April 17, 2016

***Life on My Hamster Wheel***

Ecclesiastes 1:12- 2:11; Matthew 6:19-21; 31-34

The Book of Ecclesiastes starts with the statement “all is meaningless.” There seems to be no single good English word to capture the original. The idea of *transitory* and *elusive* are part of the meaninglessness. So what are the limitations of being human? What limitations do we have to accept? What limitations should we press against (e.g. it was long assumed “man will never fly” but we do now)?

In Ecclesiastes 1:13b Qohelet says, “What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind!” Is God trying to make us miserable? Compare this to the next chapter 2:24-26, then Romans 8:20-21. What is God’s intention toward us?

Why does Qohelet say in 1:18b that wisdom and knowledge bring sorrow and grief? He was very wise and knowledgeable as was Paul a millennium later. Paul studied hard but agreed with Qohelet (1 Corinthians 1:18-25). What good is wisdom and knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:8)?

The King had the right to pursue his own happiness through pleasures that were permissible, building projects, entertainment, etc. He found no lasting value in it. We have freedom in Christ but what is to be gained from strictly the pursuit of our own happiness (1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23-24)?

What is your biggest concern for the possessions in your basement and your money in the stock market or bank? How do they lose their value? If you lose all of those things, what will you have of value (Matthew 6:19-21)?