We will become an equipping hub that trains people to unleash Jesus' love in their everyday lives.

"They equipped me to confidently take Jesus into the rest of my life, Monday to Saturday."

We will build a robust communal rule of life so our people grow in intimacy with God.

"I have rhythms and restrictions that actually help me resist popular culture and connect with God."

We will develop a culture where every stakeholder has a spiritual leader and can name their friends in the church.

"I have a leader who knows and loves me, and I have some of my closest relationships in the church."

We will continue to build our reputation as the Love the 'Ville Church through our social concern.

"No one loves the poor and the marginalized of this city like Northeast. Those people are everywhere.

We will lead in facilitating unity among diverse churches in the ‘Ville.

“They bring all sorts of churches together. There is no spirit of superiority or competition. Same team.”

We will be a multi-ethnic congregation.

“People of different colors and cultures are represented in their church, partnerships, and leadership.”

We will invest disproportionately in discipling our youth, especially the most committed.

"They are the place for your kid to get the sort of intensive discipleship training they need today."

We will create thoughtful and beautiful expressions of the Kingdom for our community.

"Every time they create content, media, art, music, anything, it really strikes a chord with me."

We will be a people of unceasing prayer.

"They figured out prayer. We pray all the time and it's not boring or weird, it's life-giving."

We will be a congregation who knows, honors, and reads the Bible.

"I grasp the story of the Bible, respect it as authoritative, know how to read it, and actually read it."

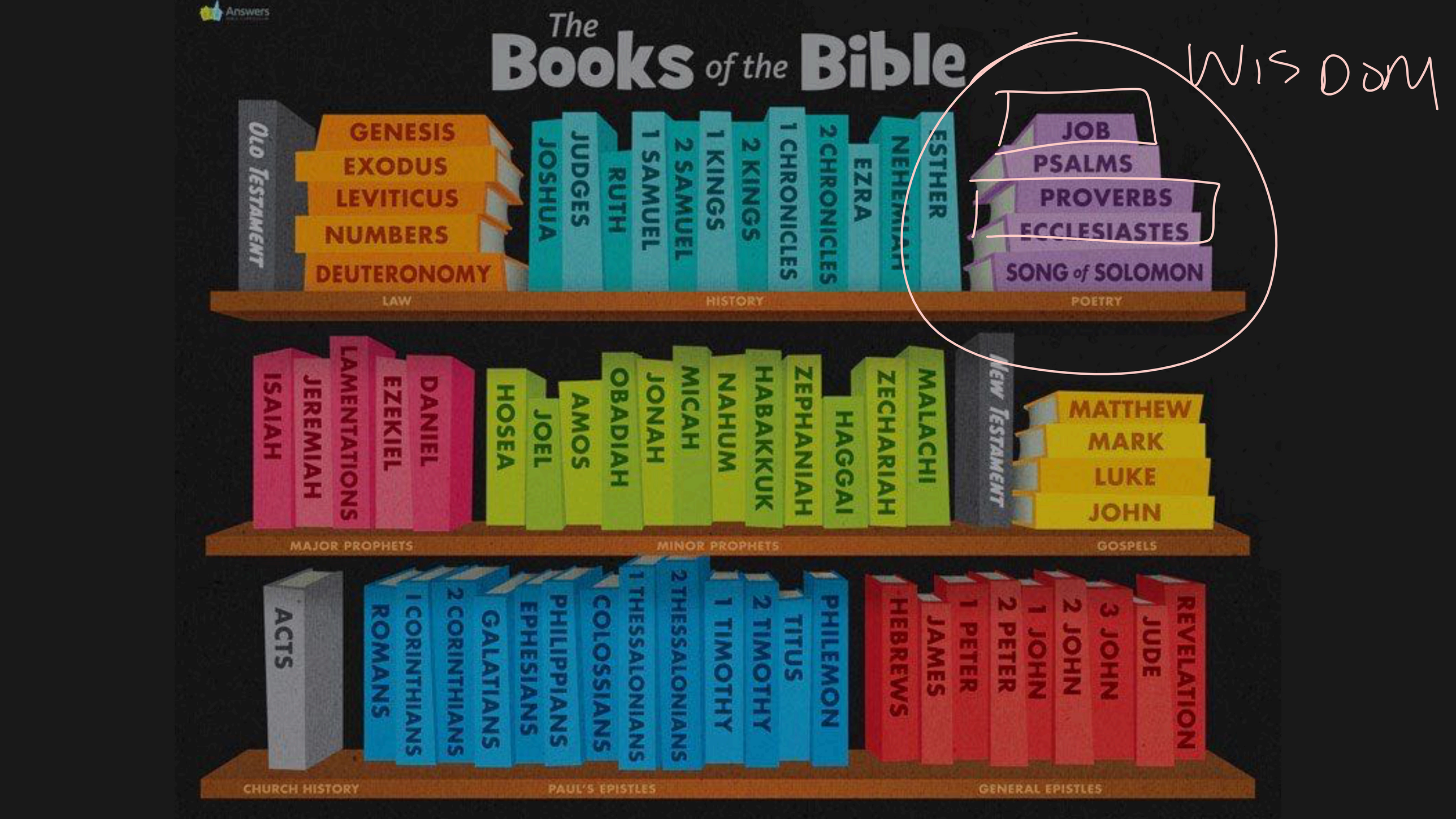
A. The Bible is a library of ancient documents from a radically different world.

B. The Bible is the living Word of God, relevant for your lives today.

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Deuteronomy
- 1-2 Samuel
- 1-2 Kings
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Psalms
- Ecclesiastes
- Isaiah
- Amos
- Malachi
- Matthew
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- Revelation

Q: How do I find meaning in a world that can feel so empty and be so unfair?

Interpretive Key: Ecclesiastes is the real and raw ancient wisdom of a Solomon-like prodigy who experienced everything the world had to offer. It's luxuries and cruelties, pleasures and injustices. Reflecting back on it, he teaches that if all there is is what there is under the sun, then life is a meaningless "vapor". The narrator concludes that the path to meaning is to (1) fear God, (2) obey His commands, and (3) remember the Day of Judgment will come.


Answers
The Books of the Bible
WISDOM
OLD TESTAMENT
GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY
JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
1 SAMUEL
2 SAMUEL
1 KINGS
2 KINGS
1 CHRONICLES
2 CHRONICLES
EZRA
NEHEMIAH
ESTHER
JOB
PSALMS
PROVERBS
ECCLESIASTES
SONG of SOLOMON
LAW
HISTORY
POETRY
ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
LAMENTATIONS
EZEKIEL
DANIEL
HOSEA
JOEL
AMOS
OBADIAH
JONAH
MICAH
NAHUM
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
MALACHI
NEW TESTAMENT
MATTHEW
MARK
LUKE
JOHN
MAJOR PROPHETS
MINOR PROPHETS
GOSPELS
ACTS
ROMANS
1 CORINTHIANS
2 CORINTHIANS
GALATIANS
EPHESIANS
PHILIPPIANS
COLOSSIANS
1 THESSALONIANS
2 THESSALONIANS
1 TIMOTHY
2 TIMOTHY
TITUS
PHILEMON
HEBREWS
JAMES
1 PETER
2 PETER
1 JOHN
2 JOHN
3 JOHN
JUDE
REVELATION
CHURCH HISTORY
PAUL'S EPISTLES
GENERAL EPISTLES

Literary Style of Ecclesiastes - Wisdom

-The literary style is the rules by which an author writes.

-For example, (research paper v. poem) or (legislation v. meme)

-Wisdom lit offers sophisticated advice on how to live well.

-Wisdom lit ignores the biblical storyline and covenant theology.

-Wisdom lit is often poetic in nature.

-There's wisdom passages sprinkled all through Bible.

-Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song Solomon are main wisdom books

-Proverbs and Ecclesiastes need to be read together!

-Proverbs is the way things ought to be - "Live wisely and experience blessing." That's the formula.

-Ecclesiastes is real talk - "You're born. Life is underwhelming. Then you die."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to Him,
and He will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction,
and haughtiness before a fall.

Proverbs 22:6

Train children in the right way,
and when old, they will not stray.

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Ecc 1:2-3

“Everything is meaningless,” says the Teacher,
“completely meaningless!”
What do people get for all their hard work
under the sun?

Ecc 4:1-4

Again, I observed all the oppression that takes place under the sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and their victims are helpless. So I concluded that the dead are better off than the living. But most fortunate of all are those who are not yet born. For they have not seen all the evil that is done under the sun. Then I observed that most people are motivated to success because they envy their neighbors. But this, too, is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

Ecc 6:12

In the few days of our meaningless lives, who knows how our days can best be spent? Our lives are like a shadow. Who can tell what will happen on this earth after we are gone?

Ecc 4:9-12

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

Ecc 7:27-29

“This is my conclusion,” says the Teacher. “I discovered this after looking at the matter from every possible angle. Though I have searched repeatedly, I have not found what I was looking for. Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman! But I did find this: God created people to be virtuous, but they have each turned to follow their own downward path.”

At its simplest, the book of Ecclesiastes is trying to work out how Genesis 1–2 [the goodness of creation] can be true and good in a world full of the results of Genesis 3 [the fallout of sin]. For the book gives strong affirmation of both the truth of the world as created by the one, living, sovereign God in Genesis 1–2, and the facts of the world as ravaged by the outcomes of Genesis 3—outcomes such as the flimsy transience of a human life; the unknowable abyss of death and forgottenness; the anger of injustice and tears of suffering; the accidents and unpredictability that confound all rational expectations; and so on.

- Chris Wright, OT scholar

Ecc 1:1-3

Frame Narrator

These are the words of the Teacher, King David's son, who ruled in Jerusalem. "Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless!" What do people get for all their hard work under the sun?

Ecc 12:8-14

“Everything is meaningless,” says the Teacher, “completely meaningless.” Keep this in mind: The Teacher was considered wise, and he taught the people everything he knew … The words of the wise are like cattle prods—painful but helpful. Their collected sayings are like a nail-studded stick with which a shepherd drives the sheep. But, my child, let me give you some further advice: Be careful, for writing books is endless, and much study wears you out. That’s the whole story. Here now is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey His commands, for this is everyone’s duty. God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad.

Two Authors of Ecclesiastes

The Frame Narrator's (#1) goal is to platform the Teacher's (#2) wisdom in order to deconstruct anything you are looking to for meaning and satisfaction in life apart from God.

Ecclesiastes 1:1

These are the words of the Teacher [*Qoheleth*], King David's son, who ruled in Jerusalem.

What we know about Solomon's life?

- Exorbitantly Rich
- Powerful King
- Savvy Diplomat
- Master Builder
- Feared General
- Notorious Womanizer
- Stunningly Wise
- Chronically Idolatrous

Ecc 1:2-3

“Everything is meaningless,” says the Teacher,
“completely meaningless!” What do people get for all
their hard work under the sun?

Two Key Terms for the Teacher

1. Under the Sun

-All the things we go to for meaning in life apart from God

-Pleasure, Work, Wealth, Intellect, Romance, Fame, Power, Politics, Time

2. Vapor (*hevel*)

-Translated as "meaningless" here

-The word image is purposeful

Work – Ecc 2:18

I came to hate all my hard work here on earth, for I must leave to others everything I have earned. And who can tell whether my successors will be wise or foolish? Yet they will control everything I have gained by my skill and hard work under the sun. How meaningless! So I gave up in despair, questioning the value of all my hard work in this world.

Wealth – Ecc 7:10-13

Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness! The more you have, the more people come to help you spend it. So what good is wealth—except perhaps to watch it slip through your fingers! People who work hard sleep well, whether they eat little or much. But the rich seldom get a good night's sleep. There is another serious problem I have seen under the sun. Hoarding riches harms the saver.

Pleasure – Ecc 2:1

I said to myself, “Come on, let’s try pleasure. Let’s look for the ‘good things’ in life.” But I found that this, too, was meaningless.

"Under the Sun" Worldview

If all there is under the sun is what there is under the sun, then life is ultimately meaningless!

Interpretive Key: Ecclesiastes is the real and raw ancient wisdom of a Solomon-like prodigy who experienced everything the world had to offer. It's luxuries and cruelties, pleasures and injustices. Reflecting back on it, he teaches that if all there is is what there is under the sun, then life is a meaningless "vapor". The narrator concludes that the path to meaning is to (1) fear God, (2) obey His commands, and (3) remember the Day of Judgment will come.

Ecc 12:13-14

Here now is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey His commands, for this is everyone's duty. God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad.

"Under the Sun" Worldview

If all there is under the sun is what there is under the sun, then life is ultimately meaningless!

"Over the Sun" Worldview

You will find meaning under the sun if you: (1) fear God (**exaltation**); (2) obey His commands (**sanctification**); (3) remember the Day of Judgment will come (**perseverance**).

Romans 8:18-24

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who His children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Romans 8:18-24

And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as His adopted children, including the new bodies He has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved.