

Dave Gustavsen – The Pursuit of Happiness: **CHASING WISDOM**

Ecclesiastes 1:12-18; 2:12-17

Sermon Based Questions - June 7, 2015

Introduction:

1. Who is the smartest person you know who is not a believer?
2. Who is the wisest believer you know? Are they smart by the world's standards?

Understanding:

3. In Ecclesiastes 1:18 it says "For **with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.**" The Christian writer Francis Schaeffer claimed that the logical outcome of using our reason without God is suicide. Do you agree? Why do you think so few logical atheists commit suicide?
4. In Ecclesiastes 2:12-14 it says both wise people and fools suffer the same fate: Death. Is it saying that wisdom is totally useless? Explain.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:20-24:

5. Why does Paul call the preaching of Christ foolishness?
6. How does this foolishness differ from the foolishness in the two Ecclesiastes passages?
7. What does "Christ crucified" (verse 23) have to do with being wise?
8. Bill Maher tricked a Christian guest into agreeing that Christianity is a totally blind leap of faith. How could you avoid falling into the same trap? See Acts 1:3 for one clue.
9. Read 2 Cor. 4 :17-18 How are these verses a great rebuke to empiricism (the theory that all knowledge is derived from sense-experience) ?What encouragement does it give you to not say "all is vanity" when living for Christ in our fallen world ?
10. Read James 3:17. How is this wisdom different from the wisdom that Solomon sought in today's scriptures? How is it not just factual knowledge? How does it become a part of our lives?
11. Read 1 Cor. 3:18. Why is the verse so harsh against the kind of wisdom that is described here? How is this different from the wisdom in the James 3:17 passages? What is missing?

Application:

12. Apply what Pastor Dave said at the close of the Sermon : "So, please: hear the warning of Solomon: even if you have an elite education and an intimidating level of intelligence, apart from God it will not make you happy or satisfied. In fact, it might lead to misery. So if you're feeling some of that emptiness, maybe it's God calling you to consider the better story of Jesus Christ, crucified for you."
13. What is there about what you experience with your senses that gets you most discouraged? Pray that God would shine the spotlight of the "foolishness of Christ" onto that area.