

**Making Noise  
SW04.23.06am**

**The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? - Ecclesiastes 1:1-3.**

**The NIV translates verse 2 as: "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."**

**INTRO: For 2½ years Miyoko Kawahara literally made a lot of noise and she became nationally known in Japan as "Mrs. Noisy."**

**1. Kawahara is a surprising 59-years-old, I say surprising, because usually we think of younger people as being the violators of the sound waves with unwanted noise.**

**2. Kawahara became "Mrs. Noisy" by blaring music from her balcony, and screaming insults to those who passed by.**

**(1. She also enjoyed beating her bedding as loudly as possible out on her balcony.**

**3. At least one neighbor developed insomnia and headaches from the noise of "Mrs. Noisy."**

**4. However, the long arm of the law has finally caught up with Miyoko and she has been given a sentence of a year in jail for her unwanted noise.**

**(1. She will probably be released from jail after serving just three months of the sentence and neighbors are already worried.**

**5. In a way, we can think of a meaningless life as a life of just making noise. It may be that Mrs. Kawahara has been in her own way trying to find some meaning for her life.**

(1. Sadly, she ended up just making a whole lot of noise and irritating everyone who passed by along with all of her neighbors.

6. To some extent, her noise irritated the entire country of Japan and time in jail is the price she is having to pay.

*1. What about your life? What about my life? Are we just making noise? Or, are we making music with a life of meaning?*

1. Solomon was confronted with this very question thousands of years ago. Here was a man who had everything the world says should make a person have a meaningful life.

(1. Solomon had it all. He had power, he had riches, he had fame, and he had great wisdom, great knowledge.

2. Solomon looked out at his vast domain as he searched for meaning, for life...and he saw nothing but noise. **“Meaningless! Meaningless!” he cried. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”**

(1. Everything that he had, and he had it all, seemed to be just a lot of noise.

3. Solomon is said to have been the wisest man who ever lived. Although at some points of his life, he did not use the great wisdom God had blessed him with.

4. The example, the good example Solomon has given us is that he finally did understand how to make music with his life and not just noise.

5. In the **book of Ecclesiastes**, Solomon evaluates for the purposes of find living three different possibilities.

6. Solomon experiments with, experiences, the mind expansion of wisdom, the pridefulness of fame, the depths of pleasure and the exhaustion of work.

(1. I want us to look at what he discovered in his search of all of them.

II. Solomon says in **Ecclesiastes 1:16**, “I communed with my heart, saying, ‘Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem.’”

1. The Bible says in **1 Kings** about Solomon that, “His fame spread through all the surrounding nations.”

2. Solomon was well known and his fame was reported as the reason for the Queen of Sheba to travel 1,200 miles to visit the Jewish kingdom.

3. Solomon was able to unite Judah and Israel ruling over a united kingdom. A kingdom which reached its greatest borders during Solomon’s rule.

4. Solomon also had a great merchant navy that traveled across all of the known world increasing his fame.

5. About his fame Solomon says in **verse 17**: “I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind.”

III. Now let us consider the knowledge, the wisdom of Solomon. Solomon says in **Ecclesiastes 1:16**, “I communed with my heart, saying, ‘Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem.’”

1. At the age of 12, Solomon became King. Shortly after Solomon is anointed king, God appears to him in a dream in which He invites Solomon to make a request for himself.

**2. Solomon answers: “I am but a small child ... Give therefore your servant an understanding heart to judge your people....”**

**3. His request pleases God who tells him: “Because you have not requested riches and honor but only that which would benefit all the people, I will give you not only an understanding heart like none other before or after you ... but also riches and honor like no other king in your days (1 Kings 3:7-13).”**

**4. According to 1 Kings 4:30-34, “He composed 3,000 parables, and 1,005 poems. He discoursed about trees, from the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows from the wall. He also discoursed about animals, birds, creeping things and fish. Men of all nations came to hear Solomon's wisdom, as did all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.”**

**5. Solomon was known then and now as the wisest of all men. However, here is what Solomon said about his wisdom and knowledge: “I communed with my heart, saying, ‘Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My heart has understood great wisdom and knowledge.’ And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind. For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow (Ecclesiastes 1:16-18).”**

**IV. Many try to find meaning, joy, and fulfillment in pleasure. Solomon also tried to find meaning in life through pleasure.**

**1. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 2:3, “I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.”**

2. Solomon also took 700 wives and had 300 concubines. In **Ecclesiastes 2:10** he says, **“Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure.”**

3. Solomon was perhaps one of the richest men to ever live and he kept busy building elaborate gardens and buildings as he tells us in **Ecclesiastes 2:4-8**, **“I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove. I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and musical instruments of all kinds.”**

4. About the result of all of his labor and all of his riches Solomon tells us in **Ecclesiastes 2:11**, **“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.”**

5. The life of Solomon just made a lot of noise as long as he was trying to find meaning in knowledge, wisdom, fame, riches, or his work. It was all just a lot of noise.

V. Kurt Cobain died in 1994. I remember the day I read about it in the newspaper. He was the founder and lead singer of the rock group *“Nirvana.”*

1. His death was the result of his committing suicide. He took a shotgun, pointed it to his head, and killed himself.

2. The newspaper was filled with the words of fans and commentators in disbelief saying *“Why? It makes no sense.”* *“He had it all . . . a great career, a huge following, plenty of money, a wife and a 19 month old daughter . . . Why? ”*

3. To most people it made no sense. But it did make sense because Kurt Cobain was living out his beliefs to their logical extreme.

4. Kurt Cobain was a self professed humanist and nihilist. In other words, he believed there was no God and that there was no meaning or purpose to life.

(1. His music, poetry was very clear about that.

5. Kurt Cobain's style of music was grunge rock. He pioneered this type of music. The alternative rock style of today has evolved from grunge rock.

6. Kurt had a disdain for anything mainstream or acceptable to society. He was a child of divorce.

(1. At the age of eight he began to be shifted from home to home, sometimes even being homeless.

(2. He was very vocal about his bitterness from that experience and from it came his belief that life was basically rotten and meaningless.

7. His music often spoke of his anger and disillusionment. One of his most famous songs was called "*Nevermind*."

(1. Its recurring line was "*Oh well, whatever, nevermind.*"

8. Another song he wrote never got released. It was too objectionable to the record company, but Kurt liked it. It was called, "*I Hate Myself, and I Want To Die.*"

(1. In another song called "*Smells Like Teen Spirit*," a well known line says, "*I feel stupid and contagious, here we are, now entertain us.*"

(2. The video of that song was voted best video of the decade of the 1990's.

9. Friends of Cobain say he lived up to his music. He often acted without reason. He was constantly on an emotional roller coaster.

(1. But his dips into despair got deeper and deeper.

(2. Once, a member of his road crew asked him why he was moping around so much. Cobain replied, "*I'm awake, aren't I?*"

10. Kurt Cobain was a young man fueled by nihilism. He had passion, but for nothing.

(1. He had a void in his heart that nothing he pursued could fill, and he believed that nothing could or ever would fill it.

(2. He had no purpose, no meaning, and he simply lived out his belief in his worldview to its logical conclusion.

11. He sounds a whole lot like King Solomon doesn't he? At least in some ways. Solomon, too pursued all of the things the world has to offer.

(1. He also wrote of the despair the things of the world had brought him. They had no meaning. It was all just noise.

12. Solomon, however, came to a different conclusion than Kurt Cobain. (*Source of Kurt Cobain illustration: SermonCentral.com contributor Scott Weber pastor of Estes Park, Colorado Christian Church.*)

VI. The 19th-century Bible scholar G. S. Bowes pointed out the ultimate futility of ambition that is not accompanied by dedication to God.

1. He pointed to four powerful world rulers of the past, as he wrote: “Alexander the Great was not satisfied, even when he had completely subdued the nations. He wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, and he died at an early age in a state of debauchery.”

(1. “Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the knights he had slaughtered, committed suicide by swallowing poison. Few noted his passing, and he left this earth completely unmourned.”

(2. “Julius Caesar, ‘staining his garments in the blood of one million of his foes,’ conquered 800 cities, only to be stabbed by his best friends at the scene of his greatest triumph.”

(3. “Napoleon, the feared conqueror, after being the scourge of Europe, spent his last years, in banishment.”  
(Source of G. S. Bowes illustration - SermonCentral.com from Our Daily Bread Devotional by H.G.B.)

2. Like King Solomon, like Kurt Cobain, they made a lot of noise with their lives but found very little meaning.

3. At one time, Mike Tyson was the most feared heavyweight boxer in the ring. Based on an interview with Tyson, Jon Saraceno revealed what went wrong:

4. “Almost 39, he is anything but at peace. Confused and humiliated after a decadent lifestyle left him with broken relationships, shattered finances, and a reputation in ruin, the fighter cannot hide his insecurities, stacked as high as his legendary knockouts.”

(1. “I’ll never be happy,” Tyson says. “I believe I’ll die alone. I would want it that way. I’ve been a loner all my life with my secrets and my pain. I’m really lost, but I’m trying to find myself. I’m really a sad, pathetic case.”



(2. Saraceno writes that, *“The divorced father of six is blunt, gregarious, funny, vulgar, outrageous, sad, angry, bitter, and, at times, introspective about the opportunities he squandered over the last two decades. He discusses his drug use (“The weed got me”), lack of self-esteem, and sexual addiction.”*

(3. Tyson sums up his life by saying, *“My whole life has been a waste, I’ve been a failure.”* (Source: Mike Tyson illustration PreachingToday.com Jon Saraceno, "Tyson: My Whole Life Has Been a Waste," USA Today (6-3-05); submitted by David Slagle, Decatur, Georgia.)

5. Like Solomon, like Kurt Cobain, like Alexander the Great, like Napoleon - Tyson made a lot of - noise - with his life but has found no meaning.

VII. Susie Scott Krabacher had her 15 minutes of fame as *“Miss May 1983”* in Playboy magazine.

1. What has happened in and through her since then is a testimony though to the grace and power of God.

2. After her time as a Playboy playmate, Krabacher came to know Jesus as her personal Savior, married, and began looking for a God-honoring purpose for her life.

(1. At the urging of a friend, she made a trip to Haiti. From that initial visit came the determination to devote her life to helping Haitian children.

3. The Haitians did not take her seriously at first. Susie says, *“They thought I’d pass out candy and toys, make promises, get my name in the paper, and go home as soon as I got scared.”*

4. But God has smiled on her determination and mission. Her nonprofit foundation has raised millions of dollars and used the money to build six schools, three orphanages, and a hospital.

(1. Hundreds of Haitian children call her “Mama.”

5. Susie says now that, *“I was born to do this work. I was not put here to be a Playboy centerfold.”*

6. She has found out what Solomon found out and that is how to make more than just noise with your life. (*Source for Krabacher illustration: PreachingToday.com - The Week, vol. 4, Issue 182 (11-12-04), p.14; submitted by Rubel Shelly, Nashville, Tennessee.*)

VIII. Conclusion - Let us see how we can make more than just noise with our lives. Solomon tells us.

1. **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all (“the whole duty of man” – KJV). For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”**

2. We can search the world and try everything but there is ultimately only one place to go to find meaning in life.

3. Actually, it is not a place it is a person. We must go to God, give our lives to Him and then we will find that our lives are no longer just making noise.

4. The apostle Peter put it another way telling us the person we are to go to is, Jesus Christ, and as Peter says, **“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).”**

(1. There's no other place, no other person in which to find meaning in life.

5. Allow the Master, the Creator to have control of your life and you will discover the noise is gone but in its place will be a composition that all who encounter will describe as being a masterpiece.

(1. Allow the Master to bring the music of meaning forth from your heart.

(During the Children's message I talked about how some lives are just like a lot of meaningless noise and enlisted the children to make a lot of noise whenever I said the word "noise" during the first part of the sermon. At the end of the sermon our worship leader sang "The Master's Hands" and then we ended with an invitation and invitation hymn.)