



# EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN

Studies in Ecclesiastes

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*Growing in Spirit & Truth*

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## Like a Bad Penny

### Introduction to Ecclesiastes 7-8

#### The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God’s pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God’s family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

Have you ever noticed how you can’t seem to get rid of a bad penny—it keeps finding its way back into your pocket. There are some negative truths that are like that, and this week’s study shows us the way to use these truths to live wisely. The first of these truths is that bad things are bound to happen in this life, so we must accept this as inevitable. In fact it is good to consider life’s negative outcomes because they lead to a more balanced perspective. For example it is good to think about death and mourning because we will all encounter both at some point; it is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man than the laughter of fools because it will help us positively deal with reality; and we must realize that a good name derived life’s experience is better than a little soothing from

salve. We must also accept that some things are inevitable rather than being upset by this fact. Another negative truth we must confront is man’s imperfection. It is much wiser to admit this and deal with it rather than seeking to overcome it. There is no one who never sins, so allowing this to waylay us, or allowing certain sins to entrap us is unwise. Mankind is always seeking out devices to commit evil so it is better to simply admit this and live according to it. Finally, Solomon encourages us to adjust to life’s limitations. Just as there are certain inevitabilities in life and universal imperfection in mankind, so we must face our limitations. Wisdom helps us gain some understanding when we face these situations. One of these is that of dealing with bad decisions by those in author-



**Life has no direction or meaning apart from God.**

ity. The best course is to simply follow their orders and pick the right time if we seek to object. People cannot overturn the king’s orders without trouble, even though they may see injustice occur in various situations. Evil and injustice will be present in this life, and we are limited in our ability to correct this. It is better to adjust to this reality and simply fear God and enjoy the pleasure that comes our way—because it is His gift. Like a bad penny negative realities are part of life—we simply must accept it them and move on.

## Daily Study Questions for Ecclesiastes 7-8

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to [www.thehospitalchurch.com/small groups/ABFs/leader resources](http://www.thehospitalchurch.com/small_groups/ABFs/leader_resources))

<p>1. Read Eccl 7:1-7. What things are “better” than others (v1, 2, 3, 5)? Why (v2, 3, 4, 6-7)? How should we apply this?</p>	
<p>2. In 7:8-14 what do we get angry about (v8, 10, 13-14)? What is the basis of this kind of anger (v8-9), and what should we do instead (v8, 14)?</p>	
<p>3. From 7:15-18 what does excess in anything lead to (v15-16)? What is a better course of action (v17-18), and what do you think this means?</p>	

## Ecclesiastes 7-8 Daily Study Questions (cont)

4. Using Eccl 7:19-22 what provides strength better than righteousness (v19)? Why (v20, 21-22)?

5. Based on 7:23-26 what is difficult to obtain (v23-24)? What small bit of wisdom did Solomon discover (v25-26), and what does this reveal about how to obtain wisdom?

6. In 7:27-29 what grim reality did Solomon uncover (v29)? How have you observed that in your own life?

7. Read 8:1. What does wisdom do for us and why? Do you think this is very common? How should you apply this?

8. Look at 8:2-9 what is the wisest way to respond to authority (v2-4)? Why (v4, 5, 7-8)? What does timing have to do with it (v6)?

9. Based on 8:10-15 what does delayed punishment lead to (v11)? What is the wrong motive for doing right (v14) and what is a better approach (12-13, 15)?

10. According to 8:16-17 what limitation did Solomon realize about man (v17)? What should this truth lead us to?

11. From Eccl 7-8 how could we respond to the inevitability of bad things, of our imperfections, and of limitations—and how should we respond?

### Scripture to Remember

*“The end of a matter is better than its beginning; patience of spirit is better than haughtiness of spirit.”*

***Ecclesiastes 7:8 (NAS)***

### Celebration Fellowship

*Help—Hope—Healing*

**We're on the web**

**[www.thehospitalchurch.com](http://www.thehospitalchurch.com)**

### Life Group Questions—The Great Invitation (Isaiah 55)

*(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)*

1. Define the word compassion, and talk about some things that make you feel compassion towards others. What makes you not feel compassion?
2. Read Isaiah 55:1-2. Who is talking? According to verse 2 what keeps people from experiencing the compassion of God?
3. Looking at 55:1-3 what does God offer to us and what does it cost us—what is our first step to experience His offer? What does that require of us?
4. From 55:6-7 what else must we do to receive God's compassion? How would you do this practically?
5. What is God's promise to His people (55:7, 12-13) and how does that apply to us? Where does God's promise to us originate (55:8-11) and what does that tell us about Him?
6. Bring up anything else important to you from Sunday's message if there is time.