

One way we're alike

Written by Bill Perkins

In one way we're alike.

We want our life to matter. And sometimes we wonder if it does, or ever will. You may go for weeks, months, or even years without giving it much thought. And then you run into an old high school or college friend, whose lofty achievements make you wonder how he, or she, accomplished so much more than you in the same amount of time. You slap him on the back, but inside you're not celebrating her success. You're grieving the comparative smallness of your own . . . which only a few moments ago you viewed with pride.

If you've ever felt or thought that way, you're not alone. Solomon observed the world around him and concluded all life "under the sun" is meaningless (Ecclesiastes 1:1-2). Our accomplishments are sand castles on the beach facing an incoming tide. Eventually, all a man or woman accomplishes will be forgotten, along with their name (Ecc 2).

Solomon pointed to the sun, it circles overhead today and makes the same journey tomorrow and every day after that. He noted that water follows a never-ending cycle from a river to the sea, from the sea to the sky, and from the sky back to the ground where it flows into a river. The endless repetition is meaningless.

Such truth can trigger despair. But remember, Solomon spoke about life "under the sun" – life without God. And his words make sense. Just ask yourself, *what have I done of eternal value without God?*

Your answer reveals two things. First, life without God, as Solomon said, is "meaningless." Second, the opposite is also true. The presence of God gives you and your work great meaning. Regardless, of the comparative "size" of your accomplishments, it's God's presence that infuses your life with eternal value (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).