

01-03-04a Ecclesiastes

Let's continue our worship this morning by turning for our scripture reading to Proverbs chapter 5. Proverbs chapter 5. Proverbs, of course, is a collection of wise sayings, observations on life, collected and edited by Solomon, the author of the book which is currently the object of our study. We're going to see as we take this sample from the early chapters of Proverbs, the first 8 or 9 chapters of Proverbs, talk almost exclusively about wisdom and the things that contrast with wisdom. Chakma, which is a versatile word used not only for skillfulness or an understanding in a particular area, but comes to be used for wisdom in the ways of God, in the things of God.

And you find that there is a lower and higher application of many of these sayings. It is good to have common sense, it's good to be prudent, it's good to be conservative and to think things out and to have a plan and to set goals and to do the things that constitute what we would call human wisdom. But so much the more when you look at divine wisdom, paying attention to the true realities which encompass the purposes and plans of God.

But in chapter 5, we're going to take a sampler. This is typical of what is recorded in this first portion of Proverbs. And then we'll return to Ecclesiastes because Solomon is on a different tact.

It amuses me as an English major to see how as our language develops and gets less and less formal, how people misuse words and one of the words that gets misapplied, people say, well, I need to take another tact and they use T-A-C-T. They say, well, I need to take a different tact with him because he's not responding to my approach. And they think that it's tact in terms of having diplomacy and the ability to approach someone and not cause them to fend you off.

But this, of course, is a sailing term when the wind is blowing from a certain direction and you want to proceed along the water, you tact. You have the starboard tact and then you come about, you're on the port tact, and then you come about, you're on the starboard tact. And to look at a sailing vessel at any given moment, you don't know by looking at its direction where it's going because it's on a tact and it's zigzagging.

And you can't tell by looking if it's on its port or starboard tact unless you observe it over time and see, you know, get the average of those zigs and zags, you discover that what direction the captain is taking his vessel. In the same way, Solomon is talking about wisdom in Ecclesiastes. Solomon also talks about wisdom in Proverbs.

But I would submit to you that these are two different tacts. And what Solomon says and the emphasis that he gives in Proverbs cannot be imported lock, stock, and barrel into Ecclesiastes because he's making a different point. So we want to take a look at what might be termed the conventional view of wisdom that we find in Proverbs chapter 5. He says, My son, pay attention to my wisdom.

Lend your ear to my understanding so that you may preserve discretion and your lips may keep

knowledge. For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey and her mouth is smoother than oil. But in the end, she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell. Lest you ponder her path of life, her ways are unstable, you do not know them. Therefore, hear me now, my children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.

Remove your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house. Lest you give your honor to others and your years to the cruel one. Lest aliens be filled with your wealth and your labors go to the house of a foreigner.

And you mourn at last when your flesh and your body are consumed and say, How I have hated instruction and my heart despised correction. I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me. I was on the verge of total ruin in the midst of the assembly and the congregation.

Drink water from your own cistern and running water from your own well. Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets, let them be only your own and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of your youth.

As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times and always be enraptured with her love. For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman and be embraced in the arms of a seductress? This from the man who had how many wives? How many concubines? For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord and he ponders all his paths. His own iniquities entrap the wicked man and he is caught in the cords of his sin.

He shall die, why? For lack of instruction. And in the greatness of his folly, he shall go astray. And this chapter draws a very clear distinction in human life between those who heed, who hear and heed wisdom and instruction and those who don't.

And this is typical, as I said, you can read all of these, most of Proverbs devotes itself to this theme in some form. And in particular, these early chapters where wisdom is personified and speaks and cries out of the gate and says, young man, don't go that way. That's the way of destruction.

And the pleasures, the distractions, the tantalizing allurements of life, is allurements a word? The alluring things of life are typified or symbolized by this woman with the lips, they used to have that song, kisses sweeter than wine and a taste of honey and all of these back in the early 60s, where the idea is that this is a very attractive, very desirable option that has presented itself, but it is not commended to us by wisdom. Wisdom says that's not a good path. So what do you have? You have desire on the one hand saying, boy, that really looks like a good deal.

And prudence or wisdom would say that is a very temporary pleasure that will be followed by

misery. So you have the choice between the short-term view and the long-term view. In the short term, many things look attractive, many things look like a solution.

And there's a wide range of areas in life where we have temporary solutions that present themselves. We think, well, this is a quick fix. We're the excedrin people.

You get a headache, you take a pill. You get tired, you drink some coffee. You get a need in some area, we have instant gratification.

We've got a fix. And you get a sniffle and you grab some antibiotics so that you don't get sicker. And that's a short-term view.

In the short term, we feel better. In the short term, we achieve gratification. You start having all kinds of hunger pangs, you grab a Snickers bar because it satisfies that immediate need.

If we never raise our eyes and look at the long-term view, we overlook the fact that many of these are not a good long-term solution. You can't live on Snicker bars. You can't have any kind of lasting stability in your life if you go from relationship to relationship, especially if you involve physical cohabitation with those relationships.

The people don't look at that. All they see is the here and now. The attraction of this is very strong.

So Solomon represents all of these areas of life. It's easy for us to say, well, I don't have that particular problem. I'm not being allured by attractive members of the opposite gender or whatever.

But this stands in for anything that has a pull that can ensnare us and drag us away. He says, The lips of an immoral woman grip honey. Her mouth is smoother than oil.

But in the end, she is bitter as wormwood and sharp as a two-edged sword. So what is the point here? In this chapter, Solomon says, if you follow the way of wisdom, you will have a happy life. You will not end up with the bitterness.

You will not end up with the two-edged sword hacking you up. So there seems to be quid pro quo. You devote yourself to wisdom and goodness and mercy will follow you all the days of your life.

And this is true. It doesn't mean that someone who pursues wisdom and follows the path that God has laid out for us is going to be immune to grief or unhappiness or testing or tribulation. Jesus said, In this world, you will have tribulation.

But there is a surpassing peace. There is a surpassing knowledge that these tribulations are brief and not worthy to be compared with the glory that is about to be revealed. But how do we get

through those things? Wisdom gives us a long-term view.

That is, in essence, what wisdom does. Wisdom says, in the long run, it is better to keep the one in the hand rather than to chase after the two that are out there in the tree. So as you scan through wisdom literature in the Old Testament, you note that there is the predicted calamity for foolishness and there is predicted blessing for obedience, faith, and wisdom.

And that's what we expect. Well, let's turn back now to Ecclesiastes chapter 1, verse 15. Actually, verse 14, where the same author, Solomon, says, I have seen all the works that are done under the sun.

And indeed, all is impermanent. All is vaporous and grasping the wind. You reach out.

You try to seize it. You look in your hand. There's nothing there.

You can't seize and lay hold of anything that will last. Now, this is a different idea. Remember, this is a different tact now.

We're not talking about here is the key to a happy life. That is the elementary level. That's what we learn in spiritual grade school.

God resists the proud. God gives grace to the humble. I will honor those who honor me, God says.

There is a good path to follow. There is a path that involves complete apathy and indifference and that will result in divine discipline and calamity and destruction. So that's easy enough to understand.

And Israel had a grasp on this. In fact, they seized and lay hold of it so much that they were blind to anything else. They looked at the rich and said, well, God blesses the righteous and God curses the wicked.

There's a man that has lots of money. He's blessed. Therefore, he's righteous.

Look, there's a poor man. There's a diseased man. There's a blind man.

There's a beggar on the street. He's not blessed. Therefore, he must be wicked.

And so anyone who was sick, anyone who had a long-lasting malady was thought to be an evil person. Anyone who was well off was thought to be righteous and blessed by God. Where is the fallacy in that thinking? Well, this is some of what Solomon is exploring in Ecclesiastes.

He says, you've got this simplistic view that do well. If you do well, will you not be justified? But there's more to it than meets the eye, literally. That's a short-term perspective.

So he says, the impermanence of it all. Let's say that you do follow the narrow road. You take the part of wisdom and you have a happy life.

You do everything right. And you have a measure of success and a measure of blessing and peace. Well, you can't take it with you.

It's not permanent. Day after tomorrow, somebody else is going to be the water running down that stream. Day after tomorrow, somebody else is going to be that wind blowing by.

Day after tomorrow, someone else's son will be rising and setting on their life. And when all is said and done and you look in your hand, what do you have to show for it? What are you going to take away? Suppose you do build a business. Suppose you do have a happy marriage.

Suppose you do raise thoughtful and productive American citizens as your children. Suppose you do all of these things. Suppose you're well thought of by your relatives and maybe even your friends.

What do you take away? When the sun sets, what do you have in your hand? Is it enough just to be remembered? I told you about that Disney movie with the dinosaur version of Lion King. It was basically the same story where all the adults are dumb and all the kids are smart. And the kids save the world.

And at the end, they say, well, we're on a journey and we don't know where we're going. But maybe it's just enough that somebody remembers that we passed this way or words to that effect. Well, that's not enough.

Solomon says that's not enough. That is a grievous answer, Solomon says. Remember, we spent some time studying verse 13.

I gave my heart to locate and explore by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven. Asa, everything that's manufactured. What do we do with the things that God has put here in front of us? This, and then some of them say grievous task.

The New King James says burdensome task that God has given to the sons of man by which they may be exercised. It's not what it says. It says this unsatisfactory answer, this grievous answer, this misery-inducing answer that God has given the sons of men to be answered with.

Is that the answer? We just labor under the sun and then you might as well become a pagan if that's all there is to it. That is an evil answer. Evil is pretty strong.

When we use the word evil, we think of a moral component. But in Hebrew, Ra has the idea of something that is in a wide spectrum. Anywhere from mildly distasteful to calamitous and destructive.

But it's always bad. It's not good. It's the opposite of something that's beneficial and good.

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun. And indeed, it's all vapor and trying to grab a hold of the wind. Nothing left in your hand.

It's the impermanence of it. What is crooked cannot be made straight. You may straighten it out for a while.

But it's like some people's hair. They can straighten it. But it's just going to kink right back up the first time you get a little humidity in the air.

It's like a toy that I fixed for the girls. And a week later, it's broken again. It's the law of entropy.

The second law of thermodynamics that says in a closed system... Well, I could give you the scientific definition. I'll just give you the English definition. Everything put together falls apart.

Everything moves from a greater to a lesser state of organization. The simplest illustration of this is you think about a ceramic vase sitting on the corner of a table about three feet above a tile floor. Sooner or later, if that vase is near enough the edge, somebody's going to walk by and knock it off.

And it's going to fall. It's going to hit the tile. And it's going to shatter.

When is the last time you saw a shattered vase fly up from the floor and reassemble itself? We do that with video. We run the film backwards. But have you ever stopped and thought about the fact that you can run a film backwards and see amazing things? You can see broken things reassemble themselves.

You can see spilled liquids reassemble themselves and go back into the jug. But it's entertaining to watch because it never happens in real life. Things never go to a greater state of organization.

They never go to a better place. We have to run the film backward to get it to do that because in the universe everything put together falls apart. Everything assembled disassembles.

It corrodes. It rusts. It rots.

It decays. It isn't as good as it was. It wears down.

Everything except life, which God put in motion, the divine neshama, the breath of life that God breathed into our nostrils and that God infused into plant and animal life. That is the one thing that it seems like no matter how you beat it down, think about the weeds in your yard. How many times have you pulled them out? There was a tree growing out here beside our house right where the air conditioner compressor thing is.

It's in a bad place. It's right next to the fence, right next to the compressor. It's a bad thing.

So I cut it down. Well, it sprang back up. And where there had been one branch, there were three new branches.

I got the nippers and chopped them down. It started growing again. I took the weed eater and flayed the bark off of what was left of the stump.

And every time I would go by there, I would peel and pull and chop. And that thing is still alive. If I go out there right now, there are fresh branches shooting out.

You just can't. Life is very persistent. It seems to run counter to all of the laws of the universe.

And the reason is that is the power of God. God spoke and said, go forth, multiply, reproduce after your kind, fill the earth. And that's a divine command that even thousands of years later still impels life forward.

That's why you have the little plants growing in the cracks of the rocks. But that's evidence of God. What is known of God can be seen in nature.

His sovereign Godhead. Can be seen because when he speaks, it doesn't matter how much time passes. He says, go forth and be prolific.

And life is prolific. You just can hardly stamp it out. Well, back to Solomon's investigation.

He looks and he says, people can try to straighten the crooked and they can't. They can try to fill a need and it just isn't filled under the sun. I have here, I want to show you this book by Gary R. Collins.

It's called Can You Trust Psychology? What does that got to do with any of this? Well, the subtitles here is psychology anti-Christian. Does it dabble in the demonic? Should non-Christian counselors always be avoided? Does psychology really work? Psychology began, you think back to Freud and Jung and all of these other thinkers. And it's far older than that.

You can go back to Plato and Socrates. You can go back to the classical philosophers. But in particular, if you think about our country and you think about the last 100 years, the rise of psychology and branching off from that psychiatry is an attempt to straighten what is crooked and to fill what is lacking.

And it is an honest attempt. It's a noble attempt. It tries hard.

It does a lot of observation. It is the application of science to human problems. Science experiments.

Science tries to find cause and effect. Science has done a lot for us in terms of figuring out the way electricity works, the way physics and geometry and chemistry and all these other things

work. And you observe and you say, here's a cause, here's an effect.

I can put this cause in, get an effect, and that will be useful. I can put these paste-like chemicals inside a tin cylinder and connect them in a certain way and have a battery. And batteries do wonderful things.

I'll tell you, I've probably got as many battery-operated devices under my roof as any living American. Mostly toys and electronics. But that's a useful thing.

But batteries wear out. Batteries are not a permanent solution. Solar cells.

Solar cells would be the answer. There you have a perpetual source of energy. When they put things out in space, they give them solar panels so that they don't have to worry about replenishing batteries or running out of gas.

Well, the problem with that is there's all this debris and micro-particles out in the universe and over time, your little solar panels get holes and that too will wear out. It's a chemical reaction like anything else. Here's the point.

This book in particular, I was interested because I had an instinctively dim view of psychology ever since I took my first course in it at the Naval Academy called Introduction to Military Psychology. And I thought, if that is not the mixing of several bad things into one course, I don't know what is. And in our military psychology course, I'm anticipating going out and being a second lieutenant and having NCOs and staff NCOs under my umbrella of leadership and authority and trying to accomplish a mission and take care of these people.

And in this class on military psychology, we're being introduced to the strange quirks of the human brain and different phases that people go through when they're a baby. And well, at first they like to stick everything in their mouth and that's the oral phase. And it's real gross when you study it.

They go on to talk about things that are neither here nor there in practical life. But what are they trying to do? Everybody knows there's a problem in the human soul. They try to fix it with various things.

They say, well, it's lack of education. Why do we have the slums and the poverty and crime and all that in the inner city? Well, it's lack of education. It's lack of opportunity.

Let's give them education. Let's give them opportunity. We have people who have trouble with relationships.

And they can't, every time they get next to somebody, they wind up almost pathologically destroying whatever relationship they get into. They fend off. They wound.

They hurt. They get insecure. They've got all of these problems that keep them from having relationships.

Well, if people just had a happy relationship, if they could get into a relationship and be happy, that would adjust and balance their soul. It's a human need. Need for security.

Need for food, clothing, and shelter. Need for physical relationship with opposite gender. Need for fulfillment.

Feeling like you've accomplished something, that you're worthwhile, that you are valued by others is a need, that you are loved, that you are appreciated is a human need. And so they say, well, if we can just adjust the environmental factors, if we can get in there and tinker under the hood and figure out what's the matter and get people satisfaction in these areas, they're going to be the top floor of human development is self-actualization. You're now complete, balanced, happy, healthy, wholesome, productive, a blessing to others, a paragon of humanity.

Well, there is, and that's what this is about. That's why I brought this book, because that's a very attractive notion, that it's broken and we can fix it. It's crooked and we can straighten it.

It has a lack, but we can fill it. This is a secular idea that has infiltrated Christianity, and you would not believe until you start looking how pervasive this has become. Whether it is mentioned overtly or not, thousands of sermons being preached as we speak incorporate psychology, teach psychology, teach the principles that are valid as far as they go, just like other science.

You observe the way things are and draw conclusions and make applications. That's what they do. Can you dig up a reason why somebody has trouble in their relationships and it goes back to the relationships they observed when they were a child? Sure.

Can you discover that someone is insecure and that's why they lash out, that's why they boast, that's why they swagger, that's why they do this at the other, that's why they self-destruct every relationship they get into? Sure. That can be a component of it. The problem is, it's all about identifying what is crooked and trying to straighten it.

It's all about trying to find what's lacking and fill it. Well, there is no way to straighten the crooked. There is no way under the sun to fill the gap.

It cannot be done. Solomon had as many resources as anyone and he tried it and he said, you know what? I've looked around at everything. There's nothing new.

It's all been tried. We think these are all modern breakthroughs. People have been doing this for thousands of years.

People back in the days of Babylon were trying the same thing. I'm sure they had different terms for it, but it's all the same. The point is, there is no human way to straighten the crooked or fill

what lacks.

So, what is the conclusion? If you look at wisdom, if you look at the path that God sketches out, that Solomon talked about over in Proverbs chapter 5, follow the way of wisdom and you'll be happy. Well, how different is that than psychology in the sense of bringing away something that's lasting? We say, well, of course, God can heal the broken soul. There is a balm in Gilead.

There is power to heal and to mend and to stabilize and to straighten the crooked things in our soul and to fill up that which is lacking in our soul. God has that power. That is in the way of wisdom.

That is in that which God provides us. But the question is, if it's all temporary, if it's not a permanent solution, if it's not a lasting solution, what good is it? Suppose you follow the way of wisdom and you are healthy, wealthy, and wise. Solomon is going to go on to say, you try to pass this on to your kids and it gets stolen away from them.

You try to, Solomon himself. Who's Solomon's son? We read about this in the introduction to the book. Remember Rehoboam? Solomon raised a fool for a son.

All of the things Solomon is going to say about a man laboring and gathering all of his stuff and trying to pass it on and not being able to is going to be true. Rehoboam could not hang on to the United Kingdom. Rehoboam could not hang on to the wealth and the organization that Solomon and David before him accumulated.

And where is all of that now? It's long gone. Where are the golden shields that hung, those 75 pounds of solid gold for each shield? The cups and all of the cedar and everything that David assembled and that Solomon used to build the temple. There is not one stone standing on top of another.

Well, Solomon looks, Solomon anticipates, okay, there is a good way and there is a bad way, but there's got to be something more than just what happens in this life. Even if you find the key. I saw that they were running the, what do you call it, the marathon give me money session on PBS, the telethon, the pledge drive.

And they've been showing people the same guy they put on every year, bald headed guy with a mustache, quoting all the ancient philosophers including in his mind Jesus and quotes the Bible quite often. And he's into all of this psychology and self-actualization and everything else. And hour after hour of that on educational television.

And then there's a lady that they usually put her on late at night and she's talking about how you can have, I can't even think of the term she uses, but some otherworldly sex life. She has a whole couple of hours on seven principles for getting the most out of your physical relationship and all these different things you're supposed to do. Well, the end result of all of this is the same whether

you use a secular method or even God's method.

What Solomon says is, okay, I've got my Proverbs chapter five here. I'm going to stay away from the woman with the sticky lips and I'm going to trod the narrow path here and God is going to bless and I'm going to accumulate my wealth. Well, somebody over here is listening to bald guy on TV or listening to the sex woman later on and he's getting a happy prosperous life and he says, oh boy, and he gets his wealth by another means.

He goes and indulges in all kinds of pleasures and thinks that he's happy. There is, from a higher perspective and intangible, there is a substance that is missing in both of these approaches. It's the thing that when you look at your hand, you realize you just grasped the wind.

You realize that you didn't get a hold of that permanent, eternal weight of something. And this is the trap that Israel fell into. Israel said, we're not like the pagans.

We've been purged out of our idolatry. You get down to the time of Jesus with the Pharisees and the scribes and they say, we're not like the nations. We don't even let the dust of Samaria cling to our feet.

These people that compromised and intermarried and have other ideas about the Bible. We've got the true religion. We've got the temple.

We've got the Torah. We've got the Sanhedrin. We've got the scribes and the Pharisees.

We've got the Sadducees. We are it in terms of following God's way to a happy life. But look at their evaluation.

Remember in John when Jesus heals the man born blind and they call him in and they question him and that very humorous dialogue goes on because he says, why are you asking me this? All I know is I was blind and now I see. And they say, you were altogether born in sin. Are you going to instruct us? The man says, has anything like this happened? Could it be anything other than the power of God? This is again Solomon.

God gave him incredible wisdom and this is not grade school spiritual truth. This builds on what we have learned. We know the basic things.

Do well and you will be justified. Do well and you will be blessed. God smiles on us when we are obedient, when we're faithful.

But Solomon says, all I'm seeing is this life between the rising and setting of the sun and there are other people who seem to have the same kind of blessings that God has promised to the faithful. They get rich, they have pleasure, they laugh and are merry. So what's the difference? Have you ever asked yourself this question? You can look around in the Christian world, you can look around in the world at large and you say, I'm really making an effort to be pleasing to God in

my life.

I want to do the right things. I don't want to mess up my life. I am grateful to God for salvation.

I'm grateful to God for his blessings and for the opportunities. And you are doing the right thing. You're putting one foot in front of the other on the narrow road.

But you look around, look at your economics, look at your circumstances, look at your life from different angles, different aspects of it, relationships, possessions, accomplishments. Do you really stand out in a crowd of other people who may have a completely different idea of what God's word says or who may not care at all what God's word says? Is there a visible difference by these measures? If you're honest with yourself, the answer is no. And this is a myth that has come up in the church that, oh, those people are all secretly miserable.

Donald Trump is just really one of the most miserable men. No, he's not. No, he's not.

And there are many rich and famous. And we like to think that, oh, they go home and they're like Richard Corey and they're miserable just on the verge of blowing their brains out. These people are happy.

They wouldn't change a thing. You look at that Madonna woman and a lot of these puffy this and rap star that. They're just tickled to death to be where they are.

They're having the time of their life. Some of the celebrities that are into Scientology and some of these other alternate goofball religions are just happy as clams. They've been doing it for years.

They're peaceful and serene and they feel like it gives them the tools to cope. Well, this is what Solomon is coming up against, because he says, look, I'm going to look at this from the standpoint of wisdom and I'm going to try all these things out. But you know what? Under the sun, under heaven, I don't see a big difference here.

Where is that? I'm looking for something I can hold in my hand that's different. I'm looking for something that doesn't wind up being grasping the wind. Well, we need to know what that is also, because if we don't know what that is, if we can't identify it, we will be sidetracked.

If we measure by the level of blessing like the Pharisees did, like the ancient Israelites did, if we think, well, I must be doing OK because I'm happy and God's blessing me, so I must be doing the right thing. We will miss it. This is one of Satan's favorite ways to neutralize believers, especially today.

Give us a similitude. Give us the idea that we're doing OK. Hand us a false ruler.

Hand us a bad measuring stick that tells us, I'm OK. You're OK. We're all OK.

Let's get in a denomination. Let's get in a local church together and tell each other that we're all

doing OK. We need to find that thing we can hold in the hand that says, God thinks this is OK.

God, you are approved by God. Of course, Solomon hasn't reached that point yet in Ecclesiastes. But what he's saying is, look, there's nothing new here.

Even with the law, Moses, Israel, the temple, this is not essentially new. There's no new thing under the sun. We're all telling ourselves we're doing OK.

But what do I have when I open my hand and look at it? Well, it's a question we need to ask ourselves because the majority of us are on the broad road that leads to destruction in terms of eternal fruit. And we don't even know it. We don't even know it.

Believers assembled all over this country in thousands of local churches are looking at each other saying, boy, I'm so glad that I finally found the truth. And God has blessed me and God's blessing you. And aren't we all doing great? And most of us are not.

And it is this ineffable, intangible thing that Solomon is searching for and not finding. That's what we have got to find. That's how we're going to truly fulfill our calling in this life.

So as we go forward, we're going to see Solomon. And it's amazing because in the Old Testament, before Christ, before the epistles, he figures this out. And it's an amazing investigation.

It's an amazing description of his exploration that we have in this book. And it's really, really important for us to get a grip on it. So we're going to go forward as best we can.

We're not blessed with the wisdom of Solomon, but we have the words and we have God, the Holy Spirit. So we're going to pause here and take our break. But when we come back, we're going to go forward and see the first phase of this struggle that Solomon goes through in his soul as a believer, as someone who wants to please God, to try to identify that ineffable something that lasts beyond this life, that lasts beyond the sunset, as the hymn says.

Let's pause here and take our break.