

The Search for Meaning

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Ecclesiastes 1:1-8.

B. This book is an examination of secular knowledge.

C. Solomon is the author, and he calls himself the searcher.

II. Life gives a feeling of futility. Nothing he finds has enduring value for life.

III. Nature itself has a sense of futility and everyone faces futility in his life.

A. Humanity is transient, but nature is permanent.

1. The cycle of the sun, the circle of the winds, and the circle of the evaporation cycle prove nature's permanency.

2. There is something in man that feels this principle is wrong--man should be the one that lasts.

B. All things are restless.

1. Human desire is never satisfied, but nothing is ever new in life.

a. Man thinks that things are new because his memory is faulty.

b. He has lost the knowledge of the past.

C. There is futility.

1. It is difficult for man to find out answers.

2. His understanding is inadequate.

D. Knowledge increases sorrow.

IV. The author finds the key to life--satisfaction can be found in life.

Application questions:

1. Have you ever felt like life was futile? What brought you to this point?

2. What are some pursuits in our culture that are leading people to a sense of hopelessness and despair?

3. How would you counsel someone dealing with this struggle from a Christian perspective? Explain.
