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Making **SENSE**

of the **MESS**

1 Group



Making **SENSE**

of the **MESS**

LOOKING BEYOND THE SUN

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Religious ritual without the fear of God is meaningless; instead, we should approach God reverently through Christ.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Church has become a place to consume knowledge about God and less about having an encounter with the Living God.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy
Him forever."
- Westminster Shorter Catechism**

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

“Worship has become all about me - my desires, my likes, my preferences, what I want - and that is nothing less than idolatry.”
- Danny Akin

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**God has become a means to an end rather
than an end in and of Himself.**

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**Religion has become a means to use God for
what we really want rather than an
experience of standing in awe in front of
One True Living God.**

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

5 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

² Do not be quick with your mouth,
do not be hasty in your heart
to utter anything before God.
God is in heaven
and you are on earth,
so let your words be few.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

³ A dream comes when there are many cares,
and many words mark the speech of a
fool.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. ⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger,



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

"My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷ Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Everything under the sun is pointless.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Can we find meaning in religion?



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

How to Look Beyond the Sun

1) Praise through right worship.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**"Guard your steps when you go to the
House of God..."**

Ecclesiastes 5:1



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

²³ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3:23-24

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**Yet God still loves His people enough and
has created ways to reverse what Adam and
Eve did in the Garden!**



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**How differently would we come to church if
we knew that we were about to have an
encounter with the Lord Almighty?**

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**Do not be quick with your mouth,
do not be hasty in your heart
to utter anything before God.**

**God is in heaven
and you are on earth,
so let your words be few.**

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Solomon was warning against formalism and manipulation.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Formalism can look like. . .

1) Ritualistic prayers offered over and over.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Formalism can look like. . .

- 1) Ritualistic prayers offered over and over.**
- 2) Going through the motions...doing things because this is what Christians do.**

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Religious form (things that we do) without
substance (heart/intentionality) repulses
God.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

¹⁵ I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

Revelation 3:15-16



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**The way we worship, the things we vow, how
I interact with God are repulsive to the point
of Jesus vomiting IF my heart and intentions
aren't right.**

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What about the devoted Christians whose testimonies aren't happy endings?



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What is “Right Worship” before God?



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Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—**this is your true and proper worship**. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to **test and approve what God's will is**—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

When you obey God and what/how He wants you to live, then your actions, your choices, your desires will end up being an act of worship.



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How to Look Beyond the Sun

- 1) Praise through right worship.
- 2) Worship through prayer.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. ⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

Ecclesiastes 5:4-6



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6:7-8

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**We don't have to manipulate, poke, or prod
our Heavenly Father to get what we need.
He knows before we even ask.**



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Vows were pledges a worshiper would make to God as part of the offering or sacrifice process. They were used as special requests to get God to do something significant in their lives.



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

²¹ If you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the Lord your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be guilty of sin. ²² But if you refrain from making a vow, you will not be guilty. ²³ Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the Lord your God with your own mouth.

Deuteronomy 23:21-23



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Vows were made to gain God's favor in order to urge God to grant a special request.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

Vows that go unfulfilled anger God.

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

"People can get caught up in a moment of enthusiasm or crisis, and in that moment they make a promise to God or some kind of vow."

- Matt Chandler

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**It is better to never make a vow than it is to
make one and not keep it.**



Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

We make vows all the time. Marital vows, missionary support, building funds, not yelling at our kids, be a more attentive husband, be the spiritual head of the house...etc

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin.
And do not protest to the temple
messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why
should God be angry at what you say and
destroy the work of your hands?

Ecclesiastes 5:6

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

³⁷ All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No';
anything beyond this comes from the evil
one.

Matthew 5:37



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How to Look Beyond the Sun

- 1) Praise through right worship.
- 2) Worship through prayer.
- 3) Prayerfully approach through the sacrifice of Christ.



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²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

Making **SENSE** of the **MESS**

**Jesus is the better priest and better sacrifice
who can cleanse and reconcile us for all time.**



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So What?



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¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, His body, ²¹ and since we have a Great Priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:19-23