

LOOKING TO GOD IN THE SHADOWS

**JULY
12**

ECCLESIASTES 7

DISCUSSING GOD'S WORD

1. How do verses 1-14 point to the reality that God has and fulfills good purposes, even through experiences that are difficult and heavy? How does this truth affirm the inadequacy of human wisdom?
2. What realities in verses 15-22 would caution us from trusting our own perception of the world?
3. How would you summarize the Preacher's view of humanity according to verses 23-29?

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

1. What trial or sorrowful situation are you currently facing? How might God be using that situation for your good?
2. What might it look like to be "overly righteous" (Know-it-all? "Holier-than-thou" Condescension? Self-reliance and self-confidence)? How can we help one another obey Jesus' words in Matthew 5:48 or 6:33 without erring in this way?
3. Does your perception of your own sinfulness match the Bible's declaration of your own sinfulness? How might God use this passage to help us distrust ourselves in a helpful way?

PRAYING GOD'S WORD

1. Please help us count it all joy when we face trials of various kinds (James 1:2-4) and help us look not to what is seen, but what is unseen (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).
2. God please make us a wise and sober-minded people, patient in spirit, who fear You appropriately.
3. Please lead us to those around us who are disillusioned and struggling, and use us to lead them to the ultimate Righteous One who suffered for our sake.