

The Cycle of Human Behavior II Solomon & Ecclesiastes

(Feast of Tabernacles—Day 6)
Fred R. Coulter—October 14, 2014

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to day six of the Feast of Tabernacles! Let's talk about free choice and sin in the Millennium. How is that going to be handled?

Let's just do a little review: Adam and Eve were in the garden with God.

- Did they still have free choice? *Yes, indeed!*
- Did they sin? *Yes, they did!*

Although, there was Satan the devil.

We know that during the Millennium that Satan is going to be bound so he won't be there. That won't be a factor. However:

- there will still be free choice
- there will still be the thoughts in the mind

As the Proverb says, '*As one thinks in his heart, so he is!*' There won't be any false churches around. There won't be any idols around. So, how is it that there is going to be sin? At the end of the Millennium, as soon as Satan is released, there's war! It's against those who, without a doubt, did not accept the salvation of God. You see how powerful the choice is!

Look at Israel. You'd think that if any people had any real, real incentive to obey God, when they came out of Egypt and came across the Red Sea and up to Mt. Sinai, God was with them in a pillar of a cloud by day and a fire by night, and they heard the voice of God from Mt. Sinai, but did the people still have the capacity to sin? *Yes, they did!* Did they sin? *Yes, right even below the presence of God!*

While Moses was up on the mountain receiving the judgments and the statutes and all the laws of God for 40 days and 40 nights they built a golden calf, and Aaron the high priest was in charge of the whole project. That didn't stop them from sinning. Look at the period of the judges; look at the period of the kings; Israel never had a righteous king. As we saw in part one, they were cast out because they sinned; same way with Judah.

Now with Jesus Christ and the Son of man in the flesh here on the earth, did people still sin? *Yes!* And the leaders made the gravest sin of all:

- those who should have known
- those who had the Word of God
- those who had the prophecies from God

They rejected Him!

Granted, Satan is still around. Likewise with the Churches of God. The situation changes, because to dwell with God was that God—with His Spirit, the earnest of His Spirit—is dwelling *in us!*

Let's look at the seven churches and take a quick overview as to what happened to them. Even with the Spirit of God in true Christians, do we still sin and make mistakes? *Yes, we do!* Have some of them given themselves over to rejecting all of the things that they learned of the Truth of God to follow a counterfeit Christianity of this world? One from which they were originally called out of? *Yes, they did!* About one-third to forty percent of the Church went back to it, all because of *choices!*

- choices of the leaders
- choices of the people

Because leaders sin, that doesn't mean that the people have to sin. But all too often that's the way that it is in this world. 'If the leader does it, that gives me license to do it.'

In the seven letters dictated to John by Jesus Christ, He finds fault with the Churches of God. Remember in part one:

- the revival or the beginning
- the education
- the culture—apathy/Laodiceanism
- apostasy

In every one of those steps, which follows what human nature is and does, by choice could there have been repentance? *Yes!* By choice could they have forsaken their sins? *Yes!* Let's keep that in mind as we cover some of the things of the seven churches:

Ephesus:

They did a lot; they tested the apostles. They worked; they didn't grow weary. But in all of their busyness, what did they do? *They lost their first love!* The first step in apathy! That's the beginning.

What did Jesus tell them to do? *Repent and do the first works!* We need to do the first works. Isn't it interesting how the Protestants say, 'Nothing is based on works.' However when you read about the churches, the first thing Jesus says is, 'I know your works.' Then He says *concerning his works*.

Smyrna:

They had their works, which was tribulation and poverty, persecution and death. There was no correction to them. That's one of the two churches that had no correction.

Pergamos:

Right there in Satan's city, with a big temple dedicated to Zeus! What happened to them? *They adopted the ways of Satan's way of doing things with a hierarchy and eating things sacrificed to idols*, which then actually was a beginning of what is called 'the Eucharist' today!

So bad was it with them that Jesus told them to repent, or He would come and fight against them. Think about that for just a minute. The very Church of God, having the Spirit of the Father, having the Spirit of Jesus Christ, still going out and sinning so much that they made themselves the enemies of Christ that He had to come and correct them.

Thyatira:

Then the Church at Thyatira got all mixed up with the false prophetess Jezebel, and that's all the doctrines of Baalism. Things got so bad, even after Christ offered repentance to the brethren and to the prophetess Jezebel, still some of them went into the depths of Satan.

I know that during the Millennium Satan won't be around, but there will still be choices.

Sardis:

Wasn't complete in their works. They had just a few things to identify themselves with the Head of the Church Jesus Christ. What happened to them? *They were virtually dead!* Think about that!

So, Jesus told them, 'If you strengthen the few things that remain, I'm not going to blot your name out of the Book of Life. Then He says, 'The one who overcomes...' Of course, *we have to overcome!*

We're also going to see they have to overcome all during the Millennium; every individual. Granted, we're going to see that it's not going to be quite as difficult as it is today, in some

ways; but in other ways, it may end up being far more difficult.

Philadelphia:

Everyone likes to proclaim that they are Philadelphians, and they are faithful, and they are the apple of God's eye, as it were. Well, the reason they were faithful is because they faithfully kept the Word of God and served Him, and resisted the synagogue of Satan.

Laodicea:

They thought: in this modern age, 'we've got everything made. We have the whole Word of God. We have all these means of preaching and teaching. We are really educated and good people. So therefore, we're cool.' And Jesus said to *repent and do the works that they ought to do!* Be zealous! We see in the Churches of God:

- revival
- education
- culture—apathy/Laodiceanism
- apostasy

because of lack of repentance.

Now let's see what happened to Solomon. It's interesting that in the triennial reading of the Law the Prophets and the Psalm, the whole book of Ecclesiastes was to be read during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Here was a young man who had everything given to him, laid out: *wealth, gold, silver, precious stone, authority, rulership*. He was the king over all the 12 tribes of Israel. The very son of David, the very one God chose to be king. He did not remain faithful; he sinned greatly. How did he do that?

Here is going to be the greatest lesson they're going to have to learn all during the Millennium, because human nature will be given a new heart and mind. Not a heart of stone, but nevertheless, the *law of sin and death* will still be within them. They're going to have the choices laid out before them as to what they should do. The hardest thing they're going to have to learn is *the vanity of human life!*

The great potential of human life. They're going to see the sons and daughters of God who have been in the first resurrection as their teachers. Here's Solomon who had everything going for him. There wasn't one thing that He lacked. As we saw, God gave him a vision twice. Let's see what Solomon learned by experience.

- How did he go from such a favorable position with God to nigh on being rejected?
- What was it that he did?

He was the wisest man on earth; all the kings of the earth sought his counsel. Let's read what he did. He had free moral agency to choose; and choice God is not going to take it away from anyone!

Ecclesiastes:1:1: "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. 'Vanity of vanities,' says the Preacher, 'vanity of vanities! **All is vanity**'" (vs 1-2). During the Millennium that's going to be hard to figure out.

Verse 3: "What profit does a man have in all his labor which he labors under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever" (vs 3-4). That will be slightly different during the Millennium, but nevertheless, remember that **God never removes choice!** Then he talks about the cycle of the earth:

Verse 5: "The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits" (vs 5-6). They had great deal of scientific understanding at that time, and they didn't believe in a flat earth!

Verse 7: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet, the sea *is* not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again." They understood the whole cycle.

Verse 8: "All things *are* full of labor; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Think on that! Think about how great that it's going to be for human beings during the Millennium. The best that it has ever been in the history of mankind. But nevertheless, this verse will always be true: "**...the eye is not satisfied with seeing...**" Think of all the things that they're going to see: good, right, wonderful, fantastic things, miracles. They're going to see marvelous things, indeed!

- What happens when they get used to it?
- What happens when that becomes automatic, so to speak?
- What happens when it is like today with electricity, touch a switch and even clap your hand or just speak a command and the lights go on?

And that's normal!

- What is it going to be like?
 - ✓ they're going to be able to see their teachers

- ✓ they're going to be able to keep the Sabbath Days and Holy Days

But it's never satisfying without the Spirit of God!
And with the Spirit of God we have to be diligent so that it is able to work.

Verse 9: "That which has been *is* that which shall be; and that which has been done *is* that which shall be done; and *there is* nothing new under the sun." Well, there will be a few things new under the sun during the Millennium as to human behavior and how they enter into the Kingdom of God. But that will become *normal* for those being born into the Millennium.

Verse 10: "Is there a thing *of* which it may be said, 'See, this *is* new'? It has already been in days of old, which were before us. *There is* no memory of former *things*, neither shall there be any remembrance of *things* that are to come by those who shall come afterwards" (vs 10-11)—because when we come into the world here's the world the way that it is. The way our mind thinks, that's the way it's always been.

Here's what happened to Solomon; ***he became narcissistic and self-centered, and wanting to prove these things by experience rather than believing God!*** What are we going to do with those during the Millennium who chose to do the same thing? That's the question! Will they be allowed to choose it if they want to? *Of course, because God is not going to take away choice!* Here's what Solomon did: rather than seeking God everyday, rather than yielding to God everyday, he got busy doing all of these things, and his wives got him all carried away, and he listened to the voices of his wives. I suppose you could say the most henpecked in the world. How about a thousand hens pecking on him?

- oh, give me this Solomon
- oh, Solomon, yes
- look what I've done for you Solomon

Oh boy!

Verse 13: "And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom..."—because he was the smartest man in the world. I don't know if he sat down and said, 'Well, I'm the smartest man in the world; I bet I can figure out an awful lot of things, and I bet I can even discover things that maybe God doesn't even know.' What do you know about that!

"...concerning all things that are done under the heavens. *It is* a grievous task God has given to the sons of men to be exercised by it. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold,

all is vanity and striving after wind” (vs 13-14)—a vexation, a frustration, an emptiness, when you’re expecting to be filled. Listen! The only thing that can fulfill is the:

- Spirit of God
- Truth of God
- God’s way

Nothing else will ever be satisfying; it will all come up as vanity.

Verse 15: “What *is* crooked cannot be made straight; and *what is* lacking cannot be numbered.” Isn’t that the way it is today? *Always has been!* Even during the Millennium when many of these things will be smoothed out, still there will be choice, still there will be inner thoughts. Yet, God is going to give free moral agency.

Verse 16: “I spoke within my own heart...”—rather than taking it to God in prayer. *Relying on self!* Just like today with a lot of Laodiceans, they’re comfortable with all of their friends that they’ve known or a long time. They have many excuses for not doing the things that they know that they need to do. ‘But after all we accept one another.’

When you go to your own wisdom instead of seeking God, that’s what happens. So, instead of seeking God and finding Him, what has happened to many people in the Church? *Fellowship and the brethren became their idols!* And they sought to do things *by their own way* because they didn’t seek God; just like Solomon.

“...saying...”—not realizing that in God we live, move and have our being, and we have nothing we didn’t receive. The ultimate judgment of the heart is the motivations of the heart.

Verse 16: “I spoke within my own heart, saying, ‘Lo, I have become great and have gathered more wisdom than all that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart has experienced great wisdom and knowledge.’ And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly...” (vs 16-17). He became an experimental hippy (to use a 1960s vernacular).

“...I perceived that this also *is* striving after wind. For in much wisdom *is* much grief; and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow” (vs 17-18)—**IF** you leave out God. The one who increases in grace and knowledge all during the Millennium will not increase sorrow, but will grow in love, will grow in a relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Notice what Solomon did; he literally said, ‘God, I’m going to try out all these things just to see what I can find out.’ Here’s the one who gathered 3,000 proverbs. We don’t have all the ones that he did recorded in the Bible. He sought out from other wise men of the world to the proverbs. Here’s what he did:

Ecclesiastes 2:1: “I said in my heart...” People can be very honest about their motives; Solomon was very honest, but honest *and* deceitful. Think about that. He was deceiving himself that he could find something that God has not yet provided; that Solomon, by experimenting, can have a greater insight into life and how things work, if *he himself did it* and put God on the shelf.

Oh, he still refers to God, just like a lot of good Protestants do today. They still refer to God but they don’t have God. Likewise, that’s what he did here. He wrote it all down. This is what some people would call today a daily journal; write everything down. That, in some ways, may be good to do. However, the things you don’t want to write down, because you don’t want it on paper, are here—in the heart and mind—aren’t they? *Yes!*

Verse 1: “I said in my heart, ‘Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.’ and, behold, this also *is* vanity. I said of laughter, ‘*It is* madness,’ and of mirth, ‘What does it accomplish?’” (vs 1-2). What did he learn? *Those things are apparent*—aren’t they? So, that wasn’t good enough:

Verse 3: “I sought in my heart to give myself unto wine, yet, conducting my heart with wisdom...” That’s a nifty trick if you can do it. Well now, let’s see what this is here.

“...and to lay hold on folly...” (v 3). Do all kinds of stupid things; experiment with all kinds of dumbness; and who knows what that entailed?

“...until I might see what was good for the sons of men... [he didn’t believe God; he wanted to find out for himself] ...what they should do under the heaven the few days of their life” (v 3). He concluded in the end that you ought to obey the commandments of God, but he forsook every one of them himself.

It’s just like the Protestants. They like to have the commandments on a plaque or written in stone, but they don’t do them. Same thing here with Solomon. He had plenty of money to do anything he wanted to do. Look at what he did just to find out for himself, just to conclude in his own mind:

Verse 4: “**I** made great works for myself; **I** built houses for myself; **I** planted vineyards for myself. **I** made gardens and orchards for myself, and **I** planted trees in them, of all fruit.... [notice the **I**’s—really narcissistic, wouldn’t you say?] ...**I** made pools of water for myself, to irrigate groves of growing trees. **I** bought men slaves and women slaves, and servants *were* born in my house; also **I** had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all that were before me in Jerusalem” (vs 4-7).

I imagine what he got on his white horse and riding around and saw all that God had given him. He had keepers to take care of the flocks and the herds, and everything that there was. As he says here, he had all kinds of things and he probably had a zoo where there were a lot of animals—exotic animals—from all around the world.

Verse 8: “**I** also gathered silver and gold to **myself**...” Can you imagine the storerooms opened up and it’s full of gold. How much is in there? *Here’s the keeper to tell you how much is in there.* And there’s the one with silver, and there’s a lot of silver over there. Look at this room full of all sorts of jewels and precious stones. All that; he had everything!

“...and the treasure of kings and of the provinces. **I** got men singers and women singers for **myself**... [He didn’t need a stereo, he had a live show everyday.] ...even the sensual delights of the sons of men, and many women” (v 8). Well, that tells you there was probably an awful lot of sexual hanky-panky; things that ought not be done! When you give yourself over to experimentation, and you want to try different things, the sin of the mind—even without the influence of Satan the devil—is really, really going to lead people astray. So, in that we don’t have to use our imagination very much.

Verse 9: “So, **I** was great...” Wasn’t there a boxer who said, ‘I am the greatest’? How did he end up in his old age? *He can hardly walk, and he’s got Parkinson’s disease, and he can hardly talk!* Is he the greatest?

Always remember this: *It’s not how you start, it’s how you finish!*

Verse 9: “So, **I** was great and increased more than all that were before **me** in Jerusalem...” That means all the wise men; not just the kings, not just the judges, but he’s including Moses and all the wise men of Israel.

“...also **my** wisdom remained with **me**. And whatever **my** eyes desired **I** did not keep from them; **I** did not withhold **my** heart from any pleasure; for **my** heart rejoiced in all **my** labor, and

this was **my** portion of all **my** labor. Then **I** looked on all the works that **my** hands had done, and on the labor that **I** had labored to do; and, **behold, all is vanity and a striving after the wind; and there is no profit under the sun**” (vs 9-11).

Without the Spirit of God *in you*, growing and developing, life is empty. Look at all these high tech people out there today, trying to have all this humanism: ‘We’re going to live forever; we’re going to come home everyday and we’re going to sit down in our easy chair and click, click, click. We’re going to hook up our computer and we’re going to download all of our thoughts into a computer.’

- Do you have a program for *righteousness*?
- Do you have a program for *sin*?
- Do you really want all of your thoughts downloaded into a computer?
- Do you want someone to come along and hack that and know all your sins that you have committed?

‘Oh well, we’re going to be able to do things so we can live forever. We’re going to be able to cross-genesize things with genetics of animals. We’re going to live forever.’ Immortality in the flesh! Isn’t that wonderful? Not much different from what Solomon was doing here. But did it fill anything? *No!* What happens to them? *They die empty! Sad! Weak! Withered!*

Verse 12: “And **I** turned to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; for what *can* the man *do* who comes after the king? Only that which has been already done.” Well, I’m sure some of the things that he did, some of the other kings couldn’t do, because they didn’t have the wealth to do it, and they didn’t have the wisdom to do it.

Verse 13: “Then I saw that wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness.” True! But if you observe that to be true, you’ve got to act upon it—isn’t that right? *Yes! You’ve got to come to God and put it together correctly!*

Verse 14: “The wise man’s eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walks in darkness; and **I myself** also perceived that one event happens to all of them. Then **I** said in my heart, ‘As it happens to the fool, *so* it happens even to me...’” (vs 14-15). He saw he was going to die; he finally understood that.

We don’t know how some of these things affected Solomon’s thinking and his mind the rest of his life. We do not know! Giving himself over to wine and other pleasures like this; remember, they had opium centuries ago!

“...and why was **I** then more wise? And **I**

said in **my** heart that this also *is* vanity” (v 15). Why? *Because he wasn't going to God!*

That's the way it's going to be in the Millennium. God is going to be there. Every opportunity to do what is right, but free choice will not be taken away.

Verse 16: “For *there is* no memory of the wise *more than* of the fool forever, since that which is now shall all be forgotten in the days to come. And how does the wise die? Even as the fool! Therefore, **I hated life...**” (vs 16-17). He had every opportunity to love life. Look at everything he had going for him. Think what it's going to be in the Millennium with everything going for everyone. That's going to be quite a thing.

- Will they really be satisfied with all of the good things that God has provided?
- Are there who are going to say, ‘Well, I don't know about this’?
- Are there going to be those who will reject salvation?
- *Yes! Rev. 20 says a lot of them are!*
- How is that going to be handled during the Millennium?

Verse 17: “Therefore, I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun *is* grievous to me; for all *is* vanity and a striving after wind.” It really got to him a little later on.

Verse 18: “Yea, I hated all my labor, which I had done under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who shall be after me.” Oh what a pity! Even the Pharaohs couldn't take it with them. It's still—that which has not been stolen from them—in the tombs and whatever pyramids and graves that they had.

Verse 19: “And who knows *whether* he shall be wise or a fool?...” Was Solomon wise? *or* a fool? *Well, he gave himself over to foolishness, so he must have been foolish much of the time!* He abandon wisdom and came back to it. But what sort of scar did that leave on his thinking and on his emotions, and his relationship with God?

Here's the sad part, v 19: “And who knows *whether* he shall be wise or a fool?... [Rehoboam turned out to be a fool!] ...Yet, he shall have rule over all my labor in which I have labored, and have shown myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.” That's going to be hard to take.

Verse 20: “And I turned to cause my heart to despair of all the labor... [let me just get totally depressed] ...which I had done under the sun. For there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in

knowledge, and with skill; yet, to a man who has not labored in it, he shall leave it *for* his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil. For what has man from all his labor, and from the striving of his heart, in which he has labored under the sun? For all his days *are* sorrows, and his labor vexation...” (vs 20-23). *Nothing satisfies!*

Now, because of free choice and because there is still *the law of sin and death* in human beings, there will be those who will conclude the same thing. They're going to look at all the good things, and they're going to say—like a lot of the young people do today—‘Oh, that's boring!’

“...yea, so his heart does not take rest in the night. This *is* also vanity. There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and make his soul see good in his labor? This I also saw, that it *was* from the hand of God” (vs 23-24). They're going to be able to see things from the hand of God.

Verse 25: “For who can eat, or who can enjoy it, more than I?” *Nobody!* He can enjoy everything better than everybody else! What a whole lot of vanity that is?

Verse 26: “For *God* gives wisdom, and knowledge, and joy to a man who *is* good in His sight. But to the sinner He gives labor, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him who is* good before God... [it's going to be taken from one and given to another; sound a little bit like the parable of the talents and the pounds] ...This also *is* vanity and a striving after wind.”

Well, the moral of the story is that ***unless you do it God's way it isn't going to work out too good!*** This also shows that even when everything has been provided by God, and even removing Satan the devil, *choice is still going to cause people to sin.*

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We see that this process of how society is applies to each individual. This gives us the understanding as to why God has given so many warnings in the Bible concerning His way; because of choice! Yes, Satan is there in the world today. Yes, he causes a great deal of problems. When he's removed, God's not going to remove choice from human beings. So, they can chose to want to do things like here in the book of Ecclesiastes. So, when that happens, what can be done about it? I just want you to think about it.

Ecclesiastes 3:1: “**To everything *there is* a season, and a time for every purpose under the heavens.**” God has a purpose for all of mankind, but has given choice. When it comes time for the

Millennium, that is the purpose of God. God has called all of those who are going to be in the first resurrection; they have been *called, chosen* and *faithful*, then changed at the resurrection into spirit beings, born again, and they will rule and reign with Christ.

We are also, in that capacity, going to be learning, growing in grace and knowledge still yet. Everything about God's way is constantly going forward. So will it be then. But during the Millennium, here we have many of the things that are going to happen here, and we'll see tomorrow that the sinner is going to die and be buried. There will be death for the sinner. We'll talk about for the righteous tomorrow.

Verse 2: "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what *is* planted." Today, most of us have lost that because we don't have gardens, and we don't grow our own food; we just run on down to the supermarket and get whatever we want. That will be fine and dandy until the time comes when that's even going to be a difficult proposition.

Verse 3: "A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up." That's true; it applies to everything. We have a time to break down *physically*, to heal *physically*. Likewise, spiritually. You come to repentance, you repent of your sins; a time to be healed. What did Jesus say about the planting of the Word? *That those who reject it are blinded, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and be converted, and I should heal them!* "...a time to heal..." *spiritually!*

"...a time to break down..." Yes, all the old ways of thinking, all of our old ways of life. The biggest time to break down is at the return of Christ. This whole world is going to be shaken and everything is going to be upside down. All broken down! It's going to have to be *built up!*

Verse 4: "A time to weep..." There's weeping for joy; there's weeping for sorrow. You have both kinds—don't you?

"...and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to gain, and a time to lose...(vs 4-6). All of these things are based upon choices.

Now we have the time to gain the knowledge of God. There are others who are taking that time, and instead of gaining, they're losing. All by choice. Remember how powerful human choice is. God gave it to everyone and commands us to

choose life, and to love Him. That's what it's going to be all during the Millennium.

"...a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace" (vs 6-8). Of course, there is going to be no war during the Millennium, but we're still going to have people overcoming human nature. They will have the inner war with themselves and their thoughts and the idols in their mind. They will have choices to make. Again, that can still apply.

Verse 9: "What profit does he have who works in that in which he labors? I have seen the task which God has given to the sons of men to be exercised by it. He has made everything beautiful in its time; He has also set eternity in their heart..." (vs 9-11). Yes, even in the flesh we become so consumed with wanting to live forever *our way* that all of the technology focused today is *how to do that!*

They don't realize that they can do that by coming to God. They have chosen to go *their way*. And with Satan in the world he's leading them to it. They will never attain eternal life. They may have some novel things that they can do, and there are a lot of novel things they can do, but they can't do what God is doing. He's put "...eternity in our heart..." so we would want God's way, we would want to live forever and to seek the Lord to find out how to do that. It isn't going to be done any other way!

"...so that no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end" (v 11). Isn't that true? How did God make the universe? That's going to be a class I'll want to attend in the Kingdom of God. Interesting!

- How do plants know how to grow?
- How does a seed know how to sprout?
- How does a plant know when the fruit is mature?
- Or when the grain is ready?
- How does that work?

All of those things we can see, but we don't know 'two hoots to a whirlwind' how that is done. You see how little we really know. That's why ***character is the most important thing:***

- the knowledge of God
- the Truth of God
- the love of God
- our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ

That's what's important, and this is what Solomon never really knew.

Verse 12: "I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice and to do good as long as they live." He knows that, but he didn't do that! How many people know that, but don't do that? *All of us!* Isn't that true? Think about that for a minute.

Verse 13: "And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God. I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever..." (vs 13-14). He still had some knowledge of God.

"...nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it..." (v 14). At least he learned that much! But why did he have to go through all this experimentation to do so? Amazing, isn't it? And have it all written down! That's great!

"...and God does *it* so that men should fear before Him. That which has been is now; and that which *is* to be has already been; and God requires an account of that which is past" (vs 14-15). He's going to have an account of our lives.

Verse 16: "And again I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness *was* there..." See how difficult it is with human beings?

"...and in the place of righteousness, that wickedness *was* there. I said in my heart, 'God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for *there is* a time there for every purpose and for every work.'" (vs 16-17). So, he knew that, but what did he really act upon? How was he able to apply it?

I don't think he learned this, though he gave it; and this is a parable type of saying here, Ecclesiastes 4:13: "A poor and a wise child *is* better than an old and foolish king, who knows not how to receive admonition any more." He wrote what happened to him. Isn't that amazing? Talk about a life!

Go ahead and read the whole thing here, because it's all good to read and understand, but let's realize that our focus needs to be on:

- the way of God
- the plan of God
- our relationship with God

Let's not get all wrapped up in self and narcissism; so that we can receive the things of God that He wants to bless us with. Having learned those lessons, and after being raised as spirit beings, we're going to be able to teach human beings the way to God. Even in spite of all that, there will be some who will choose not to receive eternal life. That's an

amazing thing!

Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a righteous man on earth who does good and does not sin." That's true! Even with Christians! As long as you have *the law of sin and death*, and especially as long as Satan is around, that's going to happen. Who is after us all the time? *Satan the devil! We are living in Satan's fantastic world today!* It's so deceiving— isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 23: "All this I have proved by wisdom; I said, 'I will be wise'; but it *was* far from me." Because the wisdom that God has is eternal and unsearchable. What we receive of it, we receive because we yield to God.

Verse 24: "That which is far off and exceedingly deep, who can find it out?" Well, yes indeed, we'll be able to find out a lot of those things. But not while we're human beings.

Verse 25: "I set my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *of things*, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness; and what I find more bitter than death is the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands are *like* fetters. Whoever pleases God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her" (vs 25-26). What a witness to his life! Yes, he had 1,000 women who were snares and nets. How many times was he trapped? *We'll leave that one for thought!*

Ecclesiastes 8:15: "Then I commended pleasure, because a man has no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry; for that shall go with him in his labor through the days of his life which God gives him under the sun." That's the way it has to be.

Verse 16: "When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth, for neither day nor night do men give sleep to their eyes, then I looked at all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because though a man labors to seek *it* out, yet, he shall not find it. Yea, further, though a wise man thinks to know it, yet, he shall not be able to find *it*" (vs 15-17). Why? *Because the wisdom of human beings is foolishness with God!* We can't find the things of God this way, by human experimentation. That's the whole lesson of it.

Here is the key; don't forget this. This applies to everything that we do. This is another way of saying ***be diligent all the time!*** Remember where God says,

- ***IF*** you will diligently obey the voice of your God,

- **IF** you will diligently keep the commandments of God
- **IF** you will diligently keep the statutes and judgments and ordinances that I give you

Diligently! Why does He always emphasize that? *Because human nature doesn't naturally want to do it, because of the four steps of human nature:*

1. revival
2. education
3. culture—apathy/Laodiceanism
4. apostasy

Ecclesiastes 9:10: “Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with all your might... [that’s what needs to be done] ...for *there is* no work, nor plan, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave where you go.”

We have a limited time to do the things that God wants us to do. It says in Isa. 40 that we’re just like a flower, or grass—all flesh is grass, and like a flower that grows old and withers up and dies, and its beauty is gone. Let’s ask ourselves:

- What are we doing with the opportunity that God has given to us now?
- How are we applying ourselves so that we can be able to teach all the people that are going to be under our care during the Millennium?

We’re going to have to feed the flock! There are going to be many flocks, and there are going to be many shepherds. Christ is going to be the Chief Shepherd. We are going to have the authority and the business of bringing in all that will into the Kingdom of God. That’s quite a thing! We need not get wrapped up all in ourselves!

Let’s see one of the things that’s going to happen during the Millennium, Ecclesiastes 10:18: “By slothfulness... [lack of diligence] ...the building decays...”—true; same thing with human life.

There’s a program on hoarding. They’re so slothful they can’t keep anything clean. They hoard and hoard, and pretty soon their houses get so filled with everything there’s no place for them to live. That’s the height of slothfulness. Decay sets in and those houses get moldy, stinky, dirty and everything falls apart.

I remember a house of a family up in Boise, Idaho, in my first year as a minister. It was unreal! They couldn’t keep it clean, though they knew they had to do it. It was quite a thing! It was a frustration to see that they couldn’t do anything. Needless to

say, they didn’t stay in the Church very long, because of slothfulness.

“...and through idleness of the hands the house drops” (v 18)—falls in, collapses, comes apart! Just like our lives!

You can read the rest of it! Let’s come to the conclusion of the matter here. Then we will see how we can apply ourselves and what we are to learn, and what we will be able to teach others.

Ecclesiastes 12:13: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter... [the whole story of life] ...**Fear God, and keep His commandments. For this is the whole man.**” You need to add to that:

- repentance
- conversion
- the Spirit of God
- the Word of God

Verse 14: “For God shall bring every work into judgment... [we started in Rev. 2 & 3] ...**concerning every secret thing**, whether *it is* good, or whether it is evil.”

Let’s see how we are to apply ourselves. The Word of God is given to give us wisdom and knowledge and understanding. The Proverbs are there for us to learn

- how to apply ourselves
- how to avoid evil
- how to do what is right
- how to be diligent

Here is what we need to do, and this is what we need to be teaching the people under our care during the Millennium. We need to learn that *now!* This is one of the things that apathy and the Laodiceans need to learn. That’s why Christ said to the Laodiceans, ‘**REPENT!** Get yourself some eye salve. I’m knocking at the door, open it, and I will come into you and sup with you. Do the works! Be hot! Be zealous! Don’t be lukewarm and cool.’ Likewise Prov. 2 tells us how to be zealous.

Proverbs 2:1: My son, **if...**—Every conditional thing is upon us as human beings, and we have to choose, we have to apply ourselves, and we have to do what is right

“...**if** you will receive my words and treasure up my commandments **within** you” (v 1)—not lip-service and outward acknowledgement of secret sins and different motives.

Verse 2: “So that you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding.” You

have to work at it; you have to apply yourself to it.

Here is the attitude, v 3: “Yea, **if** you cry after knowledge *and* lift up your voice for understanding; **if** you seek her as silver and search *for* her as for hidden treasures” (vs 3-4). Now, you know that if you knew where a treasure was you would be busy out there digging. You would find some means to get it—wouldn’t you? *Yes, indeed!* Notice that attitude, and with that attitude, what happens?

- You work!
- You do!
- You concentrate on it!
- Your mind is fixed on it!

Remember the Proverb that says, ‘**O Lord, my heart is fixed.**’ That’s how we can avoid all these difficulties that we have just covered.

Remember, whenever there is an **if** there is always a **then**.

IF you seek Me, **then** you shall find Me
IF you ask, **then** you shall receive
IF you knock, **then** it shall be opened

Verse 5: “**Then you shall understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.**” That’s the key, because God gives it to the diligent who work *spiritually* of

- the spiritual Truth
 - the spiritual love of God
 - the spiritual knowledge
- to
- grow
 - change
 - overcome
- to
- realize that we are here to be educated for eternal life
 - become like the Teacher, Who was Jesus Christ so that we, likewise, can be teachers

Verse 6: “For the LORD gives wisdom; out of His mouth *comes* knowledge and understanding. He lays up sound wisdom for the righteous; *He is* a shield to those who walk uprightly” (vs 6-7). Remember the protection of God!

Verse 8: “He keeps the paths of *right* judgment and preserves the way of His saints.” All of that! Life is the experience of growing in grace and knowledge of the Word of the Lord.

Verse 9: “**Then**... [notice how hard you have to work] ...you shall understand righteousness and judgment and equity, every good path.” Isn’t

that what we need? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 10: “Wisdom shall enter into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul.” There will be a satisfaction. Not a striving after wind as what happened when Solomon decided to become a narcissist and set aside God over here. Oh yes, acknowledge Him, give Him some lip-service.’ Yes, that’s true, but then he found out that everything he did was worthless!

Verse 11: “Discretion shall preserve you and, understanding shall keep you.” Then it talks about all the things concerning that.

When you go through the Proverbs... {note the DVD with the Proverbs (cbcg.org)}...remember what you need to do with it. Go over a chapter every day for a whole month and then go back and repeat it again. Let those Proverbs be written in your heart and mind:

- this will give you understanding
- this will give you wisdom
- this will give you defense against evil
- this will give you resoluteness of mind
- this will give you diligence

Proverbs 7:1: “My son... [look at it as God speaking to us] ...keep my words...” What did Jesus say about His words? *If you love Me, you will keep My Word!*

“...and store up my commandments within you.... [written in your heart and mind so you can do them] ...Keep my commandments and live...” (vs 1-2). Apply that to us and eternal life. Here’s the patience of the saints; here are those who have the faith of Jesus Christ and keep the commandments of God. Look at that, New Testament doctrine right here:

“...and keep my law as the apple of your eye” (v 2)—how good it is. We went through parts of Psa. 119; go through the whole thing.

Verse 3: “Bind them upon your fingers; write them upon the tablet of your heart.” That’s what God wants.

We’ll pick up tomorrow how we handle sin and sinful people during the Millennium.

- What do we do?
- What do they do?
- How is this going to be done?

Isa. 55—this is what it’s going to be, and this is what it is with our lives. Remember this: if you’re thirsty and you get a drink of water, you’re satisfied and feel really good, especially if it’s hot

and you're really sweating. If you can get some ice cold water with a little sparkly fizz in it, that is so satisfying. However, you're going to be thirsty again.

So, what we need to do is always be *eager, hungry and thirsty*. What does it say? *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled!* But that's an ongoing thing. What this is, it's free from God.

Isaiah 55:1: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who *has* no money, come, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread?...?" (vs 1-2). Look at how people spend money on all kinds of things, and just waste it and their lives are still empty and they're deeply in debt and they don't know what to do or where to go.

"...And your labor for *what* never satisfies?...?" (v 2). Remember, *the eye is never full of seeing, and the ear full of hearing*.

So, God says, through His Spirit, "...**Hearken diligently to Me**, and eat *what is* good... [taste and see that the Lord is good; that's the Word of God] ...and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (v 2). The greatest riches of all, the richness of the nourishment of the Word of God and His Spirit.

Verse 3: "Bow down your ear, and come to Me..."—come to God. Not like Solomon did coming to himself, 'I'm going to find out what I need to do, I'm going to experiment.' What about studying some of the Proverbs that you had there, Solomon? You could have learned that. But thank you for the book of Ecclesiastes that we can understand what a futile thing that it was.

"...hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (v 3). That's what we're going to do, brethren.

Verse 4: "Behold, I have given Him *for* a witness to the people, a Prince and Commander of people." That is David and the son of David Jesus Christ.

Verse 5: "Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know; a nation *that* did not know you shall run to you because of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you." That's talking about us in the Kingdom of God and how the nations are going to come to us. God is going to give us that responsibility.

Here's what we're going to be preaching

and teaching all the way along, and what we need to learn. We need to learn this first:

Verse 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way... [that's what Solomon should have done] ...and the unrighteous man his thoughts... [God is going to judge the heart and mind; the thoughts] ...and let him return to the LORD..."—repentance! Just like there is always choice, with conviction of spirit there is always repentance. God grants repentance.

"...and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.... [this is where we are going to have to come]: ...'**For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways**,' says the LORD" (vs 7-8). That's the first thing that people need to know.

Here's where we're going to go with this. That's why He's put eternity in our heart, v 9: "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Remember, God is going to accomplish everything that He said He's going to do, and we will have a part in it.

Verse 10: "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from the heavens, and does not return there, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, and gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater." We're going to teach them God's way!

Verse 11: "So shall My Word be which goes out of My mouth..."—at any time. Now with the Word of God here; in the Millennium with the Word of God expanded out how many folds, a thousand-fold over.

"...it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall certainly do what I sent it to do. For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break out before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands. Instead of the thorn, the fir tree shall come up; and instead of the brier, the myrtle tree shall come up; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign *which* shall not be cut off" (vs 11-13). That's going to happen all during the Millennium!

Brethren, let's see how good and great things are going to be, and how great a part we have in it. But we all must get right with God! Then we can teach others to do so.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, 13-18
- 2) Ecclesiastes 2:1-26
- 3) Ecclesiastes 3:1-17
- 4) Ecclesiastes 4:13
- 5) Ecclesiastes 7:20, 23-26
- 6) Ecclesiastes 8:15-17
- 7) Ecclesiastes 9:10
- 8) Ecclesiastes 10:18
- 9) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14
- 10) Proverbs 2:1-11
- 11) Proverbs 7:1-3
- 12) Isaiah 55:1-5, 7-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 20
- Isaiah 40
- Revelation 2; 3
- Psalm 119

Also referenced: DVD—Proverbs (cbcg.org)

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 7-30-14

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