

B. Regarding the Book of Ecclesiastes

It is a powerful book dealing with values and the thrust of life. It has been neglected at times due to its earthy language and the sober nature of its message. In effect it says.. "Nothing is worthwhile unless it is centered in God." The writer speaks from a background of participation in life to a degree that is far above what most of us have experience. Nothing has satisfied him when the Lord was not seen in the process. Knowledge, amusement, experience, possessions, etc., have all failed to meet the need of his soul. He tells us that these things have a place and are useful but not as the great values of life. Knowing and loving God are the key life factors from which all other things gain meaning.

Ecclesiastes is a poetic book and thus is very repetitive..hard to outline in a smooth fashion. It talks about the life we now live with the term "under the sun" and it uses the term "vanity" to explain that all human experience is nothing in itself. An enormous number of us place a disproportionate amount of energy and time on this life so it is no accident that the writer of this book downplays human achievements and works unless they are in harmony with God.

The writer believes Solomon to have been the author and that the traditional concept...he wrote it in his old age when he could see the folly of his later years...is correct. It is the voice of experience reminding us that God is Supreme and our lives are dependent on Him and His will for permanence and satisfaction.

In this study we are not working with the whole book...mostly with chapter 9, 11 and 12 for they give us a nice picture of what is involved in using one's life effectively...when the items mentioned on page 1 are in effect.