

Ecclesiastes

Chapter 5

I. Introduction

- a. Thus far, this book has laid a clear foundation that life without God is pure vanity
 - i. Nothing gained in this life apart from our service to Christ will matter eternally
- b. Solomon certainly realized in Chapter 2 that life can be enjoyed so long as we realize that all of our blessings are gifts from God (**Ecclesiastes 2:24**)
 - i. He has brought out various viewpoints of life with and without God
 1. But in the end, "*all is vanity and grasping for the wind*" unless service to God is our motivation
- c. Today's lesson begins with instruction on how to approach God while the latter part of the chapter explains the vanity of a life spent for gain and honor

II. Commentary

a. **Verses 1-7**

- i. Solomon gives clear instruction on approaching God in His house
 1. During Solomon's day, the house of God was the Temple
 - a. Certainly, we can make some connections between the Temple and church worship
 - i. But keep in mind, there are some differences in OT and NT worship
 2. God is to be approached in a reverential way
 - a. A church service is not a place for socializing
 - i. If you spend the church service socializing rather than taking part in worship, God is displeased with you
 3. Whether in the OT or NT times, when we gather, it must be to open God's Word and find out what it has to say
 - a. This is more important than the "motions" we go through
 4. We need to be cautious to speak the truth when we talk on the things of God
 5. We must ever keep in remembrance that God is Sovereign over us
 6. We need to keep a guard over our mouth
 - a. Though, it's often difficult to distinguish between when it's proper to speak and when it's proper to keep silent
 7. We must be cautious in what we promise God to do
 - a. It is better not to make a promise to God than to make a promise and break it
 - i. When a vow is made and then broken, your mouth got ahead of your body and caused your "*flesh to sin*"
 8. The fear of the Lord is far better than saying the right thing
 - a. Our actions must always reflect our words

b. Verses 8-17

- i. We should never be surprised when we see those that rule taking advantage of their position without true concern for those they rule over
 - 1. Certainly, we see this today
 - a. But, this has always been the case
 - i. *"...for high official watches over high official"*
 - 1. It seems this is saying that rulers take care of each other
 - a. I'm certain this is true even today
- ii. Those that love riches in this life are never satisfied
 - 1. The rich just want to get richer
 - a. Yet, oftentimes he just has to spend more money to make more money
 - i. It's really a never ending cycle that oftentimes ends with little increase
- iii. A man who works daily for his needs without spending a life trying to amass riches sleeps well at night
 - 1. But, a man whose life is spent seeking more and more gain cannot sleep due to the anxiety this attitude towards life brings
- iv. Oftentimes in a desire to make more money, men lose a fortune
 - 1. This happens all the time in the stock market
 - a. Television shows and magazine articles often outline the fall of those who have been rich and lost it all trying to make more
 - i. Sadly, this is not new to our generation
- v. It would do us all well to remember that we will take none of our riches or the toys bought with them with us when we leave this life
 - 1. Job said, *"Naked I came from my mothers womb, and naked shall I return there"* (**Job 1:21**)
 - a. Solomon, also an extremely rich man, is declaring the same thing as Job
 - 2. In most cases, the rich seemingly never see this truth
 - a. A life lived without regard for God and our own mortality is evil
 - i. This attitude towards life oftentimes brings much sorrow in life and especially in death

c. Verses 18-20

- i. This passage describes a life that is approached in a totally opposite manner than the one who spends a life trying to gain riches
 - 1. It's a good thing to enjoy all of the blessings that God provides so long as we acknowledge with our heart that God gave them
 - a. This attitude towards God as our Blessor will bring much joy in this life
 - i. When our blessings are looked at as a gift rather than just a step towards more riches, there is much comfort