

## SESSION #3 – “HOPE-Wise”

### "Get Wisdom... to Live a Purposeful Life in the Midst of Vanity"

**Ecc 9:7-10** <sup>7</sup> Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. <sup>8</sup> Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. <sup>9</sup> Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. <sup>10</sup> Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

### Vanity... and JOY???

- **v. 7, 9** There's – ...bread & wine—with joy and a merry heart! ...Enjoy life with your wife!

JOY (4x's) ...ENJOYMENT (5x's) in Ecc. [NOTE: Vanity (38x's)—What's This Particular “inspired revelation” trying to teach us about?]

**Ecc 2:24-26** There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, <sup>25</sup> for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? <sup>26</sup> For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy,

**Ecc 3:10-13** I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. <sup>11</sup> He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. <sup>12</sup> I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; <sup>13</sup> also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

- **There's the expectation of Engagement and Not Neglect or Withdrawal ... v. 8** - "do your laundry and take a shower!" ...Affectionately love and relate to her! (v. 9) ...DO LIFE with your whole heart, with skill, with thought, with a plan! (v. 10)

### The Storyline for All Storylines

#### The “Storyline of Humanity, the Story of Solomon... and Our Personal Story”

... “God has already approved what you do...” (Ecc. 9:7) *“this, is from the hand of God”* (Ecc. 2:24) *“the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with”* (Ecc. 3:10)

- **Understanding the Creation Mandate**

**Gen 1:26-31** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." <sup>29</sup> And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

**...*"THIS" is "GOOD" ...This "Purpose" of God is "APPROVED"***

**...*Man will Have a Meaningful Existence!! ...He will ENJOY & EXPAND EDEN and He will SUBDUE the Earth and FILL the Earth with the Glory/Image of God!!***

**Gen 3:15-19** I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." <sup>16</sup> To the woman he said, "[I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you." <sup>17</sup> And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; <sup>18</sup> thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

**...*THIS is the "FUTILITY" (of Rom 8), the "VANITY" (of Ecc.) ...it is the Uncooperative Relationship between Man & Creation (with lots of "Vexing Push-Back: "enmity" ... "pain" ... "contrariness" ... "ruling over" ... "cursed" ... "thorns & thistles" ... "sweat" ... "dust to dust existence"***

**Gen 9:1, 6-10** <sup>1</sup> And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

**...On the other side of Catastrophic Setback ...Man still has an APPOINTED PURPOSE!!**

**Deut. 8:1-10** <sup>1</sup> "The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ... <sup>6</sup> So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. <sup>7</sup> For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, <sup>8</sup> a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and

pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,<sup>9</sup> a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper.<sup>10</sup> And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

...There's a Lot of Gen 1, Gen 9 & Ecc 9 in this moment/season of life!! ...**v. 7-10** ...there's water management, botany, agricultural industry, Food Network shows ...engineering, industry, heavy equipment, & high tech!!

**It's a "GOOD LAND"!** ...Wait! Does Deut. know about Ecc.???

- **Creation Mandate + CORRUPTION** (the Fall infected Everything with FUTILITY) ...We are still God's Image Bearers who are to Fill the Earth with His Purpose & Glory! ...only now things are Infected with Futility! ...There is a simultaneous existence of "purpose/approved activity that we are to seek to enjoy" ...&... "futility"

- **A REDEMPITIVE UPGRADE!**

Rom 8:18-26<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.<sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.<sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope<sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.<sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.<sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.<sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?<sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

<sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

***...Here's All the Ingredients that Solomon Referred to in his "Life-Under-the-Sun" World—Only Now they Pull God Out of the "Background" and into the Foreground!!***

- **VANITY** ...Futility/Vanity are still with us! ...suffering & groaning is still in this present chapter!
- **HOPE!** ...There is a HOPE that becomes more Present & Prevalent—as we pull Eternity into the Present! (v. 18 ...we compare now with what's coming; v. 24-25 ...we stir up the flavor of hope by looking to the unseen realm)
- **The SPIRIT** ...*We have something extremely helpful, empowering, and enabling—that is NOT US!* ...The "first-fruits of the Spirit"!

***We don't have God's life FULLY RESTORED to Us (that awaits a new heaven & new earth & glorified bodies), but we do have the "Indwelling & Infilling Presence of the Holy Spirit"***

**Rom 8:28-39** <sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **GOD... In the FOREGROUND!**

...Remember this quote: "...in Ecclesiastes God intends you to know him by requiring you to look plainly and without polish at yourself, your neighbors, and the world in which you and I live. God puts himself in the background, as it were, in order to place self-concern front and center." **Zack Eswine**, "Recovering Eden", p. 1

***Ecclesiastes is featuring something different, complimentary, and essential to what Romans is featuring!*** (Rom. Devotes 6 verses to "Life-Under-The-Sun"—Ecc. Devotes 12 Chapters!)

...Let God's Word say what it says—Not what you'd like it to say!

"God in his infinite wisdom knew that the general revelation of creation, which confronts us with his existence and glory, could not impart to us the kind of knowledge of him, the necessary knowledge of ourselves, an understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, and an awareness of the disaster of sin and of the fallenness of the surrounding world that could rescue us from us, propel us to him for his saving grace, and provide us a plan for how we should then live as children of that same grace. And so he gave us the wonderful and amazing gift of his word." **Paul Tripp**, "Do You Believe", p. 33

...God is Thrust into the Foreground—and we are intended to "see" his active, sovereign presence!!

## **Solomon's Story & Ours—In This Vain/Vexing World**

### ***Solomon is Going to Live in God's Redemptive Purpose***

**Ecc 12:9-10** Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. <sup>10</sup> The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth.

**2Chron 7:1-3** As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house. <sup>3</sup> When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."

YES... He did "wisdom research" like no other person ever! ...He Shepherded God's people with Divine Wisdom (1Kin 3) ...He built the TEMPLE (with all its Meaningful Purposeful Implications!)

NO... He did not Live a "Vanity-Free-Life"!

### ***You & I are Called to Live in God's Redemptive Purpose ...while On Earth—Doing "Life-Under-the-Sun"***

**Ecc 8:15-17** And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun. <sup>16</sup> When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, how neither day nor night do one's eyes see sleep, <sup>17</sup> then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.

**Ecc 12:1, 13** <sup>1</sup> Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; ...<sup>13</sup> The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

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