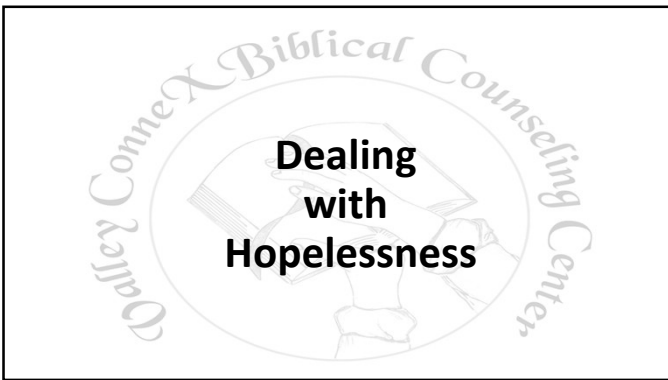


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Definition

- Hopelessness occurs when I believe I no longer have any resource to address my situation.
- Hopelessness is the opposite end of the spectrum from fulfillment.

3

Scriptures dealing with hopelessness.

- 2 Kings 18-19
- Ecclesiastes
- John 11
- Acts 27:13-28:10

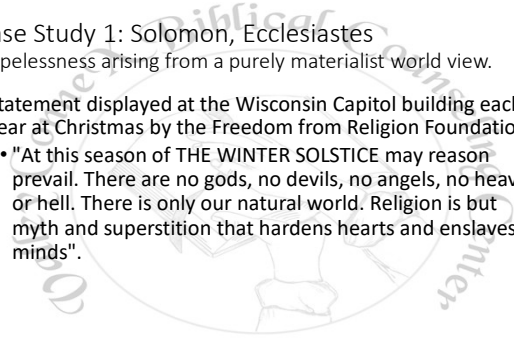


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Case Study 1: Solomon, Ecclesiastes

Hopelessness arising from a purely materialist world view.

- Statement displayed at the Wisconsin Capitol building each year at Christmas by the Freedom from Religion Foundation:
 - "At this season of THE WINTER SOLSTICE may reason prevail. There are no gods, no devils, no angels, no heaven or hell. There is only our natural world. Religion is but myth and superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds".

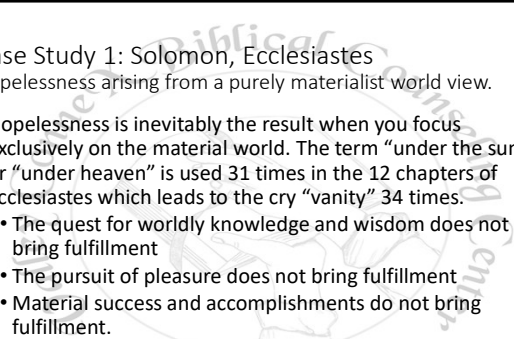


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Case Study 1: Solomon, Ecclesiastes

Hopelessness arising from a purely materialist world view.

- Hopelessness is inevitably the result when you focus exclusively on the material world. The term "under the sun" or "under heaven" is used 31 times in the 12 chapters of Ecclesiastes which leads to the cry "vanity" 34 times.
 - The quest for worldly knowledge and wisdom does not bring fulfillment
 - The pursuit of pleasure does not bring fulfillment
 - Material success and accomplishments do not bring fulfillment.



6

Case Study 1: Solomon, Ecclesiastes
 Hopelessness arising from a purely materialist world view.

- Hopelessness is inevitably the result when you focus exclusively on the material world. The term “under the sun” or “under heaven” is used 31 times in the 12 chapters of Ecclesiastes which leads to the cry “vanity” 34 times.
 - Worldly fame does not bring fulfillment
 - Injustice leads to despair from a purely worldly viewpoint.
 - Suffering seems absurd.

7

Case Study 2: Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18-19
 Hopelessness when all of your best- and well-intentioned efforts prove inadequate.

- Hezekiah allowed these events to change his hope of salvation in God to worldly solutions.
- People will taunt you in the midst of your hopelessness.
- Hopelessness is humiliating.
- God is the unfailing resource that provides deliverance from hopelessness

8

Case Study 3: Mary and Martha, John 11:1-44
 Events ordered by God to bring us to a state of hopelessness.

- God will deliberately bring us to a place where everything we hope in besides Him will fail.
- How would you counsel Mary and Martha on that third night that Lazarus was in the tomb?
- Lean on the truth rather than your circumstances to understand who God is and what He is doing.
- Hope cannot be based on your preferred outcome. Hope is based on God’s presence, plan, and purpose.

9

Case Study 4: Luke and Paul, Acts 27:13-28:6
Hopelessness when we cannot make sense of our circumstances.

- Anyone, regardless of your spiritual maturity or strength, can experience hopelessness.
- When facing the unknown always go back to what has been clearly revealed.
- The circumstances that can lead to hopelessness keep coming.

10

Some observed reactions to hopelessness

- Panic
- Paralysis
- Rage
- Confusion
- Cynicism
- Rebellion
- Suicide, the tragic, ultimate expression of hopelessness

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Some observations:

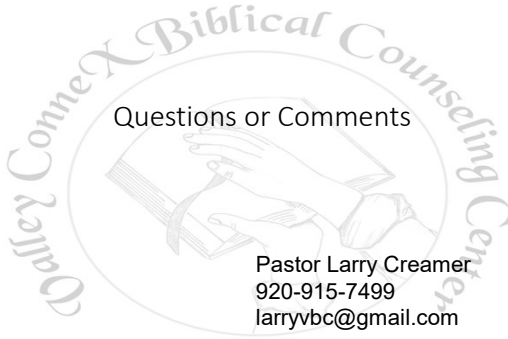
- Avoid the temptation to try to give an explanation to the specific events that led the person to hopelessness.
- Walk with the person who is experiencing hopelessness and consistently apply the appropriate Scriptures to their situation.

12

Some observations:

- Scripturally deal with the reactions occasioned by hopelessness:
 - Sins to confess
 - Understanding the person and work of God as revealed in Scripture.
 - In the throes of what appears to us as the most difficult and hopeless situation the unfailing resource that saves from hopelessness is that there is a throne in heaven and One seated on that throne. Revelation 4:1-11

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Questions or Comments

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