

# Ecclesiastes Outline

- 1) Life: a gift from God (1:1-2:26)
  - a) Introduction (1:1-3)
  - b) The perceived futility of life (1:4-11)
  - c) The restless preacher (1:12-18)
  - d) Testing life's pleasures (2:1-11)
  - e) Testing life's philosophies (2:12-23)
    - i) Wisdom vs. folly (2:12-16)
    - ii) Success vs. failure (2:17-23)

Qualified conclusion (2:24-26): Enjoyment in life is a gift from God alone, given to those of faith; yet it is still only temporal in scope and in worth.

- 2) Life: God's design or man's echo chamber? (3:1-5:20)
  - a) God's control? (3:1-4:16)
    - i) Principle (3:1-15)
      - (1) God's seasons (3:1-8)
      - (2) God's profit (3:9-15)
    - ii) Problems (3:16-4:16)
      - (1) Anomaly 1: corruption (3:16-17)
      - (2) Anomaly 2: death (3:18-22)
      - (3) Anomaly 3: oppression (4:1-3)
      - (4) Anomaly 4: ambition (4:4-6)
      - (5) Anomaly 5: selfishness (4:7-12)
      - (6) Anomaly 6: injustice (4:13-16)
  - b) God's economy? (5:1-17)
    - i) Religion vs. relationship (5:1-8)
    - ii) Wealth vs. labor (5:9-17)

Qualified conclusion (5:18-20): Enjoyment in life is a gift from God alone, given to those of faith; not taken of men by force or right.

- 3) Life: God's way a better way? (6:1-8:15)
  - a) Common evil: wealth at the expense of life (6:1-12)
    - i) Wealth without enjoyment (6:1-6)
    - ii) Wealth without contentment (6:7-12)
  - b) The better things of life (7:1-15)
    - i) A good name *better than* possessions (7:1a)
    - ii) The gravity of a carefully considered end *better than* unconsidered merriment (7:1b-4)
    - iii) Rebuke from a wise man *better than* the son of fools (7:5-6)
    - iv) Oppression *better than* profane gifts (7:7)
    - v) An end *better than* a beginning (7:8a)
    - vi) Patient in spirit *better than* proud in spirit (7:8b-9)
    - vii) Wisdom *better than* wealth (7:10-12)
    - viii) God's way a better way (7:13-15)
  - c) Dangers to the better way (7:16-29)
    - i) Self-righteousness (7:16-22)

- ii) The unchaste woman (7:23-29)
- d) The enabler of the better way (8:1-13)
  - i) The wise man submits to human government (8:1-5)
  - ii) The wise government submits to divine government (8:6-11)
  - iii) Where government fails, God will not (8:12-13)

Qualified conclusion (8:14-15): Enjoyment in life is a gift from God alone, given to those of faith; and remaining in those who seek the better way

- 4) Life: lived for eternity (8:16-12:14)
  - a) Joy (8:16-9:12)
    - i) Within God's ways are still mysteries (8:16-9:3)
    - ii) Within man's days there is still time to hope (9:4-6)
    - iii) Joy as the inheritance of the righteous (9:7-12)
  - b) Wisdom (9:13-11:6)
    - i) Wisdom's power (9:13-18)
    - ii) Wisdom's purity (10:1-3)
    - iii) Among kings (10:4-20)
      - (1) Wisdom's humility (10:4-6)
      - (2) Wisdom's patience (10:7-11)
      - (3) Wisdom's words (10:12-15)
      - (4) Wisdom among foolish kings (10:16-20)
    - iv) Wisdom's generosity (11:1-3)
    - v) Wisdom's initiative (11:4-6)
  - c) Time (11:7-12:7)
    - i) Redeem the time (11:7-10)
    - ii) Remember thy Creator (12:1-7)

Unqualified conclusion (12:8-14): Enjoyment in this life is a gift from God alone, given to those of faith; and you will answer for every act – so love life and serve God: what more can a man ask for?