



"CHOOSING INTIMACY WITH GOD OVER ISOLATION"

ECCLESIASTES 12:1-4

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Introduction: Today as we conclude our series on attitudes, we are going to examine the attitude choice that has the longest impact on our lives. Choosing to experience intimacy with God over isolation from God is a decision that profoundly affects our lives now and throughout eternity.

I. **Ecclesiastes: Journal Of A Playboy**

Ecclesiastes 1:12-13a ¹² "I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ^{13a} I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven." NIV

A. **Map #1: Pleasure** (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11)

Ecclesiastes 2:1 "I thought in my heart, 'Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.' But that also proved to be meaningless." NIV

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 ¹⁰ "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. ¹¹ Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun." NIV

B. **Map #2: Wisdom** (Ecclesiastes 2:12-17)

Ecclesiastes 2:14b,16b ^{14b} "...but I came to realize that the same fate overtakes them [the wise and the fool] both. ^{16b} Like the fool, the wise man too must die!" NIV

Ecclesiastes 2:15 "Then I said to myself, 'The fate of the fool will overtake me also. What then do I gain by being wise?' I said to myself, 'This too is meaningless.'" NIV



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C. Map #3: Work (Ecclesiastes 2:18-23)

Ecclesiastes 2:18-19 ¹⁸ "I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. ¹⁹ And who knows whether that person will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless." NIV

Luke 12:16-21 ¹⁶ "And He told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a certain rich man was very productive. ¹⁷ And he began reasoning to himself, saying, "What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?" ¹⁸ And he said, "This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'" ²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' ²¹ So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

II. Living Above The Sun (Ecclesiastes 12)

Ecclesiastes 12:1 "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them;'" NIV

Four Vital Steps to Develop a Relationship with God

A. Realize that True Fulfillment Is Impossible Apart from God (Ecclesiastes 12:1-4)

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

B. Honestly Evaluate Your Relationship with God (1 Kings 11:4)



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Job 1:20-22 ²⁰ "Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.' ²² Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God."

1 Kings 11:4 "For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been."

C. Remove Any **Barriers** to Intimacy with God (Isaiah 59:2)

Isaiah 59:2 "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear."

D. Continue to **Nurture** Your Relationship with God (Mark 1:35)

Mark 1:35 "And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there."

Conclusion