

Broken Humanity

Ecclesiastes 7:15-29

1. Introduction.
 - a. The nature of Solomon's wisdom.
 - b. Short review on where we are in the book.
2. Vss. 15-18 – A twisted reality.
 - a. The observation.
 - i. Review of “hebel” (pronounced “havel”).
 - ii. Solomon observes that righteous people are often suppressed, and yet wicked people are often exalted.
 - b. Vss. 16-17—The response.
 - i. Don't look to wisdom to try and solve this reality (v. 16).
 - ii. At the same time, because things are backwards, don't assume that pursuing folly will then prosper you. Traditional wisdom still holds true (v. 17).
 - iii. Solomon's point is don't be surprised, but understand there's a kind of balance to life.
 - c. V. 18 – The approach.
 - i. A wise person hangs onto the truth of both verses. Wisdom won't solve the hebel (v. 16) and folly won't give you freedom from the hebel (v. 17).
 - ii. The one who fears God is able to do this well. They're not surprised by the hebel, nor do they become weary from trying to solve the hebel.
3. Vss. 19-22 – Wisdom and the experts.
 - a. Wisdom is better than the best opinions of the experts (v. 19).
 - i. Wisdom can actually strengthen a person.

- ii. Wisdom allows a person to have surety of mind, no longer being tossed around by every new thought or idea.
 - b. The voices of others will always be suspect (v. 20).
 - i. People don't have pure motives.
 - ii. People are finite and are unable to give perfect counsel.
 - c. Solomon's answer – Don't be surprised by this reality (v. 21).
 - d. Solomon's reason for why we shouldn't be surprised – We all do the exact same thing (v.22).
 - e. The greatest voice we could ever have speaking into our life is God's wisdom in the form of the Scriptures.
- 4. Vss. 23-26 – The limits of wisdom and the futility (hebel) of relationships.
 - a. Man's wisdom can't solve the hebel (vss. 23-25).
 - b. Relationships won't fill the eternality that's been placed on your heart, nor will they numb your experience of hebel.
- 5. Vss. 27-29—Solomon's conclusion regarding any virtue in humanity.
 - a. He assumes he hasn't exhausted every aspect of trying to discover virtue within humanity, so this is a partial conclusion (vss. 27-28).
 - b. There is very little virtue, or answer to the havel, to be found within humanity in general (v. 29).
 - i. The reason for this is because at the core of humanity is an idolatrous heart.
 - ii. 1Corinthians 1:20-25.
 - iii. The only solution to hebel is found in the cross of Christ.

Small Group Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this sermon?
2. In what ways are you looking to your own wisdom to try and solve the issues in your life?
3. In what ways are you listening to voices of this age to try and solve the issues in your life? In other words, who or what needs to go away?
4. In what ways do you need to grow in your dependency upon the Scriptures?
5. In what ways have you grown cold toward the promises of God?
6. How is Christ the ultimate solution to hebel?