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Luke

Chapter 12 - An Unforeseen Disclosure

The Miscalculation of Man Revealed (vs. 13-21)

**Luke 12:13-21:** Someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” But He said to him, “Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?” Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.” And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.”’” But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and

now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Well, I believe that one of the reasons why we love the word of God so much is because it is truth. Peter reminds us that truth is not debatable, nor is it a matter of one's own opinion. It is truth. And I think oftentimes we hear different perspectives and different thoughts, but still there's only one truth. And Peter will state, "it's not a matter of one's own interpretation, but men were moved by the Spirit of God." That is the Spirit of truth. Jesus will say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." I'm so glad that He is an absolute, that He doesn't change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He doesn't change. It is this truth that gives us an anchor, as Hebrews will say, an anchor for our soul. If in fact it was an ebb and flow, you know, one time it's this, another time it's that, where's the anchor? But we have a rock both sure and steadfast, don't we? It's something that doesn't move, and that is the truth of God. Scripture would tell us in the

Gospel of John in John 1 that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. What does the Word look like? Full of grace and truth. So, we actually had Truth walking among us. The thought is that perhaps in some ways Jesus was here to condemn us, but He states it clearly in John 3, "I didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world through Me might be saved." And so, we realized that the process of the condemnation really wasn't Christ going around condemning as much as it is Christ revealing what truth was. And once you begin to reveal what truth is, according to Ephesians 5, you begin to expose things. Another way of putting it is, when light goes into the room, it exposes things. And by virtue of the Light being in the world, Jesus began to expose things.

In Luke 12, Jesus is exposing things. And His fundamental statement is, "Nothing is hidden that won't be revealed." Why? Because He's the Light of the world. And because light is going to shine in the darkness, and the darkness cannot subdue it nor comprehend it. But the darkness cannot overpower it. And so, we're so thankful that as Christ comes on the scene, He begins to reveal things.

Now, after saying all that, it is important, as Paul will tell Timothy, to rightly divide the word of truth; that Peter will actually make reference to the fact that the unstable and the untaught will distort Scripture. When he's talking about untaught, he's not talking about people that don't take classes. What he's talking about is the incorrigible, those unteachable. So, those that are clearly desirous of learning and have the spirit of truth within them, this is a key in 1 John; truth will ring true. However, God raises up pastors and teachers to actually reveal this truth and give us stability in this. And so, as you come to these Gospels, you realize that in the Gospels, God is shining forth light, He's revealing truth to us, and there is only one truth in it.

Now, after saying that, let me say this, there are many applications to truth. Nevertheless, there's one truth. Now, the reason why I say this is because the way that Luke writes this book, and I have to have you go back to the very beginning of the book. We've done this several times, but we do this to remind us of the way that this particular Gospel was written. Luke writes the book, if you look with me, in Chapter 1 and verse 1, as he begins to

explain what he has undertaken. And once again, let me reveal to you that this is not only not a matter of one's own interpretation, but only men moved by the Spirit wrote these things. So, this is the Spirit of God writing these things. It is for this reason that we pay close attention, because we know that whatever God says, means something. Whatever I say, whatever anybody else says, well, our opinions really have no bearing on what truth is. But God is declaring truth in this.

So, the way that the passage reads is,

(Luke 1:1) “Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us,

(Luke 1:2) just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word,

(Luke 1:3) it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus;

(Luke 1:4) so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.”

What he is telling us within the passage is, there is a way that he's been writing, and the Spirit of God has moved him to write in this book in a certain way. Now, we oftentimes think of the phrase, “in consecutive order,” making reference to historical or timeline, but that's not what he's talking about. What he's talking about is the whole purpose of the order in which He's given the Scripture is so that you might understand the truth in a more vivid way. In other words, he'll use an interesting word when he talks about “in consecutive order,” in Luke 1:3 in particular. What he uses is a word in the Greek called “*kathexēs*”. This particular word actually means putting one thing on top of another. His point is that he is giving understanding to a truth in a broader way by giving a consecutive, successive order to things. In other words, he's going to state a truth and then he's going to build upon that. And so, as we go through the different chapters, they are interconnected. The one thing builds upon the other.

So, when He starts off in this Chapter 12, He's starting off about... Well, He's concerned that His disciples are going to catch this bug called hypocrisy. I mean, it is this disease that is infiltrating everything. It's like leaven that comes in and leavens the whole lump. It is very contagious. And He warns His disciples right off the bat, "Beware of hypocrisy." Well, hypocrisy really is antithetical to truth. In other words, it's kind of the opposite of truth. Truth is about being real. It's about being genuine. Hypocrisy is about being fake and putting on masks. And so, it is this point that He wants to bring out. Now, He's going to start off by telling us that this is the problem. He's then going to make reference throughout this particular chapter of the things that are tied into this. It is our nature to maybe read the first verse, and okay, He's talking about hypocrisy. Then we go into this particular passage in verse 13, and there's a guy in the crowd, and he goes, "Tell my brother to give me half of my inheritance." And Jesus goes, "So, this is about greed, isn't it?" And we go, "Well, that's not connected." It is connected. And that's the point that I want you to see, that Luke has given us one thing upon another, so that we might better understand

the problem of this hypocrisy. Now, where does hypocrisy come from and why do we have it? Well, in many respects, what He states at the very beginning is that really it is an overflow of fear. Fear comes into our life and we're afraid of what people are thinking. We're afraid of how they're going to react, or maybe we're afraid of how things are going to turn out. But fear is a great motivation to make us do the things that we do. If in fact you're not motivated by the love for God, which let me just state, if you don't have a love for God, you don't have love. Because Scripture says, God is love. So, if you're not motivated by a love of God, then you're going to be motivated by fear. Now, I know that many of us, like Peter, would say, "I'm not afraid of anything." But the rooster's going to crow and you're going to find out you are. And that's just God revealing these things. And that's what Christ is doing all along the way. He just begins to reveal. And in this passage, if you look with me, He turns to His disciples and he goes, "Okay, with all this mass of humanity stepping on one another and people only thinking of themselves," He says, "Let Me let you know this hypocrisy is, I mean, it's running rampant." And look,

we don't have to be psychologists to understand this to be true. I mean, almost everybody we talk to on any given day, we can find out they weren't being completely truthful. They weren't being transparent. They were putting on airs. They were putting on a face. In fact, fundamentally, all people are cover-up artists. And we're so good at what we do, according to Psalm 32, that we'll actually, to our own hurt, cover-up. Remember where the psalmist goes, "I thought I'd be silent about my sin, and then my body wasted away." Yeah. Well, what are we doing? What are you suppressing? You're suppressing your fears. You're suppressing your anxieties. You're not dealing with the reality that you are a sinner. "If I'm a sinner, I'm going to be judged." "If I'm a sinner, they're not going to like me." "If I'm a sinner, something's going to be exposed. I can't admit that stuff." Finally, the psalmist goes, "I admitted my sin and I was okay." It's like, what's the worst that could happen? But the wonderful thing in 1 John 1 is that, look, "if you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you." If you say you have no sin, you're just lying. You're suppressing the truth, you're putting on airs, and you're faking it. And of course, we're

really good at being a cover-up artist. So, this Luke 12 really begins and opens up with that. Jesus starts off and He goes, “Here's the problem. Everybody, you're faking it. So, you need to be truthful.” And it's only with the Spirit of Truth that will begin to reveal this.

His statement is pretty interesting in verse 2,

(Luke 12:2) “But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.”

There's nothing covered that will not be revealed and hidden that will not be made known. This is where I think we err many times in the passage, is that we maybe in our own mind, begin to devise, “Well, I know how God's going to uncover stuff.” And the bottom line is, no, you don't. But He's going to show you in the passage. So, these things aren't disconnected. One's tied upon another, and He's just piling one upon the other. So, what is He saying within the passage? Well, what He begins to say is, “Let Me tell you what the problem is. The problem is you're afraid of man.” And so, He begins to share this, and He says, “Look, this is the warning.”

Now, it's interesting, He starts off in verse 1, "Beware." He then says in verse 5, "I warn you of this." You go into verse 15, and once again, He's going to say, "Beware." And His point is that there are things that are not seen by you. In many cases, you don't even know why you're acting the way you are. You know that you're doing wrong. You know that you're upset. You know that you have anxiety. In fact, He's going to be dealing with anxiety as you go a little bit further in this passage.

Look at Chapter 12, just drop down to verse 25,

(Luke 12:25) "And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span?"

(Luke 12:22) "And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life..."

So, He's clearly going to be dealing with anxiety. It's about fear. Fear is a great motivator. If you're not walking in love, you're walking in fear. Perfect love casts out fear. So, if in fact you're walking in the love of God, you won't be afraid. But the point is that we're afraid of what people are thinking. And because of this, we become superficial. We put on airs. We put on the mask, and we begin to

walk in a disassembling, pretensive way in which we act superior sometimes; we put on airs sometimes; sometimes we try to fit in with whatever the crowd is doing. And the warning is that once you begin to go this route, you begin to put up callousness because you stop feeling. Once you stop acting real, you start acting fake. Once you start acting fake, you no longer feel. And so, there's a callousness that comes in.

An interesting example of that, if you look with me in Ephesians 4:17, Paul will state,

“So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

(Ephesians 4:18) being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

(Ephesians 4:19) and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Well, interestingly enough, we're going to be talking about greed today.

Now, the question you have to ask yourself is, what does greed have to do with truth? And what does greed have to do with fear? And what He's going to be revealing is that it's a succession of events. One thing piles upon another. Once you stop seeking truth, once you stop seeking God, you've got a huge void. I hate to tell you, but now you're in charge. And once you're in charge, you've got to control the universe. Well, that can become pretty anxious. I mean, not only do you have to control what's going to happen to you on the days that follow, but now you've got to figure out what you're going to do after you die. And all these thoughts begin to come in, and you become anxious. Now, this is what you can do. I've got an idea. You can suppress it. But after a while, what's going to happen is that, as the psalmist says, your body's going to waste away, and you're not going to find any peace in that. You can run from it. You can do drugs, alcohol, drink, whatever. You can go to entertainment. You can go to pleasure. This was one of Paul's concern to those in

Thessalonica, that they were at a point where they had no hope. And he says, "Look, I know what you're going to do. You're going to go back to your old ways. You're going to start doing your old things." It's the beginning of 1 Thessalonians 4. He says, "You're going to go back to your old way of life." And he says, "You've got to stop going back to your lustful passions." Well, why do people go to their lustful passions? Because when they walk in fake, they stop feeling. They miss that. So, they need something that stirs their sensations. I know that most of us aren't thinking through the process, but Scripture walks us through the process. The whole reason, the whole thing that began this, is you're afraid. Then you started putting on a mask. Then you started dealing with the emptiness that the mask created. Because once you put on the mask, now you're in the fake. Now, you're just suppressing. And what do you do with that hole that you have? Well, you've got to have some sort of relief. So, you go to other sources. This is those pursuit of those things with greediness, Ephesians 4 says. The way that Colossians 3 will say, he says, this greediness actually amounts to idolatry. In other words, whatever you fear,

that's what you worship, and that's what you'll become like. By the way, that's Psalm 115. Psalm 115 will tell you that whatever you worship, you'll become like that. That's why you want to worship Christ, because He's the One you want to become like. See?

So, as this passage goes on, He says, “Everything's going to be revealed,” and He starts off by saying, “And I just want to let you know that your biggest problem is fear. You're fearing the wrong things. You're fearing man. You should be fearing God.”

That's His statement if you look in there,

(Luke 12:5) “But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!”

“But the problem is you fear man.”

Verse 4, if you back up,

(Luke 12:4) “I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body...”

What is He talking about? He's talking about fear. You're afraid of what people are going to do, what people are thinking. He says, "Don't be afraid of man."

Jeremiah will say in Chapter 17, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man." You're going to be cursed if you trust in him.

So, as it goes on, of course, in the passage, He makes clear reference to the fact that if in fact you deny the Spirit moving and talking about blaspheming of the Spirit, and the passage is specifically talking about talking against the Spirit. That's what it says in the passage. It doesn't bring anything else in. Talking against the Spirit. And what is the Spirit of God? The Spirit of Truth. And what is the Spirit of Truth saying? It's saying, "You need God. You need salvation. You need a Savior." See, it's calling out to you. It's speaking the word. But you suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Isn't that what Romans 1 says? I mean, you profess to be wise, but you become fools. You suppress the truth and you say, "I reject the truth." It's the unpardonable sin. You're rejecting the truth. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father

but by Me.” What won't be pardoned? If you don't accept the truth of God.

So, it says in verse 12,

(Luke 12:12) “for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

(Luke 12:13) Someone in the crowd said to Him...”

Now, my point is in all of this is, this is not a disjointed event. This is an event that was placed in this particular text so that it might build upon the fundamental principle. What's the fundamental principle? We're living lies. We're lying to ourselves. We're putting on masks. We're not being genuine. We're not being real. You're not confessing your sin. You're not admitting you're a sinner. You're not admitting that you need a Savior. You're not admitting the truth. So, what are you going to do if you don't admit that? Well, you're going to find some way to escape. So, this young man in the middle of the crowd goes, “I need my inheritance.” Why is he worried about his inheritance? Because that's a way that he fills that void. Why are people so concerned about money? I don't know.

“Someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.””

It's interesting that he calls him “Teacher,” and clearly not “Lord”. He is in the midst of the crowd.

If you go back into Luke 12:1, there were so many people in a multitude, they were gathered, they were stepping on one another. So, this is a chaotic scene. There's a crowd; there's a mass of humanity. It uses the word “*ochlos*,” which makes reference to the fact that this is an undisciplined, unruly crowd of people. And they're just kind of, as Scripture already said, stepping on one another.

He cries out and he calls to him and he goes, “Obviously his brother has his inheritance, his part.”

And Jesus responds in verse 14,

(Luke 12:14) “But He said to him...”

And here again, this is truth talking.

Jesus said to him,

“... “Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?””

Now, it's very interesting that He refers to him as “man”. It's not that he doesn't know that he's a man, but the point is that He's referring to him not as a disciple.

If you look at the beginning, in Luke 12:1,

“... He began saying to His disciples...”

You look at verse 22,

(Luke 12:22) “And He said to His disciples...”

Right, this guy is not a disciple. So, the question fundamentally is, “Why are you asking Me what you should do? You're not one of My disciples.” And oftentimes, I have people come up to me, “Oh, you're a pastor? What do you think about this?” I said, “Well, where do you go to church?” And sometimes they tell me where they're going. I said, “Ask your pastor.” That's the person that you've placed yourself under their authority. Ask him.”

But here in the text, He says, “I'm not the one that's supposed to decide or to allocate.” He uses the two words, “judge,” that is to decide, “arbitrator,” is the one who allocates the funds. He goes, “Who made Me the

One to do this?” Now, the interesting point is, of course, we know that Romans 13 says, all authorities are ordained by God, and God had already established authority with the governmental system to handle these kind of things. Jesus, His kingdom's not of this world. Let me just say this too, especially as pastors, it's not our job to micromanage people's lives, the individual decisions that they make. It is our responsibility to proclaim the principles, the fundamental truths. Let the Spirit of God then begin to lead and direct them. But we're not rulers of this world. We're rulers of the kingdom. And our job is to point out the truth, not to tell them what to do in every given circumstance or situation.

So, Jesus makes this statement,

(Luke 12:15) “Then He said to them, “Beware...””

Once again, the whole warning of this particular text is, “You obviously are thinking wrong. You don't see the right thing. I'm going to expose what the problem is.” Now, once again, He starts off by exposing the fundamental problem is you're afraid. The second problem is the way

you deal with your fear. And what is that? Greediness. That's His point.

“... “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed...””

Actually, take personal interest in this issue. You know how if somebody didn't give us back the right amount of change or something like that, we take personal interest in that? And He says, “Why don't you take personal interest in your soul?” So, immediately He takes them off of the realm of the transient, and He takes them into the realm of the eternal. And He says, “Be on your guard against every form of greed.” And clearly, there's a lot of forms of greed. Lust of the flesh is a form of greed. The word itself makes reference to the fact that you always just want more. And here again, why is it you always want more? And the reason is, what you're going after was never meant to satisfy. So, it doesn't matter if you have more money. It doesn't matter if you have more cars. It doesn't matter if you have a bigger house. It just never satisfies. It was never meant to. And what you're doing is you're embracing a lie because you have suppressed the

truth. The truth is that satisfaction only comes from God. That peace only comes from God. These are things that only God can give. And you get into Ecclesiastes 2, and it says, only joy can come from God. And yet, how many things do we go after to try to find joy? We go, “Well, you know, that was kind of a wash.” I mean, you may have had a buzz, but it's really no different than a drug. I mean, you got it for a moment and then it's gone. And, you know, what is it Hebrews says? “Passing pleasure of sin.” And wow, does it pass by quickly. It's just like money. It makes its way like eagles and flies away, as Proverbs says. So, He said to them, “Be on guard against all of this, especially for greed.”

“... for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.”

Did you get that statement? People are trying to define themselves by virtue of what they possess because they don't feel of any value. So, they've got to feel valuable in some way. Maybe it's by virtue of performance. Maybe it's by virtue of accolades of men.

In Psalm 49, the psalmist says, “You have the praise of men? Big deal. You're all going to die and what's going to happen then?” So, there are things that we go after if we try to fill this void and this emptiness because we dealt with fear inappropriately. We put on a mask, we said it doesn't exist, or we suppressed it, or whatever we did, and we said, “This is the way we're going to deal with that bad feeling. We're going to go after something that'll fill the void.”

So, Jesus gives the parable, and it's this parable that will explain that. Watch the parable.

(Luke 12:16) “And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive.”

You're going to love what productive means. It's actually where we get the word “euphoria”. Yeah. “So, if I'm very productive, I'm in a euphoric state.” Oh, good for you. That's one of those buzzes.

“The land of a rich man was very productive.

(Luke 12:17) “And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do...’”

I mean, he was very rich. He's very productive. Let it go. Why can't he be content? The second problem is that he starts talking to himself. You know, if you want your opinion, just talk to yourself about it.

“And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’”

Strangely enough, the word “store” is where we get the word “synagogue,” gathering together. It's strange we should be gathering together as a body of Christ, valuing that fellowship, but we gather together other things that we love and somehow feel that that's going to fill the void.

“... since I have no place to store my crops?”

(Luke 12:18) “Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.’”

(Luke 12:19) And I will say to my soul...”

How many times have you tried to talk yourself into something? “I'm going to be happy today.” You know?

“And I will say to my soul...”

When Scripture makes reference to the soul, most of the time it makes reference to the fact that this is a seed of your desires, a seed of your longings. That's what resides in your affections. So, in this particular passage, he does this self-analysis, and he goes, "I'm going to say, 'This is what's going to make you happy. This is what's going to give you joy.'"

"And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods..."

And once again, it's very interesting that the word "goods" there, "*agathos*," that he uses, actually makes reference to something good in character. My point is that we oftentimes assign not only value to the things that we possess, but we declare it as being good in character or nature. And it's not. It's just an inanimate object, or it's just something that we collect, but we say, "Oh, this is very important. Right? Right. It's very important."

(Luke 12:18) "Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.'

(Luke 12:19) 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come..."

This is security, isn't it? This is what we're looking for, some type of security. We even have this stuff in our nation called social security. And I guess because you pull everybody in, you feel more secure. But I just feel like they take more. But anyway, many years to come.

"... take your ease..."

Get comfortable.

"... eat, drink and be merry."

Now, this is going to surprise you, the word "merry" is almost the same word as "productive". It comes from the fundamental word where we get "euphoria". In other words, "I'm going to find my joy in my possessions." Why? "Because I have no joy anywhere else." Why? Because you're afraid; you sold your life out to fake, and now you've got to fabricate some kind of happiness because you didn't go to God. You went towards man ways.

(Luke 12:20) "But God said to him, 'You fool! ....'"

“You misunderstood individual.” You have no comprehension of what is truth and what is right. And the sad thing is that these things begin to happen in our life, and we not only don't think through it, as they're beginning to happen, but we also don't know what's happening. In fact, if you were to tell most people, “This is your problem,” they'd go, “No, it's not.” Because they're so much in denial; once again, remember, they suppress the truth in unrighteousness. The reason they're unhappy is because they tried to find joy in all the wrong places. It's the exact same thing that happened to the woman at the well.

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’”

That's one of the frustrations of Ecclesiastes. You know, “Some idiot's going to inherit the stuff that I work so hard for.” And God goes, “Yeah, you're not going to be able to control that.”

(Luke 12:21) “So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

In other words, he has no desire for God in his mind or in his heart. His value is not with Him, but he's building up treasures of things that he does love. Why is he doing that? Because he's not satisfied.

This fundamental principle is really seen throughout Scripture. I could give you a number of examples, but we've got to go to Ecclesiastes because it hits it so well. So, if you turn with me to the Book to Ecclesiastes, let me show you how this works. Once again, we're dealing with a fundamental principle that what Luke did was he built upon this principle to demonstrate to us why we're so miserable. And I love the word of God because it lays this all out, and you go, "That's why I'm miserable." God goes, "Yeah. Remember I told you, nothing's going to be hidden that will be uncovered and I'm uncovering it." Do you hear Him doing that? Now, we're cover-up artists. So, hypocrisy, that's what we do. We do that real well. But Jesus says, "We're going to uncover that. I'm going to bring you in a place where you're going to be afraid. Now, you're going to deal with something." Now, what you have to ask yourself is, where are you storing your

security? And wherever you're storing your security is telling you what you believe. It's being uncovered. What you believe is being uncovered by what you store.

Matthew 6 will say, "Store for yourself things in heaven, where moths can't corrupt, or thieves can't break in and steal. Where your treasure is, there will your heart follow." It doesn't say, "Your heart will designate where your treasure is," it says, "You start storing stuff up, before long you're going to go, 'That's where my heart is.'" It'll take your heart. So, be careful what you store up.

In Ecclesiastes 1, what is the book about? It's about frustration of man. I mean, there's no answer to anything under the sun. If you take God out of the picture, out of your life, if there is no God, nothing makes sense. For instance, the race is not always to the swiftest. In other words, why didn't the fastest guy win? It doesn't always happen that way. Why doesn't it always happen that the good guy wins? I mean, the good guy should always win, right? I mean, the bad guy should never get away with it. I mean, you're looking at these things from the perspective

of, “there's no God,” and you're going, “Whoa, we're in trouble.”

The other thing that's extremely frustrating is that no matter what I do, no matter what you do, things don't seem to change. I know almost every generation, there's somebody that comes in the world, “We're going to change the world.” I don't know. I mean, look at it. Hasn't happened.

And that's what his point is in verse 3,

(Ecclesiastes 1: 3) “What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun?”

In other words, what gain is there?

I mean, he gives an example,

(Ecclesiastes 1:4) “A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.

(Ecclesiastes 1:5) Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hastening to its place it rises there again.

(Ecclesiastes 1:6) Blowing toward the south, Then turning toward the north,

The wind continues swirling along; And on its circular courses the wind returns.

(Ecclesiastes 1:7) All the rivers flow into the sea...

You know, people are afraid we're going to lose water. We have the same amount of water that we've always had. The only reason why we might have less water is maybe some of it's in space that we've taken in the capsules up there, and I guess we let it loose. I don't know. But other than that, we still have the same amount of water.

(Ecclesiastes 1:8) "All things are wearisome; Man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing..."

I see some really cool things. I like watching the cars, just one of my many faults. And they were selling this one car for over a million. And the first thought that gets in your mind is, "I'd like to drive that." But then, I tell my wife, "If I had that car, I'd be afraid to park it. I couldn't enjoy it." Anyway, long story.

"... The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing."

You know, I've listened to some songs, and I go, "Man, this is the greatest song that I've ever heard." You listen to it about 50 times, you go, "I'm sick and tired of that song." It doesn't matter if Willie Nelson sings it or who sings it.

(Ecclesiastes 1:9) "That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun."

And one of the great frustrations of his life in verse 11 is,

(Ecclesiastes 1:11) "There is no remembrance of earlier things..."

I mean, if I were to ask most of you, "Who is your great, great, great, great, great grandfather?" I mean, it's amazing that they can be forgotten that quick. Because they certainly felt like their life was going to be meaningful. I mean, take your finger, put it in water, take it out, and that's about how long you're remembered.

But this whole first chapter, he goes, "Everything I seem to be going after, it's like striving after the wind." And of course, we know that you can't catch that. It's an

unattainable, frustrating thing to try to grasp. This creates fear. I can't control my life. I can't control a destiny. I mean, even though we (our country) were kind of founded on “manifest destiny,” you don't control your destiny. So, you try to make things happen and you try to find significance in what you do, but it's going to be forgotten. How frustrating is that? How fearful is that? You're going to die and leave everything that you work so hard for, and nothing's going to be remembered.

I mean, as he states this in verse 18,

(Ecclesiastes 1:18) “Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain.”

He's afraid.

You know what Chapter 2 is about? Going after pleasure. It's classic. And that's exactly what Jesus is conveying in Luke. You start off with your fears; you cover them up. Instead of coming to God and confessing, and saying, “I need You,” you cover them up, you put on facades, you act like everything's going well. You don't want to admit that you don't have things in control. Peter didn't want to

admit that he was one that would run from a little girl. So, the point of the matter is that we don't like to admit our weaknesses. But the fact of the matter is, we don't know how to handle fear. And instead of going to God, we go to other resources.

If you look at the whole Chapter 2,

(Ecclesiastes 2:1) “I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself.” And behold, it too was futility.”

“I built large houses. I built gardens. I built parks.” I mean, I can't even do that. “I made ponds of water.” I've done that before, just a little one. “Male and female slaves, collected for myself silver, gold, female singers.” I mean, talk about good music boxes. He had singers. I mean, stereo, better than stereo. He became great more than everybody. I mean, if you become greater than everybody around you, clearly, you'd be satisfied. “I won.” You know, “I have more than anybody else.”

He goes,

(Ecclesiastes 2:17) “So I hated life...”

Read the end of this. Watch it in verse 24.

(Ecclesiastes 2:24) “There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good.

This also I have seen that it is from the hand of God.

(Ecclesiastes 2:25) For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?

(Ecclesiastes 2:26) For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting...”

In other words, the sinner goes out there, and he goes, “I'm going to find satisfaction.” And the only thing he does is gather and collect stuff. I mean, I'm at the stage where I'm trying to figure out a way to get rid of stuff in my house. And you realize that, “Why was this stuff even important? I mean, why can't I get rid of that one bolt?” And “I'm going to need that again.” I mean, it's wacky, isn't it? But the thing is, we're trying to find satisfaction in all these other things. And that's where the emptiness comes from. This is what Jesus is exposing. He'll then begin to talk to him about the anxiety, whether they have a roof over their heads or whether they have food in their

mouth. You're afraid, aren't you? Let's deal with the fear, but let's not go to the wrong sources. And He begins exposing. That's what Scripture's about.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today and we ask You to reveal the things in our hearts that are holding us back from trusting in You completely. We know that Truth has entered the world, and You revealed to us that You are the way, You are the truth, and You are life. And there's not going to be anything that was going to bring us into the presence of joy, for in Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore, than receiving You, first of all, as our Lord and Savior; and then following Your path. And as we begin to follow Your path and we begin to live truth, we begin to find abundance of joy. You even tell us, "I came that your joy may be made full. Stop running to these things."

Your head's bowed and your eyes closed. We're just asking you to come to truth. The truth of the matter is, those things aren't making you happy. Your pursuits

aren't making you happy. They're not fulfilling your needs and your void in your life. But there is One who does. His name is Jesus. We ask you to receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even those who believe in His name. And godliness actually is a means of great contentment. You come to Him.