

“Futility or Fullness”
Ecclesiastes 12:1-14
New Hope Community Church
March 25th, 2018

Life Group Meeting
Ecclesiastes 12:1-14

Introduction Solomon addresses these important topics —

- Overcoming **burnout** from the sense of futility in life
- Discovering the source of true **wisdom**
- Discovering the source of true **satisfaction**
- Finding purpose in the **painful** things of life
- Knowing how to **approach** the infinite God
- Avoiding the **extremes** that lead us off course in life
- Living with no **regrets** at the end of life
- Living with healthy **attitudes** that affect the outcome of life

A. The Greatest Example of Hebel (Vapor) — Life Itself (1-8)

1. A charge: Make God the **center** of life while young
2. A reality check: A graphic description of what **awaits** us all
 - Days that are **difficult**
 - Years that are increasingly **unpleasant**
 - Solomon gives an allegorical picture of **aging** (3-6)
3. A wake up call — death is not the **end!**
 - We move from the temporal to the **eternal**
 - The body that seemed so important returns to **dust**
 - Our **spirit** will appear before the One Who gave us life
4. Solomon ends as he began — life under the sun is **vapor** (8)

B. The Place Where Vapor Gains Meaning — True Wisdom (9-12)

1. Solomon reveals his purpose in writing - to reveal **truth** (10)
 - Truth that **prods** us in the right direction (11)
 - Truth that **anchors** us to solid ground
 - Truth that has its source in **God**
2. Solomon makes an important **distinction** in true wisdom (12)

C. The Point Where Futility Turns to Fulness — In Christ (13,14)

1. We were made for more than vapor, we were made for **God**
 - To fear God is to **submit** fully to Him
 - To keep His commandments is to find **true** life (Jn 10:10)
2. There is a day of accounting for all people, for all **deeds**
 - For the unbeliever — the great white throne judgment
 - * Facing the choice of **rejecting** God: Death & judgment
 - For the believer — the judgment seat of Christ
 - * Facing the choices we made in **loving** God: Reward

God did not create me for time; He created me for eternity.

Time (my lifetime on earth) provides the opportunity to get acquainted with Him. It is an opportunity for Him to develop my character in His likeness. Then eternity will have its fullest dimensions for me. Henry Blackaby

QUESTIONS

1. Share with each other any important insights the Holy Spirit has impressed upon you from the Book of Ecclesiastes.
2. Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-8
3. Solomon appeals for young people to remember God in the days of their youth. What are effective ways for parents to really encourage their own young people to do this. How can New Hope be effective as a church in doing this?
4. Solomon seems to be describing through vivid images the reality and inevitability of the aging process. Why does he do this? What speaks to you as you read and ponder this?
5. Solomon repeats the phrase in v. 8 that he began with in 1:2. Remember, the literal meaning of the Hebrew word is ‘vapor’, and the figurative meaning is ‘futility’. Why do you think that Solomon repeats this phrase again in this chapter?
6. Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-12
7. Solomon uses the analogies of truth as being that which ‘prods’ us and ‘anchors’ us. Share how this has been true in your life.
8. Read Ecclesiastes 12:13,14
9. How do you feel about Solomon’s conclusion in v. 13?
10. What are your thoughts about the judgment seat of Christ for the believer (2 Corinthians 5:10)?
11. Any thoughts about Henry Blackaby’s statement at the bottom of this week’s notes? Does it change anything about how you want to approach the rest of your life?