



# People matter

ECCLESIASTES 4

# Ecclesiastes 4

<sup>1</sup> Again I saw the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them. <sup>2</sup> And I thought the dead who are already dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive. <sup>3</sup> But better than both is he who has not yet been and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

# Ecclesiastes 4

<sup>4</sup> Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbour. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

<sup>5</sup> The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh.

<sup>6</sup> Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind.

# Ecclesiastes 4

<sup>7</sup> Again, I saw vanity under the sun: <sup>8</sup> one person who has no other, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

## Ecclesiastes 4

<sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

## Ecclesiastes 4

<sup>13</sup> Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice. <sup>14</sup> For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor. <sup>15</sup> I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. <sup>16</sup> There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

“People are what matter,”

— Sarah Pearce to Snotty Abe, circa 2013/14.

1. When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy
2. When people matter for a better reason: Friendship
3. When people don't seem to ultimately matter
4. Why people do ultimately matter

1. When people matter for  
the wrong reason: Envy.

(vv1-6)

## When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy (vv1-6)

<sup>1</sup> Again I saw the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them.



International  
Labour  
Organization

unicef   
for every child



# CHILD LABOUR

GLOBAL ESTIMATES 2020, TRENDS AND THE ROAD FORWARD

© UNICEF/UNEP 2021/2020/2019

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

# GLOBALIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

JOSEPH E.  
STIGLITZ

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE  
IN ECONOMICS

"Accession, privatization and highly restrictive...  
... brings an author's insights into the context  
of the 1980s and beyond, from East Asia to  
Russia and on to Argentina."  
—New York Times

WITH A NEW AFTERWORD



## When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy (vv1-6)

<sup>2</sup> And I thought the dead who are already dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive.

<sup>3</sup> But better than both is he who has not yet been and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

## When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy (vv1-6)

<sup>4</sup> Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's **envy** of his neighbour. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

# When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy (vv1-6)

<sup>5</sup> The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh.



# When people matter for the wrong reason: Envy (vv1-6)

<sup>6</sup> Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind.



2. When people matter for  
a better reason: Friendship.

(vv7-12)

## When people matter for a better reason: Friendship (vv7-12)

<sup>7</sup> Again, I saw vanity under the sun: <sup>8</sup> one person who has no other, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.



When people matter for a better reason: Friendship (vv7-12)

**2 > 1**

## When people matter for a better reason: Friendship (vv7-12)

<sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.

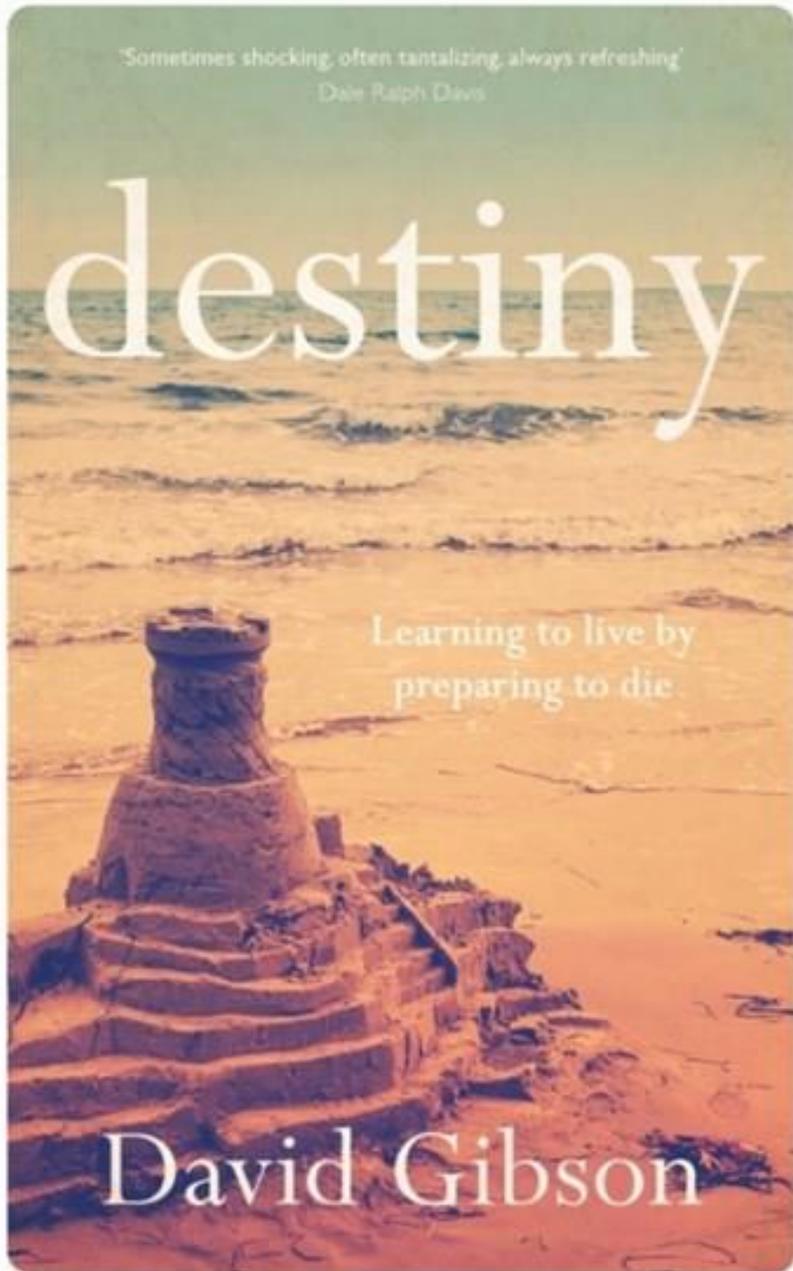
<sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!

<sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone?

<sup>12</sup> And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

When people matter for a better reason: Friendship (vv7-12)

**3 > 2 > 1**



“We” is better than “me”.

## When people matter for a better reason: Friendship (vv7-12)

<sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.

<sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!

<sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone?

<sup>12</sup> And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.



3. When people don't  
seem to ultimately matter.

(vv13-16)

## When people don't seem to ultimately matter (vv13-16)

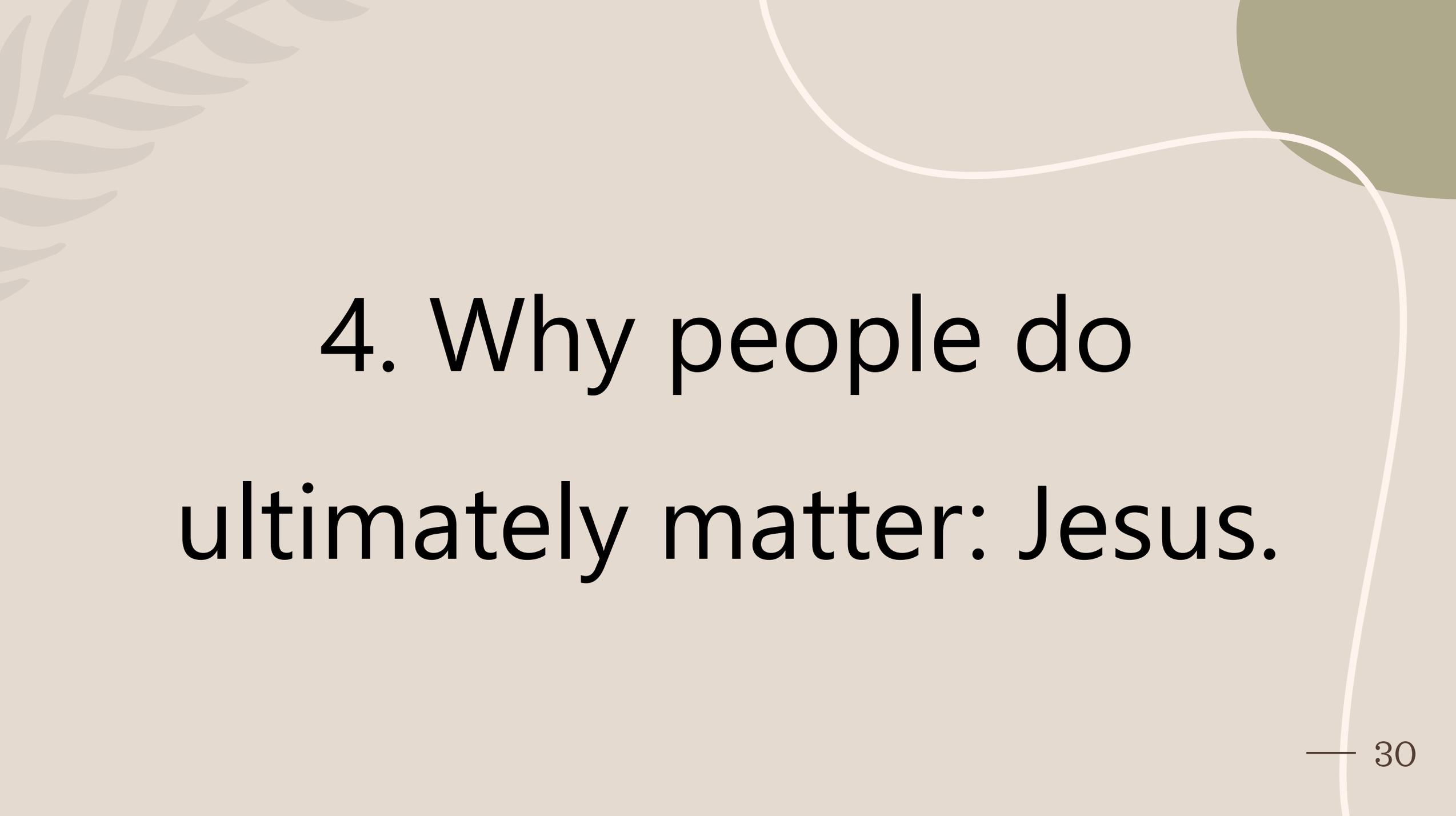
**13** Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice. **14** For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor. **15** I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. **16** There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.



## When people don't seem to ultimately matter (vv13-16)

**13** Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice. **14** For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor. **15** I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. **16** There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.





4. Why people do  
ultimately matter: Jesus.





## Why people do ultimately matter: Jesus

**Ecclesiastes 5:15:** As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take away nothing for his toil that he may carry in his hand.

## Why people do ultimately matter: Jesus

**Ecclesiastes 5:15:** As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take away nothing for his toil that he may carry in his hand.

"For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy."

(1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

## Reflection

1. Think of one thing you are doing either out of envy or for your own ambition that you need to cut down on this month.
2. Think of one person you know that you will invest more time and energy into this month, either in sharing the gospel or in encouraging their faith.