



## *The Vanity of Human Wisdom – Ecclesiastes 2:15*

15 Then I said in my heart, “What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?” And I said in my heart that this also is vanity.

When we take our focus off of our relationship with God and instead measure our lives against those around us, we are likely to find more than a few points of frustration. We will

always be able to find those people who seem to make the most foolish of decisions and still manage to skate by or in fact succeed wildly despite their folly.

I had a colleague who seemed to just be able to slide right through. He would always be taking care of things at the last minute or talk his way into or out of situations that would likely have undone most other people. Yet, time and time again, he just kept landing on his feet. In fact more than that, he just kept succeeding where there might appear to have been no opportunity to do so. The only way I knew how to describe what would happen, would be to say that he could somehow “Gilbert” his way out of things. There just seemed to be something in his personal and affable approach that made things work out.

Now, I could have been frustrated, knowing that I stood no similar chance of “Dave-ing” my way through similar situations. Alternatively, I could celebrate with him or as possible use his “magical” abilities to further joint projects that benefit many others. True to his “Gilbert-ness” I could do nothing but choose the latter.

Solomon, in Ecclesiastes 2:15, begins to question the wisdom of wisdom itself. He looks around and finds little difference between his pursuit of wisdom and the lives of the foolish. Under that sun, this is true. For even the labors of the wise, from a temporal perspective, appear to have no lasting value. My office is filled with a great number of books, that are unlikely to be remembered in a generation or two. Having written two books myself, I often wonder what kind of a lasting impact my labor on them might have. When I am in a mood similar to Solomon’s, I might question the time spent crafting them for publication. However, having connected with a few people who have read each of them, I can reflect back on the impact that this labor of mine had on their approach to ministry. Is there always a notable impact in our immediate lives? Perhaps not. Yet, from an eternal perspective, I wonder just how surprised we will be to find how impactful our labors have truly been.

## *Thoughts for Reflection*

If you have ever been in a frustrated frame of mind about your job or career, how were you able to gain a more long-range or eternal perspective?