

The Five "W's" of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 1:14 ESV

I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.1.14.ESV>

Solomon is an old man looking back on his life when he writes this book. He tried all of life's pleasures and it left him empty.

The five "W's" :

1. Solomon tries to find happiness in Wisdom.

1 Kings 4:29-32 ESV

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, 30 so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. 32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/1ki.4.29-32.ESV>

Ecclesiastes 1:16-18 ESV

16 I said in my heart, "I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge." 17 And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind. 18 For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.1.16-18.ESV>

Ecclesiastes 8:16-17 NIV

16 When I applied my mind to know wisdom and to observe the labor that is done on earth—people getting no sleep day or night— 17 then I saw all that God has done. No one can comprehend what goes on under the sun. Despite all their efforts to search it out, no one can discover its meaning. Even if the wise claim they know, they cannot really comprehend it.

<https://bible.com/bible/111/ecc.8.16-17.NIV>

2. Solomon tries to find happiness in Wine.

Ecclesiastes 2:1-3 ESV

1 I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" 3 I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.2.1-3.ESV>

3. Solomon tries to find happiness in Work.

Ecclesiastes 2:4-6 ESV

4 I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. 5 I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6 I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.2.4-6.ESV>

Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

<https://bible.com/bible/111/col.3.23-24.NIV>

4. Solomon tries to find happiness in Wealth.

Ecclesiastes 2:8 ESV

I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.2.8.ESV>

1 Kings 10:23 ESV

Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/1ki.10.23.ESV>

Solomon is the world's richest man telling us some important truths about money.

A) The more money I have, the more money I want.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 ESV

He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.5.10.ESV>

B) The more money I have, the more money I spend.

Ecclesiastes 5:11 ESV

When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.5.11.ESV>

C) The more money I have, the more I worry.

Ecclesiastes 5:12 ESV

Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.5.12.ESV>

D) The more money I have, the more money I lose

Ecclesiastes 5:13-14 ESV

13 There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, 14 and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.5.13-14.ESV>

5. Solomon tries to find happiness in Women.

1 Kings 11:1-3 ESV

1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/1ki.11.1-3.ESV>

Ecclesiastes 12:13 ESV

The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

<https://bible.com/bible/59/ecc.12.13.ESV>

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