

## LIVING IN AWE OF GOD WITH OTHERS

Ecclesiastes 4:1 – 5:7

- I. **Our starting point: what we really believe makes all the difference.**
  - The sovereignty of God
  - The revealed words of God
  - The plague of sin
  
- II. **Oppression is inescapable because it is rooted in sin (4:1-3).**
  
- III. **Envy of our neighbor leads to our own oppression as well as others (4:4-8).**
  
- IV. **Recognizing the value of one another can lead to a better way (4:9).**
  - Greater productivity (4:9a)
  - Greater and mutual benefit (4:9b)
  
- V. **Living in community provides an answer to the oppression of life (4:10-12).**
  - Supporting one another (4:10)
  - Protecting one another (4:11-12)
  
- VI. **Prosperity in isolation is like spitting into the wind (4:7, 8, 13-16).**

- VI. **Our approach to God, based on our understanding of God, matters (5:1-7).**
  
- VII. **What's the answer to oppression, envy, isolation and chasing the wind?**
  - Be in awe of God (5:7).
    - Accept the reality of oppression—it's inescapable.
    - Examine your own life and ask the hard questions.
    - Don't do it alone! We were never designed for that.

### *Study Questions for August 30*

1. Read through Ecclesiastes 5 five times this week.
2. Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7. What are some examples of the "sacrifice of fools" in terms of what we say?
3. Read Ecclesiastes 5:2-3. What is the main reason for being careful with our words according to this passage? What is the difference between the perspective of being "in heaven" versus "on earth"?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 5:4-5. Have you ever promised God something while in a crisis? Did you keep your word? What is so critical about keeping our word with God? If we cannot hurt God (even by withholding our pledges), then how does breaking a vow with God affect us?
5. Read Ecclesiastes 5:7. Re-write this verse in your words (while maintaining its meaning). What are we being warned about? What attitude are we to cultivate? What does that look like?