

CouplesInBloom.com – Overtaking Analytical Negativity

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The Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes clearly addresses the topic of optimism and pessimism. If you like to analyze things and you hunger and thirst for righteousness ⇒ Matthew 5:6, I suggest reading Ecclesiastes in one sitting to learn what Solomon learned.

“For the creation was **not willingly subjected to vanity**, but through Him subjecting it, **on hope; that also the creation will be freed from the slavery of corruption** to the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that **all the creation groans** together and travails together until now” ⇒ Romans 8:20-22. **But what does this mean?**

The Bible says negativity permeates life. Jesus confirms this, “You have distress in the world; but be encouraged, I have overcome the world” ⇒ John 16:33. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon *explains*: 1) why life by itself *is* vanity / ultimately meaningless and, 2) how to live successfully and with eternal meaning *in* the very midst of such meaninglessness.

Compare the Genesis 3 ⇒ Tree of Knowledge with Ecclesiastes 1:18 ⇒ “For in much **wisdom is much grief**; and he who increases **knowledge increases pain**.” Much study also wearies our bodies ⇒ Ecclesiastes 12:12. This endless burden is *not* supposed to be the focus of life, despite pessimistic perspective. Beyond knowledge, God’s *power* is also required to live meaningfully. **But HOW? And what do we DO with all life’s negativity?**

“I have seen the task which God has given to the sons of men, **to be humbled by it**.” ⇒ Ecclesiastes 3:10. In other words: **life stinks to help us realize we need God**. It is **pessimism with a purpose**. Optimism without God is the ultimate false hope ⇒ 1 Corinthians 3:1-13. God did not create us in Heaven but rather on earth, where problems exist, to see who among us will humbly respond to His positive love in a negative world.

God makes everything beautiful in its time, and He set eternity in our hearts, without which we cannot find out the work that He makes from the beginning even to the end ⇒ Ecclesiastes 3:11. **God** alone makes life good because He alone *is* good ⇒ Luke 18:19. People try to get goodness without God by trying to drown Him out with noise... but fail.

The vanity of life *exists* to reveal God’s goodness and show that “we, by ourselves, are beasts” ⇒ Ecclesiastes 3:18. **Criticism is a beast, mistakenly fighting injustice it feels**. **Embracing God’s goodness is actually how to overtake such evil** ⇒ Romans 12:21.

This is also true in marriage: “Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of the life of your vanity” ⇒ Ecclesiastes 9:9. Solomon agrees here that life *has* negativity, but learned that living joyfully is the best way to *deal* with it. Verse 10 ⇒ says to live this way with all our strength... the same way we love God ⇒ Deuteronomy 6:5.

God’s truth must overtake our life situations. This happens *when* we obey God, which *is* Solomon’s conclusion ⇒ Ecclesiastes 12:13. God *is* the One who makes His Word produce goodness ⇒ Isaiah 55:11. **Then** verse 12 can come true for us ⇒ We shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before us into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Yes; finally!

Wisdom alone destroys ⇒ Ecclesiastes 7:16. **God alone saves** ⇒ 1 Corinthians 1:21. **SEE the good Solomon saw** ⇒ Ecclesiastes 5:18. **It is God’s gift to us!** ♥ Loren Falzone