

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14 Discussion Questions

Outline of Pastor Mike's Sermon

Introduction

- Recapping the heart of the series
 - Ecclesiastes gives a theology and language for the reality of the world we live in.
 - Ecclesiastes exposes and proves that our lesser pursuits are empty and wanting.
- Table of contents
 - Commending the Preacher (v.9-10)
 - Settling the matter (v.11-14)

Commending the Preacher (v.9-10)

- Remembering the structure of the book- Ecclesiastes 1.1-11 and 12.8-14 are a separate voice from the Preacher.
 - Ecclesiastes 1.1-11
- The four commendations of the Preacher
 - Wise
 - Diligently careful
 - Skillful- attempted to write delightful words
 - Truthful
- The conclusion of the Preacher is faithful and yet he lacks the joy of someone who has answered life's biggest question correctly.

Settling the matter (v.11-14)

- Verse 11 shepherding metaphor- goads direct, the nail may be the sharp portion of the goad, the Lord is the Shepherd
 - Acts 26.14
- A warning against excessive study outside the wisdom provided by the One Shepherd
- Fearing the Lord and keeping his commands are united as the whole duty of man

Implications

- Process matters- Matthew 5.17-21

Discussion Questions

Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

1. At this point in Ecclesiastes the words of the Preacher cease and we hear from the Author of the book. In vv. 9-11 the Author evaluates the Preacher.

- a. What is his evaluation?
- b. Does his evaluation surprise you? Why or why not?

2. While the Preacher may have been able to arrive at the correct answer (fear and obey God, enjoy what God gives you, rejoice, etc.) what is the tone or mood of his writing?

- a. Can you relate? Why do you think that is?
- b. What can make it hard to rejoice in the truth?
- c. Both the Preacher and the Apostle Paul face the harsh realities of this one but while the former is frustrated and laments, the latter rejoices. Why the difference?
- d. Confidence in the goodness of God provides one with hope and joy. Where is your confidence and hope in God strong? Where does it need to grow?
- e. What is the basis of your confidence in the goodness of God?
- f. What has helped it grow in the past?

3. The Author goes on in vv. 11-12 to admonish us to listen to wisdom because it provides us with direction. Also, it is firmly established and so if we push back against it, we are the ones who will get hurt.

- a. Reflect on what you have learned from Ecclesiastes. What piece of wisdom have you taken away from your study of the book?
- b. How can you more faithfully apply to your life right now?

4. What is the Author's final conclusion?

- a. Is the inevitability of facing judgment (for both good and evil) a source of comfort or anxiety for you? Why?
- b. For those in Christ there is no Condemnation (Romans 8:1). Does this truth leave any room for fear of facing God's judgment?
- c. What does it mean to "fear God" and what does it look like?
- d. If God is our loving Father, why should we fear Him?