

“Navigating Life”
Ecclesiastes 1:1,2
New Hope Community Church
January 14th, 2018

A. A Look At the Author (1:1)

1. Title of the book derived from Greek word for **assembly**
 - The Hebrew word used in v 1 means one who addresses an assembly, or a **preacher**
 - The gathered assembly was an important Jewish event
2. The Preacher is none other than **Solomon**
 - Testimony from **within** the book —
 - (1) Son of David (3) Claim of great wisdom (1:16 / 2:9)
 - (2) King in Jerusalem (1:1,12) (4) Writer of Proverbs (12:9)
 - Testimony from his **life** experience —
 - (1) The issue of **wisdom** (chs 1,7,8,9,10,12) → 1K 3:5,9 / 4:34
 - (2) The issue of **possessions** (chs 2,5) → 2 Chr 9:13ff
 - (3) The issue of **accomplishments** (ch 2) → 2 Chr 8:1-6
 - (4) The issue of **pleasure** (chs 2,8) → 1 K 11:1-3
 - (5) The issue of **power** (ch 2) → 1 K 4:21,24
 - (6) The issue of **status** (chs 2,3) → 1 K 4:31,34 / 8:1
 - (7) The issue of **excesses** (ch 2) → Dt 17:15-17

B. A Look At the Opening Statement (1:2)

1. The predominance of a word that will be used **38** times
2. The Hebrew word ‘**habel**’ has two primary uses:
 - Literal = **vapor**, or breath
 - Figurative = **futility**, or to no purpose
 - In Ecclesiastes **both** meanings are in play and dovetail
3. To appreciate how this works, consider the nature of vapor —
 - It cannot be clearly **seen**
 - It cannot be fully **understood**
 - It cannot be accurately **predicted**
 - It cannot be **grasped**
 - It cannot be **controlled**
4. It is with this in mind that Solomon reflects on his life, and considers all that he has pursued, and the **results** he sees.

Personal Response

- ** Those of us who are younger — Refuse to close our ears to the reflections of the wisest of men who reviews life and sees many regrets. This is written so that we will not **repeat** them.
- ** Those of us who are older — Refuse to resign ourselves to the notion that it is too late for me. Rather, take to heart the lessons, make the adjustments God leads us to make, and **finish** well.

Life Group Meeting
Ecclesiastes 1:1,2

QUESTIONS

1. The name of this book and of the one who is speaking in the book clearly emphasizes the importance of the gathering together of God’s people. Share how assembling together with God’s people has impacted your life.
2. Read 2 Chronicles 1:8-12 and 9:22-27. Solomon certainly was qualified to write about wisdom and possessions, two things that are mentioned often in Ecclesiastes. Why do you think that God gave Solomon such wealth?
3. Read 1 Kings 11:1-3. Ecclesiastes also talks about the place of pleasure in one’s life. How is it that a man as wise as Solomon could allow pleasure and status to become so important to him?
4. Read Eccl. 1:2. The literal meaning of “vanity” in Hebrew is ‘vapor’, or ‘breath’. Solomon uses this word constantly as he talks about experiences in life — whether possessions, pleasure, accomplishments, power, or status. What do you think Solomon means by describing these things as ‘vapor’?
5. How willing do you think young people are to learn from the life experiences of those who are older? Can you think of a personal example from when you were young?
6. How difficult is it for middle aged or older people to make adjustments in life based upon counsel shared from others, such as Solomon? Can you share a personal example?
7. Spend some time praying for one another that we would hear from God in this study of Ecclesiastes and make any changes that He leads us to make.