

# Life in light of eternity - wisdom from Ecclesiastes for today

## David Gibson: Seminar 1

---

### HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This seminar is the first in a series of four. You can watch the seminars on your own or with your church, small group, youth group or friends. The questions/reflections provided may help you discuss and work through how to apply what you've learnt to your own life.

### WATCH THE VIDEO:

[Seminar 1:](#)  
[tinyurl.com/wxpup6m6](https://tinyurl.com/wxpup6m6)

### SEMINAR OUTLINE

How do we get a handle on a book as perplexing as Ecclesiastes? What difference does Jesus make? This seminar gives an overview and introduction to this part of the wisdom literature with some big picture thinking about the whole of life.

---

### QUESTIONS

1. Why do we need wisdom literature?
  2. What is the purpose of Ecclesiastes?
  3. Why can we be confident that Ecclesiastes is a unified book and the prologue and epilogue are not contradictory perspectives?
  4. Look at Ecclesiastes 2:24 and 9:9. What difference does it make to know that eating, drinking, working, and relating are not limited types of joy but everything that God intends for us to enjoy now?
  5. Why is it more helpful to understand the phrase, 'under the sun' chronologically rather than spatially?
  6. In what sense are the words of Scripture, 'like goads, their collected sayings like firmly embedded nails' (Ecclesiastes 12:11)?
- 

### REFLECTION/PRAYER

- 'This was the nerve the serpent touched in Eden, to make even paradise seem like an insult' (Derek Kidner). Discuss with a friend the times you've looked at God's good gifts of food, drink, work and relationships and, like Adam and Eve, asked, 'Is this it?' Why do we struggle with contentment and accepting the joys that God provides for his people now?
- Thank God that Jesus understands our longing for a better world. He groans at the brokenness we encounter and, one day, will recreate the world as it should be. Pray that, in the midst of your groaning, you would experience the comfort and hope of this truth.
- Your life isn't meaningless but it is like a breath – over in the blink of an eye. Write down your thoughts as you wrestle with the implications of this.
- Meditate on and pray through this prayer which summarises the book of Ecclesiastes: 'God the protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.' (The Collect, Fourth Sunday after Trinity)