

Does life have meaning?
1. Does life have meaning? (Ecclesiastes 1v1-18)

John Percival

Introduction

- The meaning of life?
- Introduction to Ecclesiastes

A summary of life (v1-11)

- Life is fleeting
- Life is frustrating

A search for life (v12-18)

- A rigorous search
- A futile search

A framework for life

- Jesus has come
- But we are not in heaven yet

Conclusion

Bible references: James 4:14, Eccl. 7:13, Rom. 8:20, 1 Cor. 15:58, Rom. 8:20-23

Ecclesiastes 1v1-18 (NIV)

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

² "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."

³ What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun? ⁴ Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. ⁵ The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. ⁶ The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. ⁷ All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.

⁸ All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing. ⁹ What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there anything of which one can say, "Look! This is something new"? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. ¹¹ There is no remembrance of men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow.

¹² I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men! ¹⁴ I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

¹⁵ What is twisted cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.

¹⁶ I thought to myself, "Look, I have grown and 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.

¹⁸ For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.