

- Last week we started into the book of Ecclesiastes. This was a book written by Solomon ([Ecclesiastes 1:1](#)) toward the end of his life to express all the things that the King has seen and lived through, and what is important in life. We also noted that throughout the book Solomon uses the word “vanity” a lot, and that he was meaning it as “meaningless” or “worthlessness.” Solomon says nothing is new, you can’t take anything with you when you die, and that even worldly wisdom is ultimately pointless.
- Solomon starts chapter 4 by noting that because of oppression, the dead are better off than the living under those conditions. ([Ecclesiastes 4:1-3](#))
- People are envious of other people’s hard work at times, without realizing that is this hard work that deprives one of any pleasure in life. ([Ecclesiastes 4:4-8](#))
- Jealousy is a human emotion, and is not one that is compatible with our spiritual lives ([I Corinthians 3:3](#)) and real compassion for our fellow human beings means we will not be jealous. ([I Corinthians 13:4](#))
- Two are better than one because two people can help each other out. ([Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#))
- It is better to be a wise young man than a foolish old king. ([Ecclesiastes 4:13-16](#))
- It is better to be a man of few words than talk a lot. ([Ecclesiastes 5:1-3](#))
- It is important to keep any vows we make to God, because God is the only one we must fear. ([Ecclesiastes 5:4-7](#))
- Riches can be a source of great trouble to a person, only accepting that these things and the work that come with them are a gift from God will give a wealthy person peace. ([Ecclesiastes 5:8-20](#))
- Solomon notes that a person who works hard to accumulate material things will ultimately see those things enjoyed by other people, and one can’t predict what future generations will do with their material things. ([Ecclesiastes 6](#))
- Jesus reminds us of the folly of material things also. ([Matthew 6:19-21](#))
- Solomon spends chapter 7 contrasting wisdom and folly. Among the things he notes as important to the wise are: protecting a reputation, being slow to anger, resisting temptation, being patient. ([Ecclesiastes 7](#))
- It is important to keep the word of the King, since his word is supreme. ([Ecclesiastes 8:1-9](#))
- Those who fear God may or may not die younger, but they will be buried with honor. ([Ecclesiastes 8:10-13](#))
- Striving to know God’s ways is pointless, because we will never figure them out. ([Ecclesiastes 8:14-17](#))
- Death comes to everyone, whether just or unjust. ([Ecclesiastes 9:1-6](#))
- Enjoy life with the one you love. ([Ecclesiastes 9:7-10](#))
- One or a few people can cause a lot of evil things to occur. Still it is better to be wise than a sinner. ([Ecclesiastes 9:11-17](#))

Questions

1. Why does Solomon say under certain circumstances the dead are better off than the living?
2. Of whom does Solomon say those who aren't working hard may be envious?
3. When does Solomon say hard work is particularly pointless?
4. Why are two better than one?
5. What is better to be than a foolish old King?
6. What does Solomon say about talking a lot?
7. Why does it matter to keep vows we make to God?
8. What is the thing that will give a wealthy person peace?
9. Why is it meaningless to accumulate material things?
10. What are a few things that Solomon says are important to the wise?
11. Why is it important to keep the King's word?
12. How will those who fear God be buried?
13. What does Solomon conclude about striving to know God's ways?
14. For whom does Solomon say death is inevitable?
15. Who should we enjoy life with?
16. Who can cause a disproportionate amount of harm?