

Just a Breath | The Sorrow of Life Under the Sun

Ecclesiastes 4

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I. Extreme Cruelty:

Life under the sun is marked by extreme cruelty and oppression of others. (verse 1)

1. “Man’s inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn!”
– Robert Burns

II. Exhausting Covetousness:

Life under the sun is ruled by exhausting covetousness of what others have. (verse 4)

III. Exasperation and Lack of Contentment:

Life under the sun comes with exasperation and lack of contentment in what one has. (verses 7-8)

IV. Excludes Companionship:

Life under the sun excludes true companionship and discourages authentic fellowship with others. (verses 9-10)

V. Everyday Change:

Life under the sun is filled with change every day, always seeking the next or newest. (verses 13-16)

VI. A Different Life?

God calls us to live a different life built on a different kind of relationship. (verses 9-12, Proverbs 18:24, John 15:15)

1. Share with God when you feel like you’re living life “under the

sun.” (Psalm 55:22)

2. Share your power and influence to help the oppressed. (Micah 6:8)
3. Share your money and resources with those in need. (Galatians 6:2)
4. Share your time with your family and building close relationships. (Genesis 2:18)

Study Questions

1. Read Ecclesiastes 4:1-3. In what ways have you seen or experienced evil’s oppression in your life or those closest to you? What happens inside you when you see others who are innocent suffer? Where do you see hope in a world filled with so much evil?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 4:4-6. How does “keeping up with the Joneses” show up in your heart? How does coveting most prominently show up in your life? In what ways are you prone to covet others’ success rather than celebrate and be thankful for them?
3. Read Ecclesiastes 4:7-8. What do you think you need in your life to finally make yourself happy? What does that teach you about where you’re finding joy and contentment?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. When are you most prone to run to isolation? Has isolation taught you that you are enough or are not enough for yourself? How have your relationships built through Southbrook been part of forming and shaping your walk with Christ?
5. Read Ecclesiastes 4:13-16. How do you handle change in life? Does a changing of the guard (e.g., politically, at work, etc.) excite you or cause fear or apprehension? Why or why not? Describe the last time God used a younger person to teach you deep truths about who He is. How did you react or respond?
6. What are some scriptures that have helped you keep your life

centered on God when the despair of the world starts to creep in? If you're with a group, take the time to look them up and read them together. Close by spending time in prayer.