

Welcome to the Ordinary  
**SUBSTANCE**

# The sad story of Michael Husmer



What she knows  
and what she  
didn't find out



Attitude toward the ordinary:

**Worldliness:**      **Substance:**

YOLO

Roles

IWWIW

Responsibilities

FOMO

Repetitions

Freedom and novelty

Rhythms

God uses the ordinary to  
***frustrate worldliness***  
and  
***forge substance.***  
(godliness)



1. God uses the ordinary to  
***frustrate worldliness***

# **Ecclesiastes:** A lecture on sophisticated worldliness

***"Life is a vapor"***

insubstantial (meaning) and momentary (pleasure)

***Experiment:***

"study everything with wisdom guiding" 2:3

***Concluding Question:***

"Is there anything worthwhile under the sun?"

## ***Tested:***

1. Wisdom
2. Pleasure
3. Achievement
4. Originality
5. Wealth
6. Experience
7. Renown/Reputation

## ***Resulting Feelings:***

1. Weariness
2. Crushed
3. Futility (chasing wind)
4. Gloom (needing wine)
5. Dissatisfaction
6. Anxious striving
7. Depression
8. Hatred



Remind you of anything?

## ***Jesus' symptoms for worldliness***

**Weary/tiresome**—Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

**Crushed**—choked (Mark 4)

**Anxious Striving**—worry (Matthew 6)

**Gloom**—Matthew 6: "your whole body will be full of darkness"

**Hatred**—2 masters: "He will love one and hate the other"

# *Chasing Vapor brings misery (1:14, 17)*

Ecclesiastes 2:17-20

So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun.

(there's a twist coming. Shhh...)

# ***The Unsatisfying Answer:***

**Ecclesiastes 2:24 - 3:1**

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? To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

## Ecclesiastes 2:10-11

**My heart *took* delight in all my work,  
and this was the reward** for all my labor.

Yet **when I surveyed** all that my hands had done and  
what I had toiled to **achieve**,  
everything was meaningless,  
a chasing after the wind;  
nothing was gained under the sun.

# ***Crux of the issue:***

The creation can never be the creator—  
it can never be ultimate.

**No lasting pleasure**

**No permanent accomplishment**

**No ultimate meaning (significance or knowledge)**

# Ecclesiastes 3:10-14

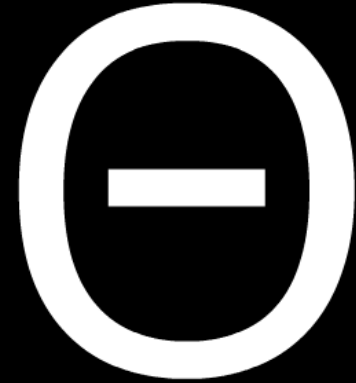
**I have seen the burden God has laid on men.** He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also **set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done** from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. **God does it so that men will revere him.**

# C.S. Lewis: *First and Second Things*

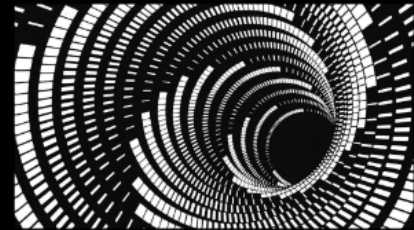
longing  
for  
beauty



fading beauty



**Eternity**  
Unfading beauty



God lays this burden on us so that we will revere him  
and be capable of happiness— ***in receiving the pleasure and  
meaning in his creation.***

**Receiving its *wholesomeness***—eating and drinking and finding cheer

**Receiving its *nature***—taking satisfaction in toil

**Receiving its *meaning***—God gives knowledge and wisdom

**Receiving its *rhythms***—“there is a time for everything under heaven”

**Receiving its *comforts***—“Everything God does will endure forever”



2. God uses the ordinary to forge  
***substance.***  
(godliness)

Accepting we are creatures gives us back both creation  
*and* the creator

This health allows us to grow in substance

*Practices of the  
ordinary:*

# Ordinary isn't *typical*

seek to be *extraordinary* in the *quality* of your ordinary life, *not the position* of your life.

# Find *Rhythm* and *Limits*

fear of missing out of novelty or opportunity  
leads to missing the wholesomely repetitive

Recognize and eliminate  
***vampiric practices***  
sucking meaning out of the lives of false lives  
(more on this next week)

Social media

Shows/films

Pornography/Romance smut

Gossip—in person gossip, most news, gossip media,

Online arguments—Facebook comments, trolling, etc.

***Etc***—can you come up with other examples?

Honor *producing and serving*  
over *consuming and receiving*

"...it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Acts 20:33 – 35

Cultivate an attitude of ***thankfulness*** (and humility)

**Redemption:** A result of understanding your justification. No one who feels their justification can feel entitled or un-thankful.

**Redemption:** The change God is bringing about in you and others.  
Evidence of grace and ground for worship

**Practices:** Worship, encouragement, prayer

**Creation:** #6—Fascination and wonder in all creation

Approach the world with fascination—  
***not snobbery***

**Snobbery and flippancy** kill joy, hope, sincerity and wholesome pleasure. It is sophisticated sneering.

**Fascination** makes everything joyful and engaging, and is an act of love- turning outside ourselves



"But a man is not really convinced of a [way of thinking] when he finds that something proves it. He is only really convinced when he finds that everything proves it. And the more converging reasons he finds pointing to this conviction, the more bewildered he is if asked to suddenly to sum them up."

- G.K. Chesterton