



ECCLESIASTES

WORLDVIEW OF WORK, WISDOM, AND WORSHIP
AND THE ESSENCE OF TIME

COMMON VIEWS

- Result of a depressed, sin-filled life and ultimately unorthodox
- Two voices -- Book is divided into two competing views held in tension. Inevitably, one is seen as unorthodox.

3 Themes in 12 Chapters



ECCLESIASTES 1:2 (NASB) – FIRST THEME

“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher,
“Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”

I am Smoke, God is Not!

Smoke:

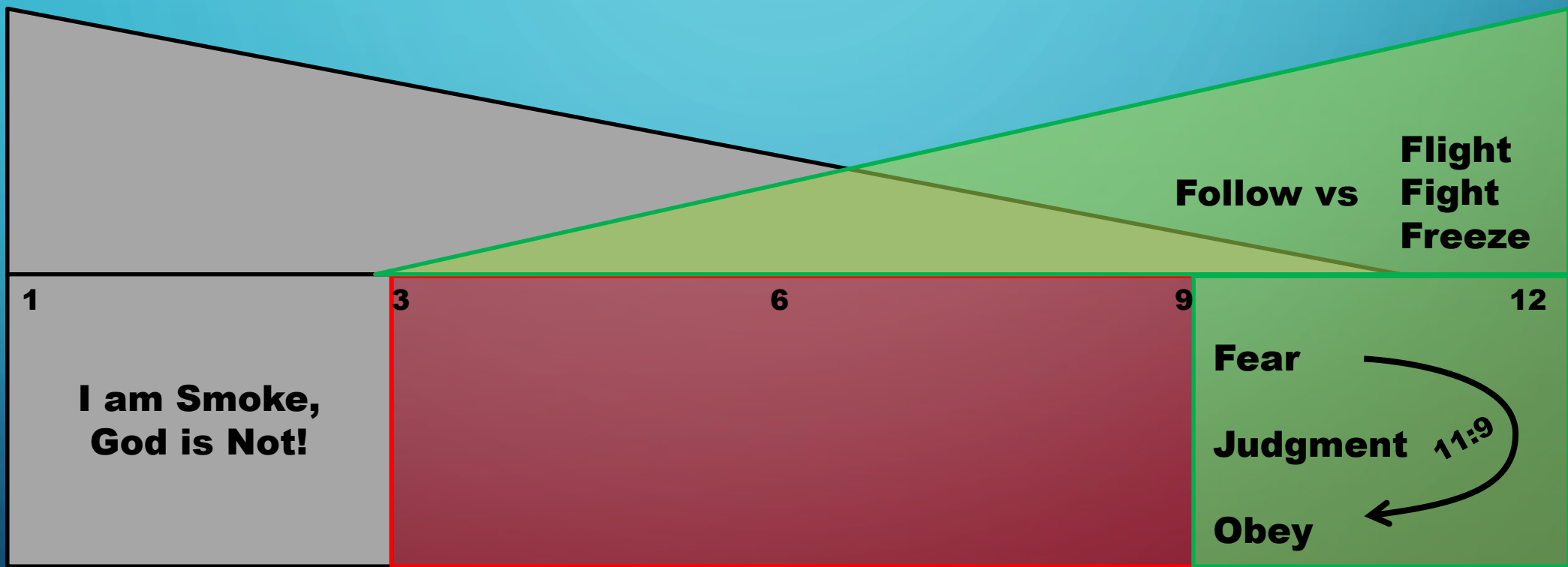
- 1) Looks Solid, but is NOT.
- 2) Diffuses Quickly.
- 3) Has a Source.
- 4) Unpredictable Trajectory.



ECCLESIASTES 12:13-14 – SECOND THEME

¹³ The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every person*. ¹⁴ For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

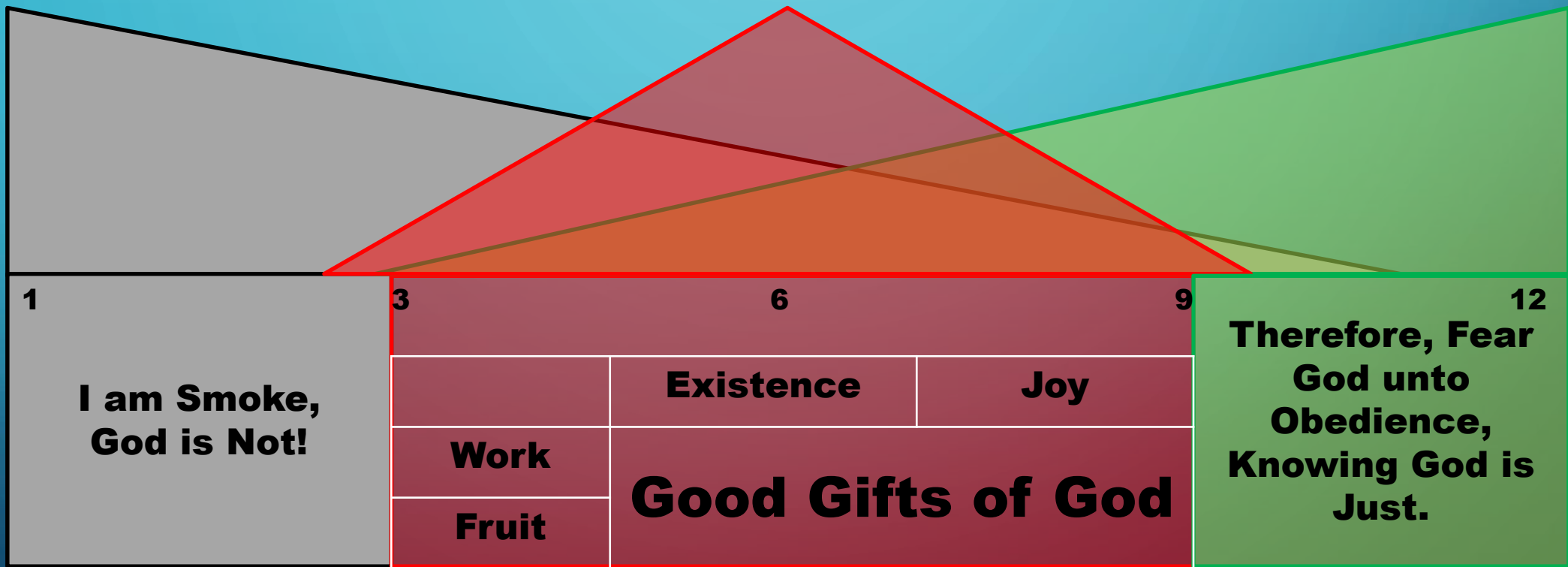
Therefore, Fear God unto Obedience, Knowing God is Just.



ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20 – THIRD THEME

¹⁸ Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun *during* the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward. ¹⁹ Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart.

How to Live



HOW TO LIVE - WORK

- Avodah: Work as Service – Obedience – Worship (common word for work)
- VS.
- Amal: Work as Toil – Trouble – Difficult Labor (what Solomon uses for work)
- This is intentional!

HOW TO LIVE - JOY

- Joy is an emotion
- Joy is a gift
- We can choose to cultivate an emotion or reject them. How we respond to the initial emotion is important.

ECCLESIASTES 7:14 – WHAT ABOUT CALAMITY

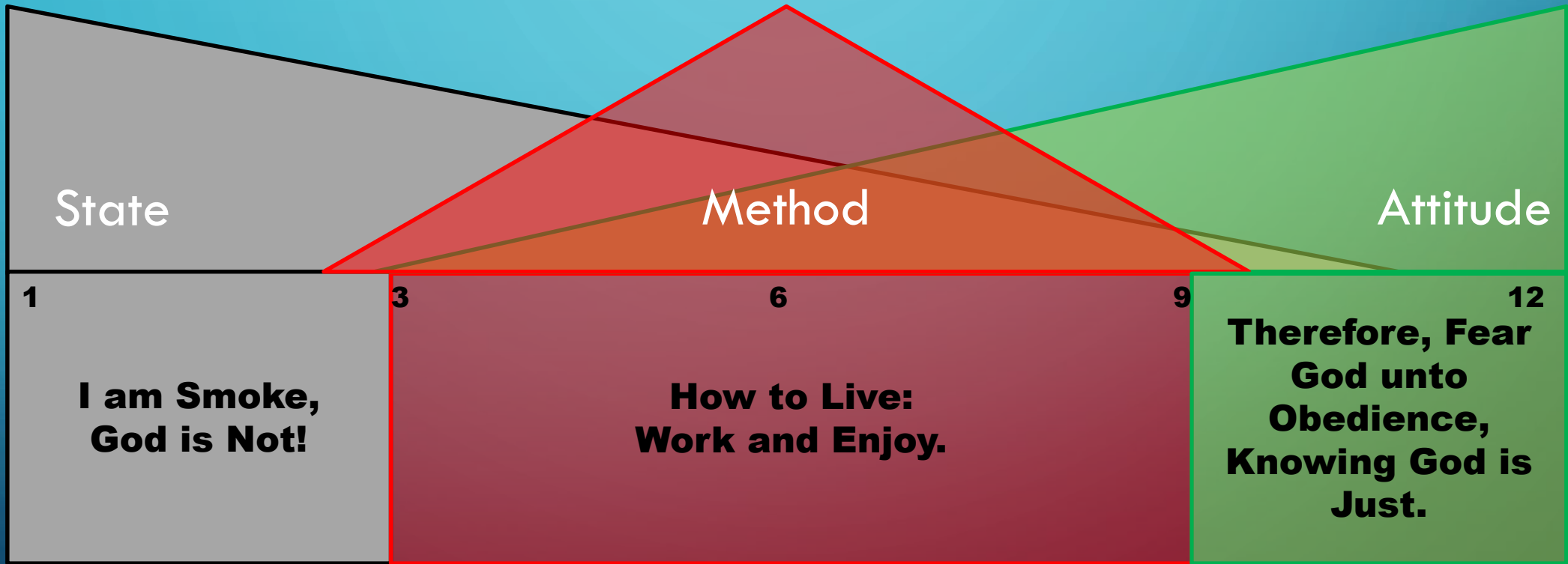
¹⁴ In the day of prosperity be happy,
But in the day of adversity consider—
God has made the one as well as the other
So that man will not discover anything *that will be* after him.

- 1) Remember the good gifts (Gratitude)
- 2) Recognize that God gives both (gives as in gift)
- 3) Relinquish prediction

GOD MEETS US IN THE PRESENT

- The gifts of work and joy are in the present. You experience them in the moment.
- No remembrance of the past and no prediction of the future. We humans only have now.
- Ecclesiastes is the only book of the Bible that really expounds on our relationship with time.

Three areas of life



ECCLESIASTES 9:7-10 – ENJOY ALL GOD’S GIFTS

⁷ Go *then*, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works. ⁸ Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head.⁹ Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun. ¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with *all* your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.