



2021 Pursue Summer Study  
 “The Truth Is...”

Principles of Truth From the Life of Solomon  
 A Study in Ecclesiastes  
 Week 1

## Introduction

*“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.” This introduction makes the identification of the author evident though many scholars debate its authorship. Solomon wrote the Proverbs when he was a much younger man so it does seem probable that he wrote Ecclesiastes as an addendum to it after he had experienced and examined life more fully. He is looking back on his attempts to master life when he was younger. He lived a very secular life full of wealth and power but was always aware of the reality of God. Now as an older man who is facing a much more imminent departure from this life, he is reviewing his life and summing up its significance. What value was gained by his endeavors “under the sun”?*

## Significant Topics

*The book is not set in any specific structure but is a compilation of varied topics that relate to understanding life. The author is speaking as a philosopher and asking questions of his audience to seriously consider the difficulties that finding meaning in life “under the sun” imposes. His overall conclusion is that*

*finding purpose and meaning in life without God is futile. The very nature of life is that it goes through the same cycles and brings the same circumstances to every person throughout time. Therefore, attempts to find significance that is lasting is impossible, for all individuals die and leave their accomplishments to someone after them. After a very few generations, their lives “under the sun” completely vanish.*

*Solomon describes this process as “vanity” and “striving after the wind.” The book goes on to give several examples of life situations that prove his point.*

*Because of the book’s lack of structure, the best approach to study it would be thematic. Solomon surrounds his frustrations around several main principles or themes that he found to be true about life after living it more fully. As a young man Solomon had all a person could want or need to be successful in life. He had money, power, fame, and best of all, he had been granted wisdom beyond any other person that had lived. With all that, he began to expound his insight into how life works in the book of Proverbs. His wisdom was vast, but his experience as to how those truths work out in life was*

minimal and insufficient. Youthfulness blinds us to our potential weaknesses and fools us into believing that we have control of life. It appears that Solomon fell to this deception. The book of Ecclesiastes presents his realization of the truths he thought he knew as a young man, but identifies how those simply didn't work out in life as he expected. That is the common dilemma for mankind. Life rarely works the way we think it should, and that can be very disappointing and confusing.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

**Vanity or futility-** a breath; emptiness. That which is weak, ephemeral, transitory; or worthless.

**Striving after the wind-** vexation; a person's efforts to achieve and master something or gain something.

**Under the sun or under heaven-** everything that is done in the world in which humans live. "Lock God out of a closed system and you are left with only this world of time plus chance plus matter."

Ravi Zacharias

**Madness and folly-** refers to the tendency to try anything just to know its outcome; to act foolishly. It is the opposite of wisdom and involves the rejection or disregard of revealed moral and spiritual values on which life is based.

**Principle #1: The Truth Is... the only way to find meaning and purpose in life is to fear God and know He determines how "life under the sun" is best lived out.**

### QUESTIONS:

(NASB) Ecclesiastes 3:14 "I know that \_\_\_\_\_ God does will remain forever; there is \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to it and there is nothing to \_\_\_\_\_ from it, for God has so \_\_\_\_\_ that men should \_\_\_\_\_."

1. Fill in Ecclesiastes 3:14 above. What has Solomon learned about God's activity in life? What does he say is God's purpose for that?



6. *Read Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. What conclusion does Solomon come to after expressing all his frustrations his inability to control life and its outcomes?*
7. *Read Proverbs 3:5-7 and 8:13. What does fearing the Lord require?*

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***“Choosing righteousness doesn’t always feel good, but our comfort isn’t God’s highest priority.”***

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8. *Explain your conclusion of how just living life “under the sun” differs from living life “under the sun” with the fear of God?*

***Prayer requests:***

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***Group time notes:***

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