

Cast Your bread Upon the Waters  
Bible study methods: Genre and finding context. Ecclesiastes 11:1

**Genres** (different kinds of biblical writings)

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. History          | 5. Wisdom literature |
| 2. Epistle (letter) | 6. Parable           |
| 3. Gospel           | 7. Prophecy          |
| 4. Psalm            | 8. Apocalyptic       |

**Creating an outline**

1. Noting the verse that is your "starting place," start reading one or two chapters before and after.
2. Read through this longer section several times. You will begin to see how the author has put his ideas together. Look for repeated words, ideas, themes, bracketing.
3. Begin creating your outline, grouping verses at the left and writing a rough description of the paragraphs you have found at the right.
4. Next, group together sentences that deal with the same part of the flow of the "argument." Write a rough description for each grouping of sentences.
5. Now locate your "starting place" verse again, with the grouping that it is in. Now study that grouping closely to learn its meaning.

**Ecclesiastes** (example outline chapters 9 - 12)

A common destiny for all

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|-----------|--|
| 9:1 - 3   | In the end, the same thing happens to everyone |
| 9:4 - 6   | The living have life but the dead are deceased |
| 9:7 - 10  | Seek to enjoy life                             |
| 9:11 - 12 | The end of life may come at any time           |

Wisdom better than folly

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|-------------|---|
| 9:13 - 10:3 | Proverbs and sayings concerning the superiority of wisdom   |
| 10:4 - 7    | Sayings about difficulties in subjection to rulers          |
| 10:8 - 11   | Proverbs confirming that our own actions directly impact us |
| 10:12 - 15  | Proverbs concerning the speaking of fools                   |
| 10:16 - 17  | Saying concerning the qualities of a ruler                  |
| 10:18       | Proverb concerning slothfulness                             |
| 10:19       | Proverb on enjoying life                                    |
| 10:20       | Proverb concerning secrets                                  |

In spite of the things that happen in life, do something!

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| 11:1 - 6 | Proverbs concerning diligence |
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Live with your Creator in mind

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| 11:7 - 12:8 | Sayings concerning youth, the toll of aging on quality of life, death |
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The conclusion of the matter

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|-----------|------------|
| 12:9 - 14 | Conclusion |
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**The Single Most Important Inspired Control**

In one word: context. Think paragraphs. Find Units. Consider sentence before and the sentence after.