

August 31, 2016

## Keep Your Eyes On The Eternal

Psalm 103:15-17, “As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children.”

In my yearly trek through the Bible I just completed the sometimes depressing journey through the Book of Ecclesiastes. The author of Ecclesiastes, which is part of the Old Testaments Wisdom literature, is King Solomon who was a man of exceptional wisdom and wealth.

Many of us have heard the account of the two women who came to King Solomon. Both of the women were prostitutes and apparently shared a home and both had babies at the same time. One of the little ones died in the middle of the night and the mother got up and took the dead child and exchanged the child for the one that was still alive. They brought their case to King Solomon for him to decide who the child’s mother really was. He wisely asked for a sword to divide the child in two and give half to each woman. The real mother of course stepped up and offered her child to the other woman rather than see it killed. Solomon then awarded the child to its mother.

King Solomon started out very strong as King and when God asked him what he wanted, Solomon asked for wisdom above wealth. God rewarded him with both and King Solomon had the great privilege of building the great Temple in Jerusalem, one of the wonders of the ancient world. But eventually Solomon fell into sin, the sin of his father David, and he took many wives and concubines and began to worship the gods of his numerous foreign wives. Near the end of his life in which there was very little of any pleasure or success that Solomon had not experienced he wrote Ecclesiastes. The theme of Ecclesiastes is the vanity of all human pursuits.

After writing for twelve chapters on the enormous waste it is to pursue self-indulgence, worldly wisdom, work, wealth and honor, he concludes with this in chapter 12 verse 13, **“The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”**

Ecclesiastes, like all of Scripture, speaks to us in our modern world. We are a very busy people who pursue many things and often times doggedly; some of which are very good and worthy of pursuit but they are not the best thing and they are most definitely not of eternal value. Solomon points out that the one thing that we are ultimately responsible for in life is to obey God, **“Fear God”** and follow His **“commandments.”** Solomon understood better than most the vanity and folly of pursuing the things of this world at the cost of eternity. Just like the Psalmist writes, our “days are like grass” and we flourish for a season just like the wild flowers in the high country. But eventually we like those flowers pass away. But the love of God, the **“steadfast love of the**

**LORD**” lasts forever. It is worth more than any trophy, amount of money, or number of friends.

In John 14:6 Jesus said, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.”** We are called, in fact commanded by God to believe in His Son Jesus Christ. Like Solomon we can attempt to fill our lives with a lot of stuff, activities, and yes even people, but none of that solves our biggest problem which is our sin. Romans 3:23 says, **“For all have sinned and fallen short of God.”** Our sin separates us from God and thus separates us from eternal life in His presence. It is only through Jesus Christ that we have the forgiveness of sins and the guarantee of eternal life.

Let me encourage you to take stock in your life. Don’t spend your days in pursuit of that which is ultimately meaningless, but rather as wise King Solomon said, **“Fear God and keep His commandments.”** The most important command of God’s is to repent of our sins and believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.