

4. Read Ecclesiastes 12:8-14. If you go with the New Living Translation rendering of 12:9-10 (see the sermon outline), how would you characterize the perspective of the author?
  
5. The cynic's voice in this book has value to the person who only wants positive, motivational words, the person who is living unreflectively, and to the person playing the cynic. Pick one type of person of the three and explain in your own words how the cynic's perspective can help that person.
  
6. The author's conclusion in 12:9-10 can be seen as a call to understand and seek to have a biblical perspective on all aspects of life. What are you doing or wanting to do to develop a more biblical perspective on all of life?

**The Good Life (A Series on Biblical Wisdom)**

"Finding Meaning and Purpose"  
 Ecclesiastes 1:1-2,12-18; 12:8-14

**The Unmotivational Speaker**

You can summarize the main part of the book like this: "Life \_\_\_\_\_, then you die." (Temper Longman III)

Understanding \_\_\_\_\_ (1:13-18)

Testing \_\_\_\_\_ (2:1-3)

Undertaking \_\_\_\_\_ (2:4-11)

Exploring \_\_\_\_\_ (2:17-23)

It's a dark book, and when some light appears, it feels like maybe he's getting in line with the rest of the Bible and with the wisdom literature, like Proverbs. But it's a \_\_\_\_\_ over and over again.

Just keep reading and he'll \_\_\_\_\_ anything positive he says before long. You just have to keep reading.

Don't be \_\_\_\_\_ by the Teacher.

If you're wondering, "\_\_\_\_\_ is this is doing in the Bible?", you're not alone.

**Keys to Unlocking Ecclesiastes**

This is really a very \_\_\_\_\_ book. There's nothing quite like it in the Bible.

Use the interpretive keys. Unlock its meaning. And before long Ecclesiastes shows you that even \_\_\_\_\_ can serve a greater purpose.

1. The book contains two \_\_\_\_\_.

The first voice is the \_\_\_\_\_. (1:1-2 and possibly vv. 3-11; 12:8-14)

The second voice is the voice of the \_\_\_\_\_. (1:3/12 - 12:7)

The Teacher is the \_\_\_\_\_ speaker.

Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



- The Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ life “under the sun” with very little ‘above the sun’ perspective.
- Understand the \_\_\_\_\_ of hevel (הבל).

### The Cynic's Value

To the person who only wants to hear positive ideas, motivational speakers—the person who tends to take proverbial wisdom and turn it into \_\_\_\_\_—the Teacher gives a dose of reality...a reality that will that will eventually smack them in the face.

To the person who is just living life and not asking \_\_\_\_\_ questions about why they exist and about purpose in life, the Teacher serves as a wake-up call.

To the person who is playing the cynic, the Teacher’s musings are meant to make them \_\_\_\_\_.

The book of Ecclesiastes argues that there’s more to life than life under the sun and there’s more to God than serving our \_\_\_\_\_ purposes.

### Beyond Cynicism

The author’s critique is more \_\_\_\_\_ than many translations let on.

NLT - “Keep this in mind: The Teacher was considered wise, and he taught the people everything he knew. He listened carefully to many proverbs, studying and classifying them. The Teacher sought to find just the right words to express truths clearly.” (12:9-10)

(1) Fear God and (2) keep his commandments.... For (3) God will bring every deed into \_\_\_\_\_...

TORAH "LAW"	NEVI'IM "PROPHETS"	KETUVIM "WRITINGS"
GENESIS EXODUS LEVITICUS NUMBERS DEUTERONOMY	JOSHUA SAMUEL KINGS ISAIAH JEREMIAH ETC.	PSALMS PROVERBS JOB RUTH CHRONICLES ETC.

### Ecclesiastes and Jesus

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ our meaninglessness to bring meaning and purpose to our lives.

### Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

- Looking back over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
- Describe a time in your life where it felt like you were living in an endless, mind-numbing loop.
- Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-2,12-18. How would you characterize the perspective of the Teacher?