

# The Happiness Code

Week 8 – Vanity of Human Enterprise

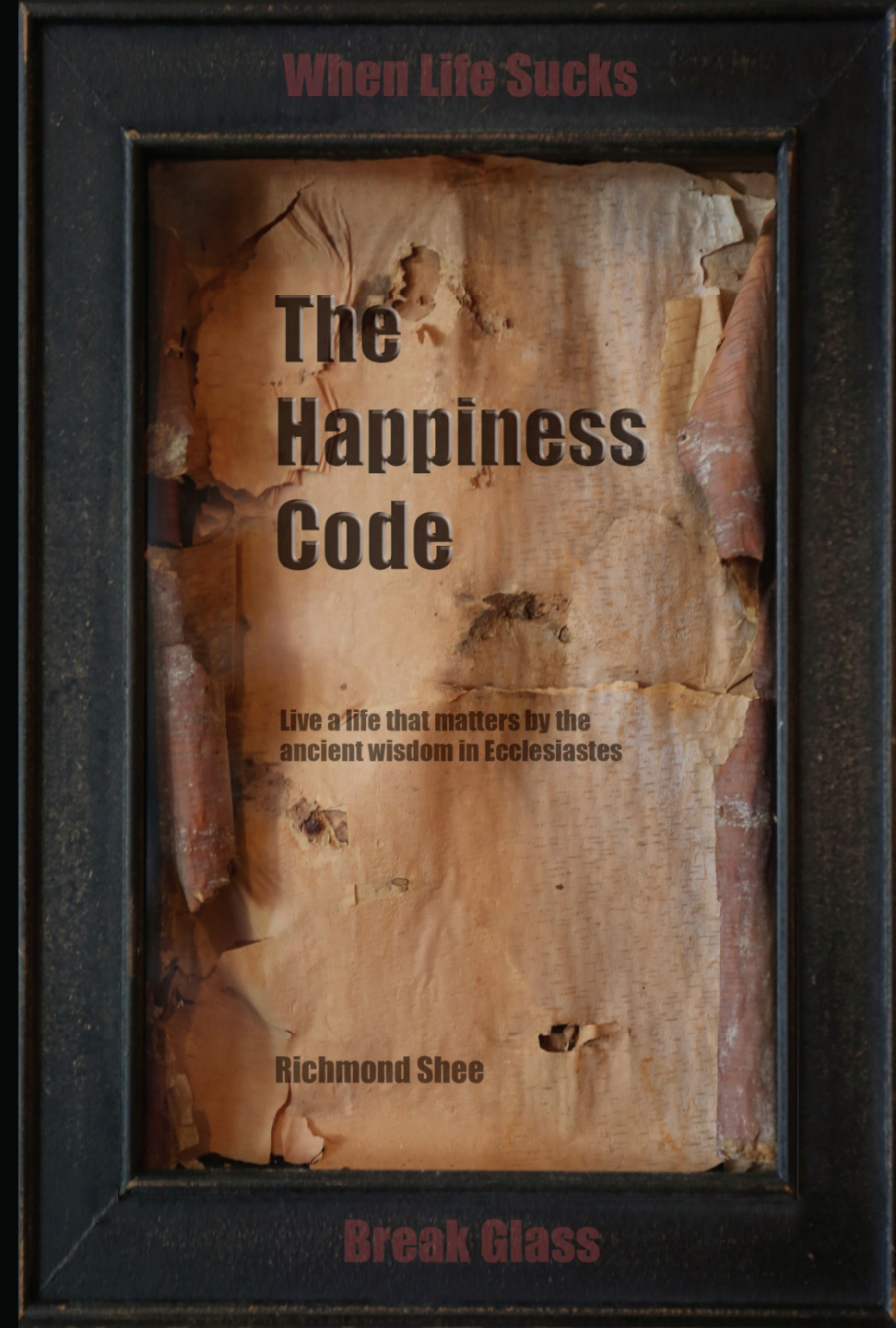
Ecclesiastes 4:4-16



## Week #8: Level Set

There seems to be a disorder that plagues the human occupations in this world.

Skillful works yield envy instead of happiness.  
Hard work produces dissatisfaction.  
The fruit of fame is doom.





## Week #8: Level Set

Lessons from 3 archetypes of self-serving people:

- A skillful perfectionist who takes pride in doing everything right.
- A solitary person who minds his own business, works hard, and hoards riches.
- A king who rises to fame from a humble beginning.





Which would you  
rather have?





Ecc 4:4 Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.  
(5) The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.



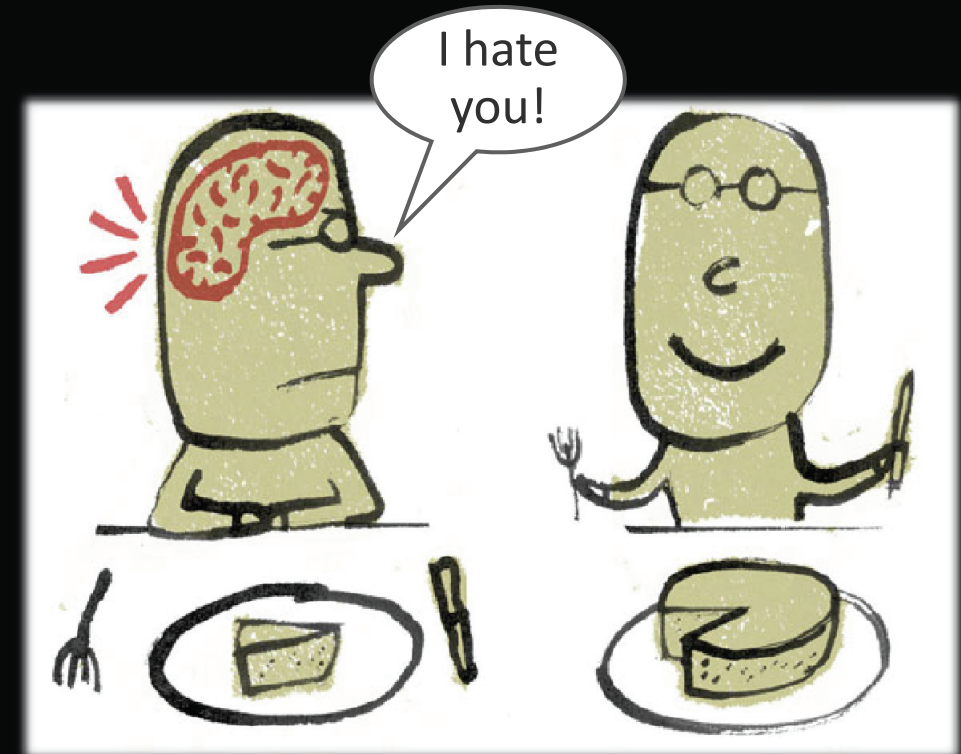
A dexterous person  
vs.  
a lazy fool



Ecc 4:4 Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit. (5) The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.



An easy and  
hungry life  
or  
A life of  
plenty with a  
great deal of  
stress and  
strife?



Ecc 4:6 Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.



- What's your definition of a handful?
- What does that look like?
- How does this affect your pursuit of worldly goods?
- Proverbs 30:7 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: (8) Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: (9) Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.



Ecc 4:7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun. (8) There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.



- Another meaningless human effort – The solitary pursuit of happiness in working, making money, and hoarding riches.
- “There is one alone” – not going to share. It’s all mine!
- “No end to his labour” – can’t stop working, because the eyes are not satisfied. Busy, busy, busy...
- Lives in pinching want amidst the greatest plenty.
- The scrooge is the epitome of self-serving—“Get what you can, can what you get, and sit on the can.”



Ecc 4:9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. (10) For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. (11) Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? (12) And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.



- The scrooge who seeks happiness by increasing his wealth through solitary effort is defeated in his own game.
- The practical benefits of partnership:
  - Synergy—“They have a good reward for their labour.”
  - Mutual aid—“For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow.”  
**Mark 6:7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two.**
  - Comfort—“If two lie together, then they have heat.”
  - Protection—“If one prevail against him, two shall withstand him.”

Ecc 4:13 Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished. (14) For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor. (15) I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead. (16) There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.



Caution! You are entering an  
obscure and ambiguous zone  
in Ecclesiastes.



Ecc 4:13 Better is a **poor and a wise child** than an **old and foolish king**, who will no more be admonished.

(14) **For out of prison he cometh to reign**; whereas also **he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor**.

(15) I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the **second child** that shall stand up in **his** stead.

(16) There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in **him**. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.



The message is clear—the vanity of fame because people tend to worship the rising sun.



- The old and foolish king represents established individuals who are prideful, narcissistic, egotistical, and grandiose, who will no more be admonished.
  - Impoverished by their folly when they are dethroned—“he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.”
  - **Proverbs 13:18 Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.**
- The poor and wise child represents people with less experience and far less advantage compared to the “old and foolish king.”
  - Rise from a humble estate to an honorable position—“For out of prison he cometh to reign.”
  - Draw many fanatics and social media followers—“There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them.”
  - Cannot retain the adoration of the people because it is human nature to gravitate to new things.
  - A reign which begins so famously ends in obscurity.
  - **Proverbs 27:24 For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?**



## Principles to live by...



- Coach-ability is a vital trait.
- Make friends with people who are poor and wise than the rich and foolish. Why?  
**Proverbs 22:25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.**
- Fame is vain. The fruit of fame is doom. Never build happiness on fame.

# You have been illuminated to these truths:

- The self-serving people's hope of happiness in skillful works, hoarding of riches, and fame is proven to be empty and dissatisfying.
- What is your definition of a handful?
  - Ecclesiastes 4:6 Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.
- Who is your ministry partner who prays and labors with you?
  - Ecclesiastes 4:9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.
- Are you teachable?
  - Ecclesiastes 4:13 Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.
- Please submit your questions and feedback to [TheHappinessCode@yahoo.com](mailto:TheHappinessCode@yahoo.com)