

Profit Or Loss?

I Profit Or Loss?  
Mt.16:24-26

# What will it profit a man...?

Mt.16:26

- **Cross: instrument of death, 21-24**
  - **Two crosses: as He...so we**
  - ***Total commitment***
- **Paradoxes, 24-25**
  - **Self gains only when self loses**
  - **We lose by gaining, gain by losing**

# What will it profit a man...?

Mt.16:26

- What can repay a man for losing his life and **leave him with a profit (26)**?
- If he loses real life, how can he profit – ***even if he gains the world?***

**Ecclesiastes:**  
wise man's attempt to answer

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## II Ecclesiastes: Solomon's Search

# **1. Search for meaning (wisdom), 1:16,18**

- **Universities cannot answer**
  - **Socrates**
- **Physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer**

## **2. Ignorance (madness / folly), 1:17**

- **“Ignorance is bliss”**
- **“What you don’t know can’t hurt you”**
- **Bury head in sand...**

### **3. Pleasure, 2:1**

- **Solomon's self-indulgence. Lk.15**
  - **Lord Byron**
- **God made us to enjoy life on basis of spiritual things**

## 4. Happiness, 2:2

- **Dennis Wholey: *Are You Happy?***
  - Perhaps only twenty percent of Americans are happy

*‘Happiness is an imaginary condition, formerly attributed by the living to the dead, now usually attributed by adults to children and by children to adults’*

– Thomas Szasz

## 4. Happiness, 2:2

- *‘Everyone has the right to be happy, and I propose to claim that right’*
- *‘God wants (me) to be happy’*

## **5. Wine, 2:3**

- Fraternities / Sororities / Commercials**

**Teenagers between ages 12 - 17 who say they drink heavily (five or more drinks on five or more occasions in the past month):**

**77 percent had at least one serious problem related to drinking in the past year**

**63 percent had built up tolerance to the effects of alcohol**

**20 percent reported psychological problems related to their drinking**

**12 percent reported health problems . . .**

## 6. Ruling an Empire, 2:4

- Ps.127:1

Unless the Lord builds the house,  
They labor in vain who build it;  
Unless the Lord guards the city,  
The watchman stays awake in vain

## 7. Nature, 2:5-6

- In all his gardens he could not grow the **tree of life** or the **plant of contentment**
- We must choose God or pantheism

## **8. Authority, 2:7**

- **Wm. Tweed, boss of Tammany Hall**

## 9. Possessions, 2:7-8

Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,  
But righteousness delivers from death  
– Pr.11:4.

- The problem with possessions:
  - 1) **Dictate.** Cost us precious time...
  - 2) **Die.** 1 Jn.2:15-17
  - 3) **Disappoint.** Hag.1:5-6

## **10. Entertainment, 2:8**

- **There is NO perfect, permanently satisfying song or pleasure**

# 11. Immorality, 2:8

- Many “**concubines**” – NASB; ESV...  
“**Harem**” – NIV
- 1 K.1:1-4

## 12. Greatness, 2:9

- Alexander the Great conquered every enemy . . . except **one**

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II Ecclesiastes: Solomon's Search

III Evaluation:  
What Was The Profit?

# Evaluation – What Was The Profit?

- 2:11, **all was vanity!** False advertising.
- 2:12, Loser; no profit.
  - Solomon: great mind, vast resources
  - If he found no satisfaction when he had the whole world to ransack, how much hope for common men to find it in small assets and less knowledge?

# What Was The Profit?

- 2:13-15, no satisfaction.
  - Could not escape **death, vanity, or vexation** of spirit.
- 2:16, greatest man of his day...  
**forgotten.** Sad legacy
- 2:17-20, **despair.** What's the use?

# What's The Use?

- 21, *LOSING*. Lk.12:20
- 22, *GETTING*. Rat race
- 23, *KEEPING*. 'Take it with us'??

**41** And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. **42** But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her”

– Luke 10

# **Conclusion: 12:13-14**

- **Simple; does not impress most**
- **One who fails in everything else except this enjoys great, eternal success**

