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“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman

*Today Reference*

#### **Ecclesiastes 1: 12-14**

**I, the teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men! I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind. (NIV)**



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## The TCL E-Leadership Resource Are You an Unhappy Leader?

Recently, in my devotions I read the scripture above and pondered Solomon's dilemma, which has to do with the unhappiness that accompanied his great wisdom. Solomon had been given a gift that most men and women would sacrifice much for. Yet he continues lamenting his gift by saying "For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief." (v18) He continues reflecting in chapter 3 in verse 17 with "So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me." Friends, the reality is that happiness is something that comes apart from wisdom.

Solomon subsequently came to this conclusion ... "A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in his work. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?" (Ch 2:24) I could not help reflecting on a little history in my life in the mid 1990's. I wrote the following in 1996 for a small publication in Hobart, Indiana.

*DATE: Sometime in November, 1994*

*TIME: 11:00 P.M. to midnight*

*PLACE: Our kitchen*

*PRESENT: Just me*

*Our kitchen had only one light on, a dim one at best. I've sat and gazed out our window here before; thinking about problems at work, what we wanted to buy next, how to get ahead. After all, if I could figure it all out and follow through on a few scenarios, I'd be a happy man. RIGHT?!*

*This time was different. My thoughts were not on work or what I wanted to buy. My thoughts were on me. I've lived more than half of an average man's life and have not found happiness. Why haven't I? I have three beautiful children, which so far are better than I ever was. I've been married 20 years now without any problems to speak of. I go to church all the time. Financially we are not in need. And the future looks bright. So why am I not happy? I sat there and thought. What am I missing?*

*I have a cassette radio on my night stand, and for the last couple of years, I have listened to four or five tapes while trying to get to sleep at night. One of those tapes is Pastor Chuck Wheeler's personal testimony. This tape (which I've heard over 50 times) tells of his personal test of Bible reading (try reading for 30 days and see what happens). Sitting there in my kitchen I remembered his words, and I thought, "Should I try this? Why? My parents read the Bible to us all the time, I grew up in a Christian school and had Bible class every day, and I even read at the dinner table once in a while." As I finished the cigarette I was smoking, I looked at the drawer of my kitchen table. I pulled it open and stared at the Bible that was there. Should I or shouldn't I?*

*It is now more than a year and a half later and I'm still reading at least two times a week (more when our small group material goes fast). I shouldn't say reading, I should say studying. I spend about an hour by myself after everyone is in bed and have found it to be the most satisfying time of the week. God has used this time to reveal many things to me that I would not have known or understood. Nine months ago He helped me stop smoking. Above all, I've found in His word what I was looking for .... happiness. I found it in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through quiet time and His word.*

*Do I still think about work? Do I still think about things I would like to have? Sure. But now these things are not the priority of my life. Now I feel I can wait until the Lord reveals how He wants me to run the business, and when, if at all, He allows me to enjoy certain earthly pleasures.*

*Have you ever thought my thoughts? Are you really happy, or are you faking it?*

It has been 15 years since I experienced the above. Anything changed? Yes it has. I have found my involvement in ministry and life so mentally exhausting that I find it hard to study His word, thus I am not as happy as I should be.

Can you relate?