

SERMON OUTLINE

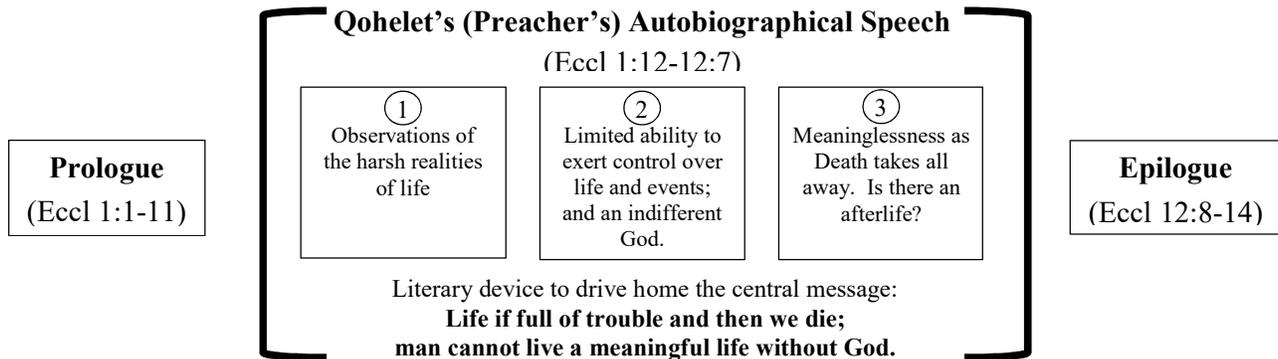
Speaker: Eld Ho Yew Kee

Text : Ecclesiastes 3: 16 - 4: 16

Title : Confronting Earthly Reality

Introduction

- The Message Translation of Eccl 3:16 – 4:16.
- The Ecclesiastes Capacitor.



- Imageries in Ecclesiastes:
 - ✓ Objects - city, cultivated fields, gardens, the temple, a house, a bedchamber, courts of justice, seats of power and battle
 - ✓ Areas of life – wealth, power, religion, social relationships, work, pleasure and death
- Forms of literary – reflection, proverbs, anecdotes and wisdom instructions
- Contradictions in Ecclesiastes:
 - ✓ Eccl 1:4 ⊗ Rev 21:1 “*the earth remains forever*”
 - ✓ Eccl 1:9-10 ⊗ Isa 43:19 “*there is nothing new under the sun*”
 - ✓ Eccl 7:16-17 ⊗ Lev 11:45 “*Do not be excessively righteous ... overly wise*”
 - ✓ Eccl 3:21 ⊗ Eccl 12:6-7 “*Who knows if the human spirit rises upward*”

- Antithesis to Ecclesiastes:

Ecclesiastes	Genesis
God is indifferent and absent	God was ever present
The world is in a state of mess	The original created world was perfect
Man is temporal as he dies ultimately	Man was created for eternity
Man may not be any different from animal	Man was made in the image of God
Work is a curse and pain and it is meaningless	Work was part of man's calling and meaningful

- Eccl 3:16 - “Furthermore” (NASB); “Something else” (NIV)

1. **Earthly Reality 1 : Does true justice exist? (3:16-17)**
2. **Earthly Reality 2 : Is man different from animal? (3:18-22)**
3. **Earthly Reality 3 : Is man better off dead? (4:1-3)**
4. **Earthly Reality 4 : Is there real meaning behind hard work and toil? (4:4-6)**
5. **Earthly Reality 5 : It is a lonely existence at times (4:7-8)**
6. **Earthly Reality 6 : There is consolation in companionship (4:9-12)**
7. **Earthly Reality 7 : So what if you have political influence and power? (4:13-16)**

Conclusion

How do we confront the elephants in the living room of our lives? Or what elephants?
Temporal solution: “*to enjoy their work*” (3:22); “*one handful with tranquility*” (4:6)
Permanent solution: “*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*” (4:12b)