

End-Time Prep Series
Lesson 20: What Are Chasing Part 1
Sermon Bible Notes by Pastor O. Cary Rodgers

Billions of people around the world make lifetime decisions based on money, fame, power, and influence. They give much of their time and money chasing after empty dreams, ambitions, and goals that do not lead to everlasting life - but instead to everlasting damnation and death.

What are you chasing? Are you chasing prestige, money, wealth, and positions of authority? Are you chasing a high through drugs? Or healing through prescription drugs? If or when you reach what you are chasing what do you find? Is it happiness, joy, peace, humility and truth? Or is it pain, chaos, vanity, emptiness, lies, deception, pride, sin, sickness, and death?

If you chase the worldly pursuits you will be living a life like a rat running in a tread wheel. They are running but getting nowhere. The faster they run, the faster they get to nowhere and the faster they wear out. This is “rat race living”, running but getting nowhere.

Many years ago this was my life running but getting nowhere. One day after work and close to the end of time fighting traffic, God got my attention to wake me up to the truth. God said to my mind in a still small voice, “Cary, you did everything you were told to do; you got your education. So what did you do after that?” I said “well I started working, Lord.” “So what's after that?”, God said. I said, “Get house, car, etc.. and keep working, Lord.” “So what's after that?,” said the Lord. “They tell me that I need to save money in my 401K (retirement fund) and then retire Lord.” “So what's after that, Cary?” “I retire, Lord.” Then the Lord continued and said, “Now, Cary what's after that.” I said, “death.” Let me pause for a second, I could see at this point that God was taking me from my past, to my present and future. The next question, pierced me and really got me to think about my spiritual walk with God. He said, “So what did you do for Me?” This question pierced me because I was still very busy in church. So I said, “Lord, what do you mean, what did I do for You?, I thought I was doing it for you. I am an Elder in the church, Youth Leader, Family Life Leader, ...” God said, “Yes, but that's what you do for them, but what are you doing for Me (to reaching the community with the gospel).” Obviously, I was speaking to God so I had to tell the truth. I said, “Nothing.” This also had a profound impact on my spiritual walk with God. My whole prospective began to change. The pursuit of worldly gain and money began to fade. I began to become more awake spiritually to the things around me.

There is a famous king in the Bible who knew about chasing emptiness, pain, sin, idolatry and wealth? He had it “all” from a worldly prospective but found that he really had nothing. What are some lessons we can learn from his story and testimony?

What book of the Bible in which he call himself “the Preacher”? Ecclesiastes

What does Ecclesiastes mean? Hebrew – the preacher

Ecclesiastes 1:1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

Preacher = one who assembles a congregation and expounds teaching.
= speaker to an assembly

General Question: Why did Solomon call himself “The Preacher” and what are lessons we must learn from “the Preacher” ?

What is the introduction (the attention grabber) to his sermon?

Ecclesiastes 1:2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.

Vanity (Hebrew) = Emptiness or unsatisfactory, short-lived --- it's a vapor..

In other words, Ecclesiastes 1:2 is saying, “Emptiness of emptiness all is unsatisfactory”

What is vanity, preacher Solomon?

First let's learn a little more about the background of King Solomon who now calls himself the Preacher

2 Chronicles 9:30 And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

King David was Solomon's father

Who was King Solomon's mother?

2 Samuel 12:24 And David comforted **Bathsheba** his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.

What does the name Solomon mean? The Hebrew meaning of Solomon – **peaceful**

This is significant in Solomon's life. Solomon was not a man of war like his father. David was very familiar with violence. He was a warrior that killed lions, bear, giants, and many Philistines. David also had a violent reign especially within his own family because of his sin of adultery and murder.

1 Chronicles 22:8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

2 Samuel 12:10 - 12

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For thou didst *it* secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

Solomon was not a warrior, his reign was to be peaceful until...

1 Chronicles 22:9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

God's main desire for Solomon and Israel was to give peace and quietness and restore Israel to great prominence on the earth as a blessing to the world.

Did you know that king Solomon had another name? What was it?

2 Samuel 24, 25

24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.

25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name **Jedidiah** {jay dee die yah}, because of the LORD.

Solomon (Hebrew) = peace.

Jedidiah (Hebrew) = “beloved of Jehovah”

Solomon, Jedidiah, was to be a gift to Israel as a blessing from the Lord.

What was David's counsel to Solomon before he died?

1 Kings 2:1 - 4

1 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

2 I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;

3 And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

4 That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

1 Chronicles 22:11-13

11 Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

When Solomon became king what did he specifically ask God during a dream?

2 Chronicles 1:7-12

7 In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

8 And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.

9 Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

10 Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, *that is so great?*

11 And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

12 Wisdom and knowledge *is* granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

1 Kings 3:12 Behold, I (God) have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

Solomon asked for understanding of judgment – wisdom. God gave him wisdom plus more. He was the wisest human being on the planet according to verse 12.

At the beginning of Solomon's reign he was young, wise, and very prosperous...

Why did Solomon begin his book of Ecclesiastes as a preacher, Ecc 1:2 “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.”

We will learn that the wisest man on the earth became the greatest fool! In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon is not speaking as a king, but a man of experience. He is an old man now, nearing the end of his reign. He is giving his testimony.

So what happened Preacher, how can the world's wisest man become the world's most foolish?

What is the rest of the story and life's lesson from the Preacher, King Solomon?

1 Kings 4:1, 21 – 27

1 So king Solomon was king over all Israel.

21 And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

25 And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

26 And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

27 And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

1 Kings 4:30-34

30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

34 And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

What did Queen of Sheba say concerning Solomon during her visit?

1 Kings 10:1-9

1 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions.

2 And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

3 And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.

4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built,

5 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.

6 And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.

7 Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

8 Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.

9 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

Knowledge and education... King Solomon was a true scientist, doctor, teacher, lawyer, engineer, business man, biologist, and researcher all wrapped in one person. There was none as educated and more knowledgeable than King Solomon.

Solomon built the most awesome temple of God... Also, his own home took 13 years to build!

How much wealth did Solomon have?

To be continued....

Appeal

We don't have to chase the truth, we must embrace the truth...