

Eternal PERSPECTIVE *Ecclesiastes*

BIBLE TEXT | ECCLESIASTES 5:1-7

1 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. **2** Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. **3** For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words. **4** When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. **5** It is better that

you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. **6** Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? **7** For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.

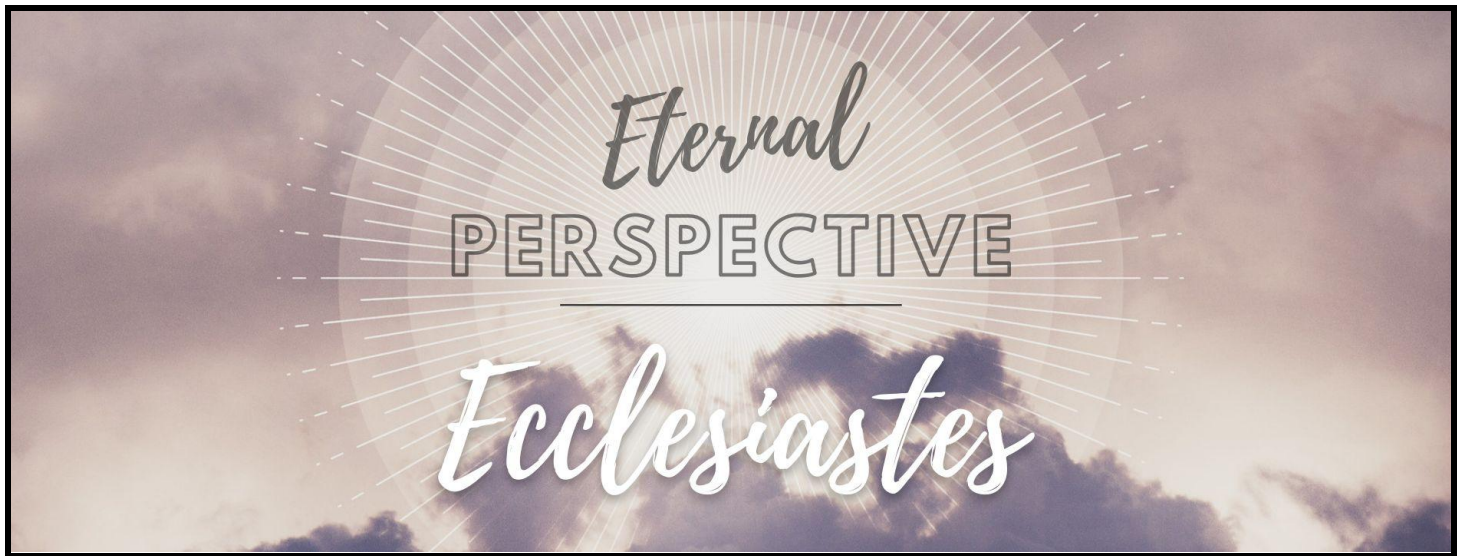
DEVOTIONAL FOR ECCLESIASTES 5:1-7

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I remember singing with my kids the Sunday school song, "Oh, be careful, little eyes, what you see" along with the hand motions. It cautions about what we allow our eyes to see, ears to hear, mouths to say, hands to do, and where our feet go. The song is good advice not just for children, but for adults, too.

How often do we make rash promises or hurtful words that we wish we could take back? Wishing to take them back almost as soon as they leave our mouths. What about promises and "other" things said to God during a mountain-top experience, hurt, or in my case anger or frustration? James 3:8 says, "but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison."

Verses 1-7 is a warning to remember that when we approach our sovereign God in any fashion, not just with our mouths, we need to do it with reverence, humility, and a good dose of fear. Proverbs 9:10 says "The fear of the Lord is



the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (See also Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7.) Coming to the Creator of the universe, saying, "oops, can I take that back?" does not show maturity, respect and love.

We should wake up each morning, remembering that God is our sovereign Lord, and we should fear His judgment (Philippians 2:12), giving Him the respect, reverence, and loyalty by guarding not only our mouths, but our entire countenance. The reverence and gratitude for His blessing of forgiveness and salvation should drive us to utmost respect and obedience.

Questions:

1. How have you been approaching God lately?
2. Have you experienced the "fear of the Lord" recently?
3. How can you listen before you speak in your prayer this week?