Life is fleeting and elusive (v.4)

Life is repetitive (vv.5-10)

Life is not remembered (v.11)

II. Looking at life from the right perspective:  
*beyond the sun.*

*The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his  
handiwork.(Psalm 19:1)*

“The repetition that we see in nature is intended to be a testimony to the goodness and orderliness of God. The regularity of the created world shows the constancy of its Creator.”

– Philip Ryken

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor5:17)*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn.1:9)*

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,  
for the first heaven and the first earth had  
passed away (Rev.21:1a).*

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,  
for the first heaven and the first earth had  
passed away (Rev.21:1a).*

*And he who was seated on the throne said,  
“Behold, I am making all things new  
(Rev.21:5a).*