

The Futility of Resisting a Sovereign God

Ecclesiastes 6:1-12

1. You'll be frustrated regardless of what you have. (vv. 1-2)
2. The pains of life will rob any meaning from life. (vv. 3-6)
3. The lack of lasting satisfaction will cause life to lack meaning. (v. 7)
4. No amount of worldly wisdom will provide meaning. (v. 8)
5. Pursuing more will not provide meaning. (v. 9)
6. God is in control so we cannot find meaning apart from Him. (vv. 10-12)

LOOKING AT LIFE BEYOND THE SUN:

- God is sovereign not us.
 - Daniel 4:32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes.”
 - 34-35 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: “What have you done?”
 - Psalm 139:16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
 - Isaiah 48:3 I foretold the former things long ago; they came out of My mouth and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.
- We need to submit to the Sovereign God.
 - Psalm 2

- Everything comes from our Sovereign God.
 - 1 Chronicles 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.

- Our Sovereign God gives meaning that pain and even death cannot take away.
 - Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
 - 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- Our desires point to needs only a Sovereign God can meet.
 - John 6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.
 - Isaiah 55:2 Why spend money on that which is not bread, and your labor on that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of foods.
 - John 4:14 But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a fount of water springing up to eternal life.
 - Jeremiah 2:13 My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

- Only a Sovereign God has the answers for life now and forever.
 - Romans 9:20 But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"

- 7.
8. God gives stuff, but not the ability to enjoy. This ties back into the previous section. At the end of the day, we can't enjoy the gifts without the giver. What keeps the person from enjoying the gifts? Why does someone else enjoy them? It seems like the answer is death. We can even go back to previous talk about death with no heir or who knows who will get what you leave?
9. Length of days and children would have been the primary blessings they would have looked for. They don't overcome life without enjoyment or even death without burial. Better to not be born. It takes several verses to conclude that the reason for this is death. If you are going to die anyway, what difference does it make?
10. By the time I get to 7 it seems like the emphasis on food is on the repetitive nature, especially if it is in difficulty or strain to obtain food. I wonder if I can connect this to the bread of life?
11. No gain for the wise or poor.
12. 9 is confusing, but I think it is better what you see you have than what you want that you don't have.
13. 10 seems to be the cycle talk again, but it turns to knowing what we will be and God being the one who determines it. Do I need to go to God's sovereign will? Is it more about God being in control and not us by nature of us being people?
14. More words, less meaning.
15. Who knows the best way to spend our days? What comes next? After a person is gone here and for the person gone?

Lacks nothing for a good life, but doesn't have one.

Grievous evil could refer to the frequency of the situation rather than the severity.

Evil affliction is bad sickness and is the same words as in 5:13, 16

Man could have what they dream of and still depart unnoticed, unlamented, and unfulfilled

Better to miscarry at birth than miscarry throughout life

Child is first to die and first to find rest

Avoid disappointment by wanting less in life

"Even if it does not have a proper burial, I say that the stillborn is better off than he."

In verse 7 appetite is the same word for soul in 2 and 3

V.9 is the bird in the hand is worth two in the bush idea

The crowning limitation for man is the inability to know the future.

By openly talking about our disappointment with life, he is trying to awaken our longing for God

If there is no heaven then there is no way to escape our vanity of existence.

12-asks a question about this life and beyond this life and can't answer either

They all describe Solomon. He is the man who...

Was given riches and wealth and honor but left it all in the end to a foreigner (6:1-2).

Fathered a hundred children and lived many years but lacks a satisfied soul (6:3-6).
Partook of all that he desired but was not satisfied (6:7).
Knew it all, only to learn that it wasn't worth knowing (6:10-11).
Lived the ultimate life, only to realize that it was over (6:12).

6:1-12

So we start with wealth again which is likely why some connect this with 5. It seems like it moves from wealth to the reality of death and what happens then.
Other dude just emphasizes being rich toward God and content in Him.
Ryken talks about heaven and knowing what happens in death.

7:1-12, 13-18, 19-29

This section is tough. Seems to be a lot of various exhortations.
Ryken goes about with the value of wisdom, trusting God in suffering, and to how all were made right but sinned against God which pushes us further to see Jesus as the second Adam who succeeded to give us hope.

8:1-9

Other dude does pretty much all of seven to this section of 8. Suggests Solomon is encouraging us to lessen our expectations, but Jesus gives a better hope.
The future is too mysterious for us to have hope. Jesus says otherwise.
Death is too certain for hope.=Jesus says otherwise.
Man is too sinful to have hope. Jesus says otherwise.

10-15

Seems to be about fearing God as judge even if justice tarries

16-9:6

The certainty of death

9:7-10

Seems to connect to the previous about how the certainty of death impacts how we live

9:11-18

Similar themes of unpredictability in life. Ryken seems to emphasize trusting God with the unknown
Other dude goes 8:10-9:12 mostly on unpredictability in life

10:1-11

I guess it is wisdom and folly, but it seems to extend to things that don't make sense in life.

12-20

Hubbard goes 9:13-10:20 emphasizing wisdom for living that was brought further to light in Jesus.

11:1-6

Ryken goes with we don't know, but God does so work hard for Him.

Hubbard goes 1-8 about investing with what God gives us

7-12:7

Seems to be about remembering God before death and we can add to that the hope of life after death in Jesus.

8-14

The final statement

Fear God. Keep His commandments. Judgment is coming.

12:8 and 1:2

Romans 2:16; Acts 17:31

1. An unending cycle-1:1-11
2. Wisdom-1:12-18
3. Pleasure-2:1-11
4. Death-2:12-26
5. Timing-3:1-16
6. Injustice-3;16-4:3
7. Work or Relationships-4:4-16
8. No Meaning without God-5:1-7
9. Money-5:8-20
10. Death again?