

I. A Mysterious Book

- A. Because of its pessimistic outlook
- B. Because of its strange conclusions

II. Understanding the Book

- A. Objective of the book (1:12-13)
 - 1. *I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven*
 - 2. A plan to determine the wise way to live
 - 3. Done by use of observation, experience and wisdom
- B. Unique opportunity Solomon had to do this
 - 1. Because he was excessively wealthy
 - 2. Because he lived in a time of peace
 - 3. Because as king he could dictate his experience without interference
 - 4. Because he was given a gift of discernment above others
- C. The attempt was unsuccessful
- D. Why would that be included in the canon of Scripture?

III. Revelation and Inspiration

- A. **Revelation** - God making known the truths which could not otherwise be discovered
- B. **Inspiration** - Process by which the Holy Spirit enables men to record revelation insuring its accuracy

IV. Revelation and Inspiration and The Book of Ecclesiastes

- A. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - 1. All Scripture is inspired of God
 - 2. So that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work
- B. To make us complete we must know how men think
 - 1. I cannot know how you think; I do not know your mind
 - 2. Ecclesiastes tells us what happens in the minds of men as they assess life
- C. What is the best conclusion a man of wisdom can come to if he assesses life without the benefit of God's revelation?
 - 1. *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* (1:2)
 - 2. *Fear God and keep His commandment.* (12:13)
 - (a) According to Proverbs, this is the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7)