

I HAVE SEEN

INTRODUCTION

- A. On several occasions in the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon declares, “**I have seen...**”
- B. By this he meant that through observation he had come to understand something important about life.
- C. In this study I want to look at five things Solomon introduces with the phrase: “I have seen”

DISCUSSION:

I. TEMPORARY NATURE OF LIFE Eccl 1:14

- A. As a result of this understanding Solomon understood that riches are not the ultimate goal of life Eccl 5:13
- B. Bible full of admonitions about temporal nature of life & especially of riches Matt 6:19-24; 1Jhn 2:15-17; 1Tim 6:17-19; Lk 12:16-21

II. HAPPINESS IS BEST APPROACH TO LIFE Eccl 3:22; 5:18

- A. What is value in choosing perpetual unhappiness over happiness
- B. All of us have times of unhappiness, but why should we choose to live in a state of unhappiness Phil 4:4-7
- C. Unhappiness is sometimes result of worry and anxiety which hasn't found peace in a faith that believes tomorrow is safely in God's care Matt 6:25-34

III. INJUSTICE IN THE WORLD Eccl 3:16

- A. Often see injustice in the world: racial injustice; unjust court rulings; bombings; mass shootings; seeking to drive God from public square; abortion; etc.
- B. Solomon came to believe God would eventually settle all cases of Injustice, so we should not spend our lives bemoaning injustices in world we can do nothing about Eccl 3:17, 18
- C. This thought captured in song: “**In His Time**”

IV. THOSE IN AUTHORITY USE IT TO THEIR OWN HURT Eccl 8:9

- A. Often seen in government - political leaders become enamored by power and hurt themselves due to it Acts 12:21-23; Dan 4:30-37
- B. But it's not just a problem for civil leaders
 - 1. Husbands sometimes exercise authority in their homes to their own harm 1 Pet 3:7
 - 2. Parents sometimes exercise authority over their children to their own harm Eph 6:1-4.
 - 3. Elders sometimes exercise authority (rule) over church to its and their own harm Heb 13:7,17

V. BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE Eccl 7:15

- A. Being good, or being faithful does not assure us that bad things will not happen to us Job 1:1-12
- B. We don't serve God, so he'll make our lives easy or comfortable; we serve God because He is the Creator and we are the creatures Rom 1:18-20
- C. Christians will suffer simply because they are Christians 2Tim 3:12; Jhn 15:20,21

CONCLUSION:

- A. We would do well to learn from Solomon these important lessons
 - 1. This realm is temporal, so our treasures need to be spiritual in nature Matt 6:19-21
 - 2. Happiness is a choice, and it is the best approach to life
 - 3. There is injustice in the world and where we cannot correct them we need to be satisfied to leave the ultimate solution to God
 - 4. Authority must be exercised with care lest the one wielding it harm himself
 - 5. Bad things happen to good people, but God is ultimately in control and we need to trust Him
- B. Some may be reluctant to obey the gospel due to things discussed in this lesson
 - 1. They are satisfied with the temporal and unwilling to focus on the eternal
 - 2. They are unhappy, and they blame God
 - 3. They see injustices and blame God
 - 4. Authority is very much like a drug that its users become addicted to. Becoming a Christian is, in part, giving up authority in one's life to God
 - 5. They see bad things happen to good people and they become discouraged
- C. We need to have enough faith in God to trust Him concerning these things and yield to Him