

Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

**Matthew 8:26**

## Store In My Heart

### Colossians 2:13-14

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Through the death of Jesus on the cross, we can live for eternity. Before that death the only hope was found in following the ordinances given to Israel through Moses. The cross ended that law and left us to the care of our Savior, Jesus the Christ. Through Him we have life.

The way of Christ provides a clear path to be with God for all eternity. His Gospel reveals that God desires for us to be with Him in Heaven. Are you following that Way?



# The Whole Duty of Man

## Matthew W. Bassford

The opening chapters of Ecclesiastes are surely among the gloomiest in the entire Bible. In them, Solomon examines life under the sun and concludes that all of the usual human pursuits are futile and vain. Wealth doesn't bring lasting satisfaction. The pursuit of pleasure proves to be pointless. The accumulation of material possessions becomes wearisome.

The same thing is true of goals that seem to be wiser. For example, it seems praiseworthy to lay up treasure that will provide for your heirs even after you have departed. However, Solomon observes that your descendants may well be idiots who will squander everything that you painstakingly stored up.

Even wisdom itself isn't a path to contentment. Sure, you can go through life understanding what it's all about and making wise decisions, but no matter how wise you are, you're still going to die. They will bury you in a cemetery alongside a whole bunch of fools, and your situation will be no better than theirs.

In short, Solomon tells us that life under the sun is meaningless, continually overshadowed by the inevitability of death. No matter how clever we are, no matter how many different avenues we try, we will not be able to solve the problem. The harder we look, the more despairing we will become.

Though it was written thousands of years ago, Ecclesiastes identifies the core problem of modern American society. We have achieved unparalleled longevity, security, and abundance. However, these things have failed to satisfy the deepest needs of the human heart.

Despite affluence and ease, too many among us are so alienated that they become mass murderers, destroying others along with themselves in a burst of nihilistic fury. Such things did not happen in

the America of a hundred years ago, even though the country was much poorer and life was far more uncertain.

The same sense of alienation appears in the trans movement, in which miserable people reject the truth of their own bodies in a desperate search for fulfillment. Though gender dysphoria did not exist in ancient Israel, Solomon would have had no trouble diagnosing its causes or predicting its outcome. With a moment's thought, all of us could identify many other symptoms of the same disease.

Of course, Solomon's conclusion in Ecclesiastes is not the counsel of despair. Instead, in **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**, he urges his readers to fear God and keep His commandments. Solomon does this for two reasons. First, it is the whole duty of man. A life that is focused on God will find meaning in meaninglessness and hope in hopelessness.

Second, Solomon reminds us that God will bring every act to judgment. Thus, even though earthly life appears futile and vain, it really is anything but. The key question of our existence is not whether we can find rest for our souls under the sun. We can't. Instead, it is whether we will live under the sun in such a way that we can find rest for our souls forever in the presence of God.

Our lives are not meaningless. Rather, they are terrifyingly meaningful. Every day that we live, eternity hangs in the balance. Every day, we take one step closer either to stupendous success or ruinous failure. Every day, we choose whether we will be numbered with the enemies of God or with His friends.

We live in a society that is drifting, aimless, and purposeless. However, we must not allow it to obscure our purpose and our aim. Yes, life under the sun is pointless, but the life devoted to God is not. Let us lay hold of the hope that is set before us, and let us appeal to everyone around us to do the same.

(It is very easy for us to get caught up in the things of this world to the point that they seem of utmost importance. As brother Bassford points out, Solomon did the research long ago and found that nothing about this world really matters in any way other than how we use it to draw closer to God and glorify Him by obedience to His Word. Fear God, Keep His Commands. DLH)

## Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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## For Our Information

Adene Gray has been dealing with shortness of breath and tiredness the past week. She has a doctor appointment on Tuesday.

Marla Rigsby's shoulder is getting worse. She has two rotator cuff tears.

John Ragsdale is to receive more blood on Wednesday.

Paula Laubach has an appointment with a pulmonary doctor scheduled for the middle of July.

Dottie Henderson received a good report from both her heart doctor and lung doctor last week.

Sunday Evening study - **2Kings 25**. Wednesday Evening - **James 1:19**

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

