

Book:	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>
Series:	<i>Two Ways to Live: Under the Sun or In the Fear of God</i>
Lesson 6:	<i>The Futility of Life, Part 5</i>
Text:	Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16
Date:	Sunday, February 17, 2013
Next Lesson:	Ecclesiastes 5:10-17; 6:1-9

INTRODUCTION

Thousands of years ago, Job nailed it on the head: “man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7) and again “man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). Life “under the sun” is harsh and the bitterness of misfortune befalls us all. This is simply expressed in our exclamations “That’s terrible!” and “How unfortunate!” etc. Because our plans are burdensome while God’s are blurred, even wise believers experience tragedy, and the honest secularist can only respond with despair. Solomon plays that role in Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16. His quest for significance “under the sun” hits a brick wall here, as he encounters over and over again the harsh and bitter misfortunes of life. This morning, we’ll analyze a few of those “bricks.”

_____ **(3:18-22)**

Application:

_____ **(3:16-18; 4:1-3)**

Application:

_____ (4:4-8)

1. _____ (v. 4).

2. _____ (v. 5).

3. _____ (vv. 7-8).

Application:

_____ (4:9-12)

Application:

_____ (4:13-16)

Application:

CONCLUSION

Life is harsh and misfortune is bitter. Is there any alleviation? Is there an escape from this trouble and sorrow? Yes, and its name is Jesus! Jesus is the good Shepherd and kind Savior who alone can smooth the rough places and straighten that which is crooked:

1. The problem of death – Jesus is the _____ and the _____ (John 11:25-27; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58).
2. The problem of oppression – Jesus is the _____ (Isaiah 25:8; Malachi 4:2; Matthew 12:19-20; John 14:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3-5; Hebrews 4:15).
3. The problem of restlessness – Jesus is the _____ (Matthew 11:28-30).
4. The problem of loneliness – Jesus is the _____ (Proverbs 18:24; John 15:15; Galatians 4:4-7).
5. The problem of disloyalty – Jesus is the _____ (Psalm 11:7; 103:19; Jeremiah 23:5; Matthew 19:28; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 2:27).

Life is harsh, but in Jesus there is hope!

*Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord, and thus surround the throne.*

*Let those refuse to sing that never knew our God;
But children of the heavenly king may speak their joys abroad.*

*The men of grace have found glory begun below;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground from faith and hope may grow.*

*Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;
We're marching through Emmanuel's ground to fairer worlds on high.*