



Don't Chase the Wind!

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, 1 John 2:15-17

Luke 12:15-20, Matthew 6:19-34

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In the Old Testament, King Solomon is considered the “**Teacher**” of Israel. God made Solomon the wisest man on earth and gave him unparalleled power, tremendous wealth and worldwide fame. But his pride and his ego led him astray; he became the greatest “**Prodigal Son**” story in the Bible!

King Solomon lived an **extravagant, godless life**; towards the end of his life, after he repented, he looked back and described his godless life like this: “***I denied myself nothing that my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.***”

Ecclesiastes 2:10

- He built a **vast palace** for himself, and called it the “Palace of the Forest of Lebanon” 1 Kings 7:1-2
- **Everything** in his house was made of gold 1 Kings 10:21ff
- Every day and at every meal, he ate the **choicest food** and drank the **finest wine** 1 Kings 4:7ff
- He undertook **great projects** for himself; Buildings, gardens, parks, vineyards, forests, flocks, & herds; he had slaves, singers, musicians, and soldiers. All of this was for himself and his own enjoyment. Ecclesiastes 2
- He took **700 wives** for himself 1 Kings 11:1ff
- He had **300 concubines** (= mistresses) 1 Kings 11:1ff
- Many of his wives and concubines were not Israelites -- nor were they believers in God -- but pagans and unbelievers. They worshipped false gods and led Solomon into great **apostasy**. He even built altars to these false gods and offered pagan sacrifices to the demons. 1 Kings 11:1ff

Despite the great gifts of wisdom, wealth and fame that God gave to Solomon, he squandered them all. Solomon's life is marked by **rebellion, idolatry and immorality**. He is the great Old Testament **Prodigal Son** that we can learn from¹.

Solomon fell into sin, squandered his gifts, and wasted his life so that you will not fall into sin, squander your gifts, nor waste your life!

By God's grace, Solomon **REPENTED**, and returned to the Lord His God. In repentance, he wrote the OT book of **Ecclesiastes**. In **Ecclesiastes**, Solomon describes his **extravagant, godless, prodigal life** using three phrases: (1) Vanity, (2) "Chasing the Wind", and living life (3) "Under the Sun".

1. **VANITY** **Vanity** means "breath"; like a warm breath on a cold day, the things of this world are fleeting and unfulfilling and disappointing; they will disappear like a vapor. By itself, without God, Scripture, nor faith, all of Solomon's wisdom, wealth, and fame was vanity -- nothing more than a warm breath disappearing on a cold day.
2. **CHASING THE WIND** **Chasing the Wind** is a phrase that means the pursuits of this world will never satisfy you; like the wind blowing through your hair, it's here and then it's gone. **"Chasing the wind" is a phrase of hopeless pursuit and wasted time.** All of Solomon's wisdom, wealth, and fame was simply chasing the wind without faith in God.
3. **UNDER THE SUN** Life **Under The Sun** is Solomon's way of describing life without God and without His Word. It is pure human life alone in a sinful, broken world with no hope, no joy, no faith, and no salvation. All of Solomon's wisdom, wealth, and fame was lived "under the sun" – without God, without His Word, with NO meaning nor significance.

**Life under the sun is ALL VANITY,
and chasing after the wind.**

¹ In theology there is a term called the "vicarious atonement", which means that Christ took our sins and died in our place (= *vicarious* — acting or doing for another.) If I can coin a word, Solomon's life is exactly opposite: "vicarious worldliness." He lived such a sinful, self-centered, immoral, and rebellious life for all of us, so that we can learn from him. He tried it all, he pursued the pleasures of the world – both the good and the sinful – to the Nth degree; far more than anyone else could possibly do in a lifetime. He had the wealth, power, time, and means to do this. We can learn from him not to even try it! He is the ultimate Prodigal Son and he writes to warn us NOT TO FOLLOW in his footsteps!

Solomon knows, He was wiser, wealthier, and more famous than all of us put together. There has been no one on earth like him. He tried everything in the pursuit of happiness; he chased **everything** the world has to offer trying to find the meaning of life. **And He failed.**

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. Ecclesiastes 2:11

His broken life, his failed efforts, and his dismal words call us to pay attention! It's a warning for all of us! Make sure that you are not chasing the wind! Make sure that your life is not like a warm breath on a cold day and everything you think is important will someday vanish on you! Chasing after the wind will lead you into rebellion, idolatry, and immorality --- just like it did King Solomon!

I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, ALL is vanity and chasing after the wind. Ecclesiastes 1:14

The book of Ecclesiastes was written in Scripture so that we can learn from Solomon! Solomon tried everything in pursuit of happiness and the meaning of life. **And He failed.**

**Life under the sun is ALL VANITY,
and chasing after the wind.**

Thankfully, there is a "Teacher" who is
GREATER THAN SOLOMON: Jesus, the Son of God!

Just as Solomon was the Old Testament "Teacher" of Israel; the Lord Jesus Christ is "greater than Solomon", and He is the New Testament "Teacher" of the Holy Christian Church².

Jesus teaches us not to chase after the wind and live vain lives, but rather to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6:33

² The Son of David (Jesus) is **greater** than the son of David (Solomon) ---- Note Luke 11:31: *The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.* Jesus is the Messianic Son of David who is also the **Son of God** who is far "**greater than Solomon**"! Just as Solomon was the Old Testament Teacher of Israel ("Ecclesiastes"); so now Jesus is the **greater** New Testament Teacher of the Holy Christian Church (John 13:13: *[Jesus said,] you call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am*)!

The **Kingdom of God** is wherever Jesus is using His Kingly power to forgive sins and give eternal life!

- ⇒ **Seeking Him** is **true wisdom!**
- ⇒ **Believing in Him** is **true living!**
- ⇒ **Trusting His forgiveness, life and salvation** is **true wealth!**
- ⇒ **Purpose, meaning, and direction** in life are found **only in Christ!**

**Although we live “under the sun”,
we live our lives UNDER THE SON!**

You have a relationship with the God of all Creation through His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ who came into the world to save you. Through Christ’s death and resurrection, you have been moved from the Kingdom of the world and into the Kingdom of God. God moves you from “life under the sun” to Life under the SON!”.

Faith in Christ makes all the difference! In Christ, your sin is forgiven, your failures are forgotten, and the Lord God Himself promises to work for good in all the vain things that happen to you in this life.

Under the SON, Jesus Christ, your life has purpose, direction, and meaning. Rather than “*chase after the wind*”, you are “working in the Kingdom of God”.

- You live a holy and Godly life that reflects that you fear, love and trust in God
- You are investing in your family so that they have a strong, solid and stable foundation in Christ
- You are faithful in your vocations and in doing so, you are a bright light of hope, peace and salvation to other people
- Under the SON, you live Biblically Literate, Doctrinal Sound, Mission Minded, and Passionately Engaged lives as disciples.

When you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, your life and what you do makes a difference. The Lord God is at work through your efforts, your time, your money, and your life. Your life has purpose and meaning.

King Solomon is the great Old Testament **Prodigal Son** that we can learn from. Solomon fell into sin, squandered his gifts, and wasted his life: he lived a vain life chasing the wind and it cost him everything.

DON'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO YOU! Don't live a vain life chasing the wind;

But through faith in Christ, **Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you!** Amen!

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that you are the New Testament Teacher sent from God, and that we must listen, learn and obey your Word. We know also that You are also our Savior from sin, the only one who can rescue us from guilt and death. Help us to seek first Your Kingdom in our lives; and to stop living in vanity and self-centeredness. Protect us from chasing after the wind and squandering our lives. We desire to glorify you and serve other people; and we ask you to help us do this! We pray this to the glory of the Father and by the power of the Spirit, amen!

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

King Solomon said in his 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. **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. **7** I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. **8** 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 children of man. **9** So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. **10** And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. **11** Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Luke 12:15-20

Then Jesus said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.” 16 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ 18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ 20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ 21 “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Matthew 6:19-34

[Jesus said,] "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, **20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **22** "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, **23** but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! **24** "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. **25** "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **34** "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.