



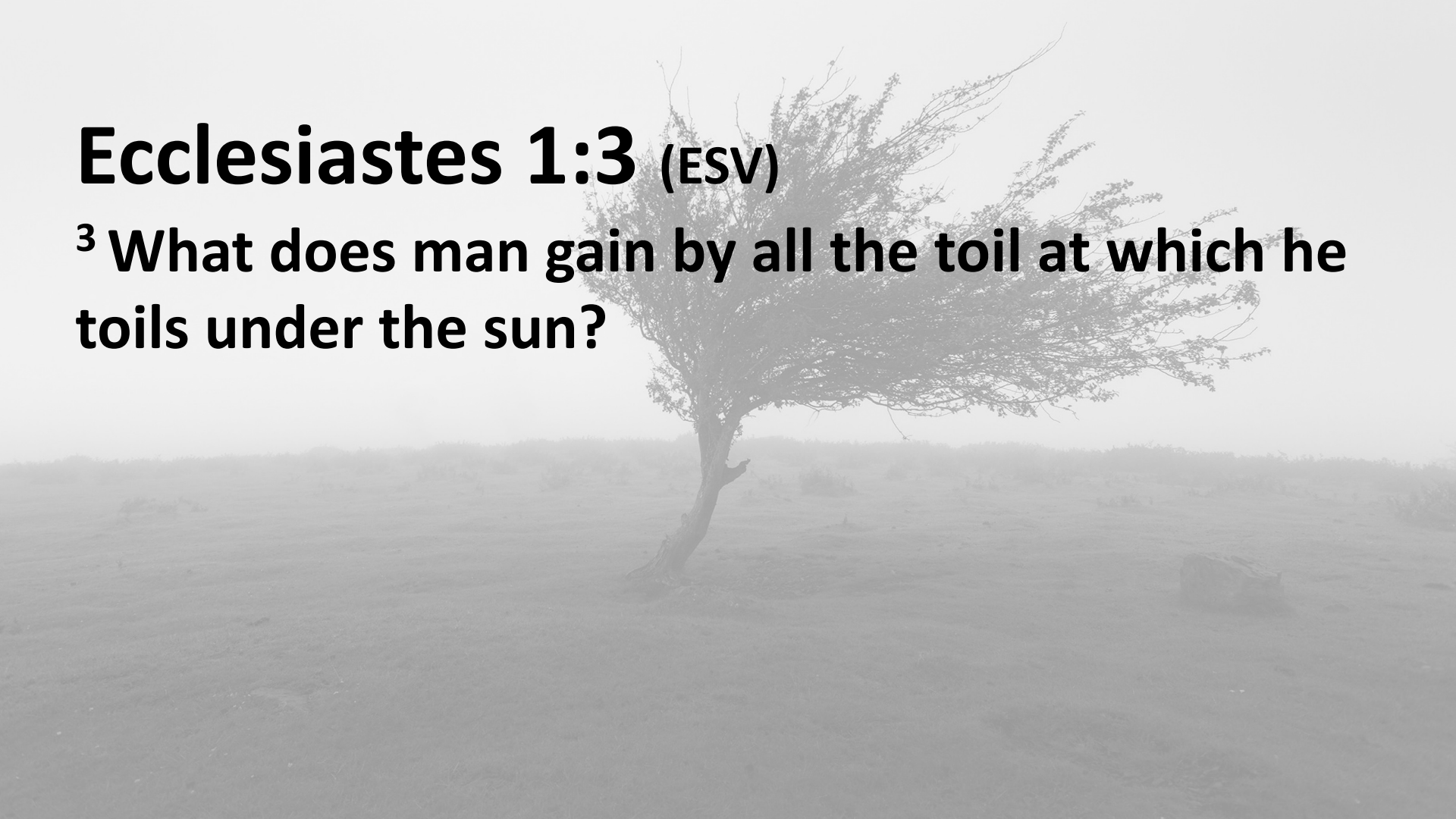
ECCLESIASTES

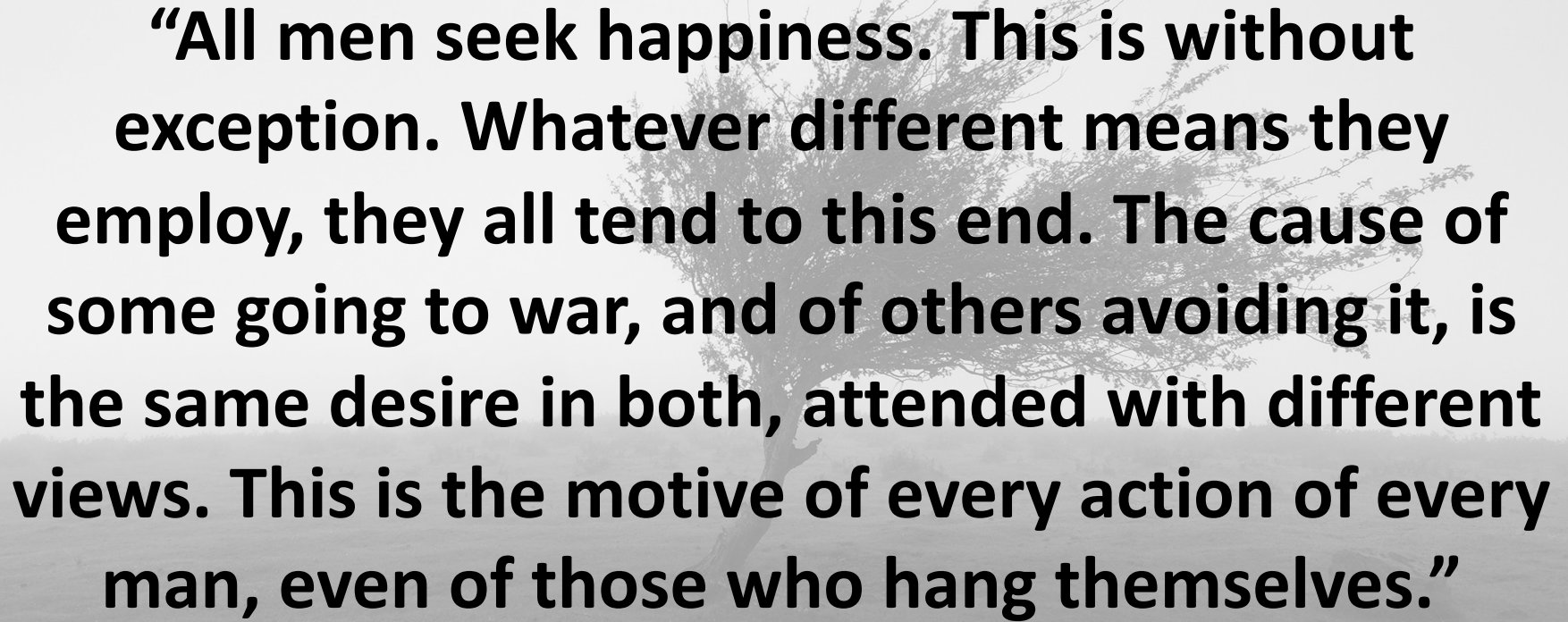
A grayscale photograph of a lone, gnarled tree standing in a vast, misty landscape. The tree's branches are sparse and reach out to the right. The ground is flat and covered in low-lying vegetation, all shrouded in a thick, white fog that obscures the horizon. The overall mood is one of isolation and contemplation.

# The Search for Meaning

# **Ecclesiastes 1:3 (ESV)**

**<sup>3</sup> What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?**





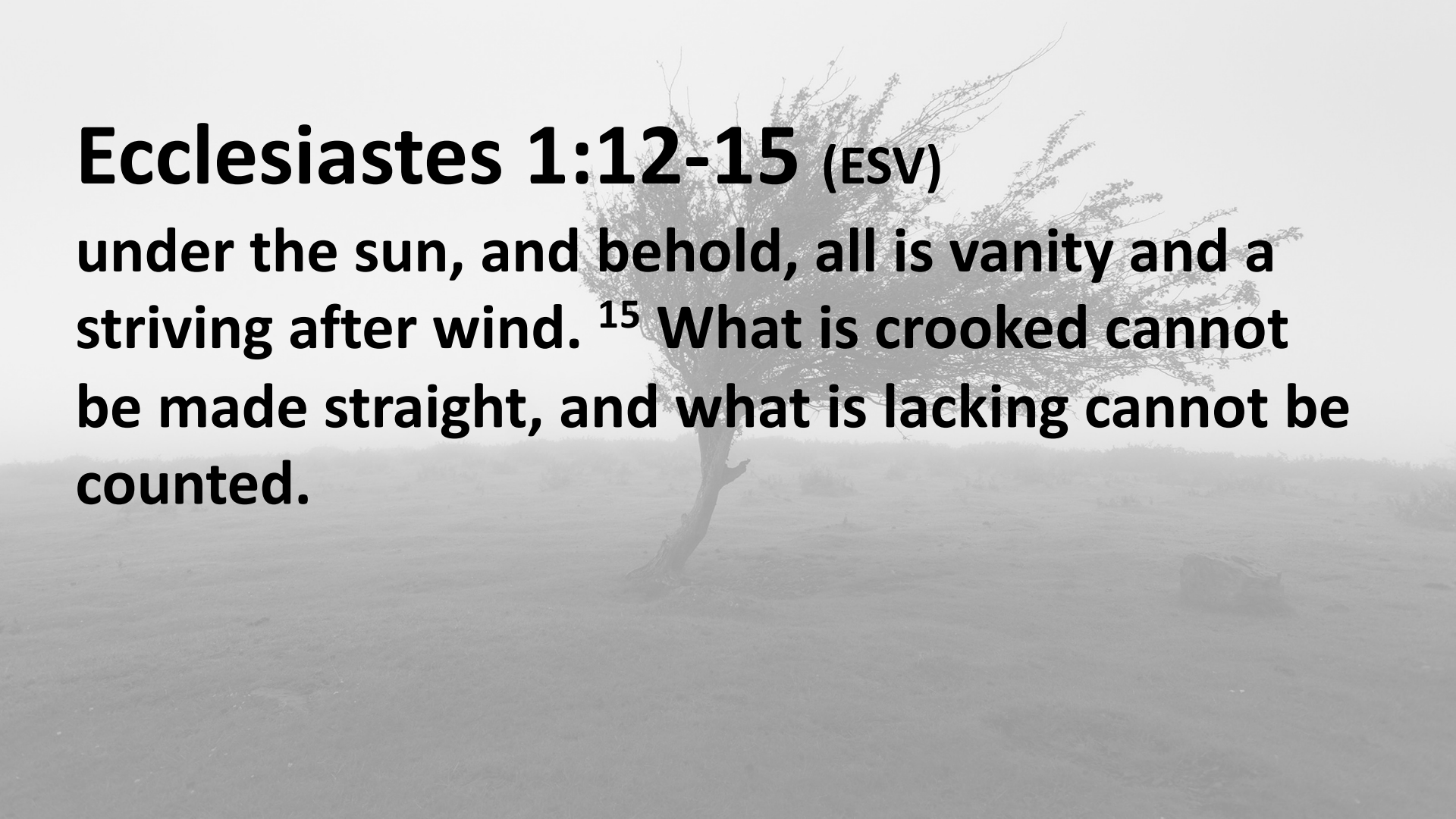
**“All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.”**

**-Blaise Pascal**



## **Ecclesiastes 1:12-15 (ESV)**

**<sup>12</sup> I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. <sup>14</sup> I have seen everything that is done**

A faded, grayscale background image of a tree in a field. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out. The field is a flat, open area, and the sky is a uniform light gray. The overall tone is somber and contemplative.

# **Ecclesiastes 1:12-15 (ESV)**

**under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. <sup>15</sup> What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.**

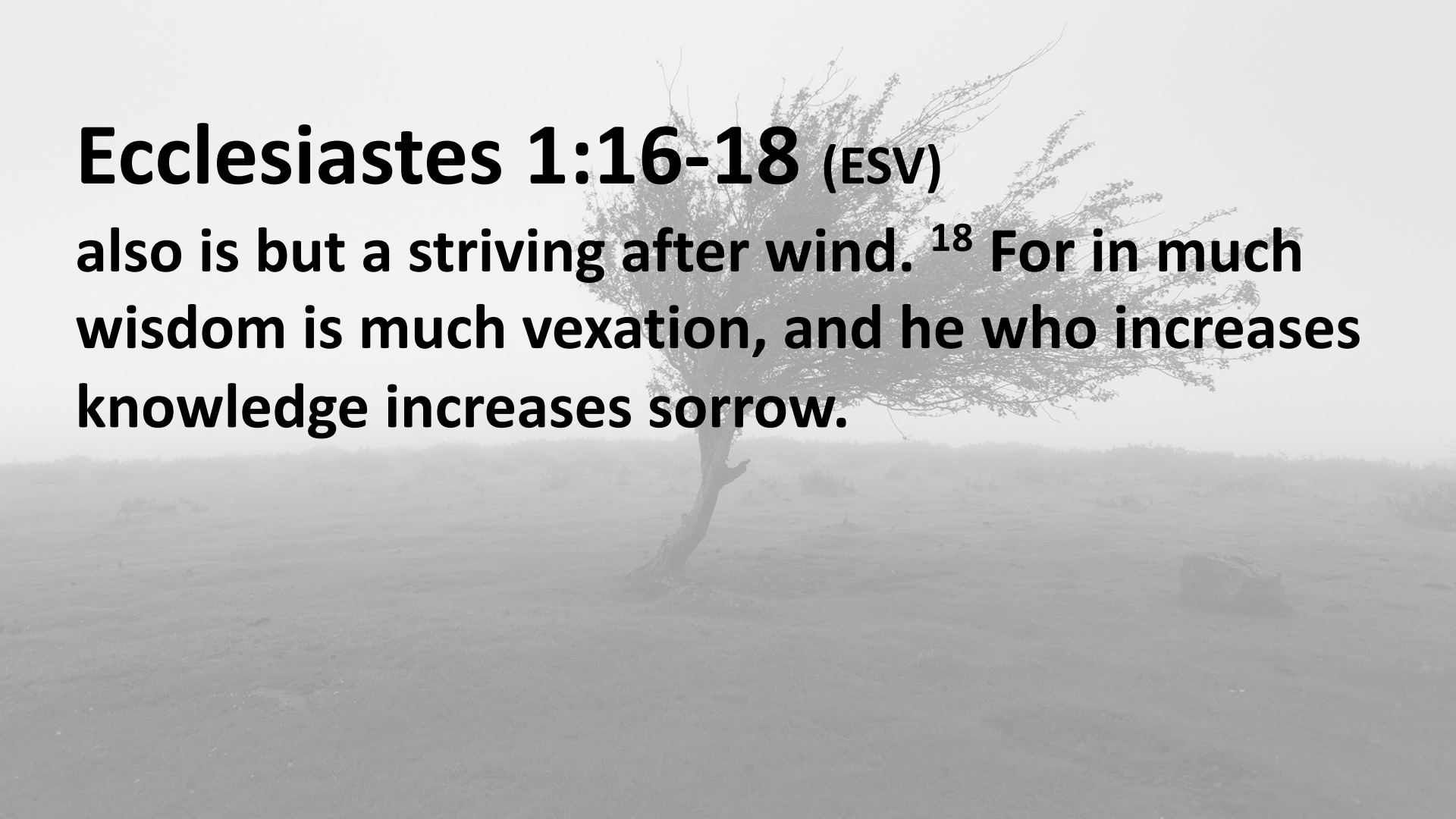
## **Ecclesiastes 1:16-18 (ESV)**

**<sup>16</sup> I said in my heart, “I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.”**

**<sup>17</sup> And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this**

# **Ecclesiastes 1:16-18 (ESV)**

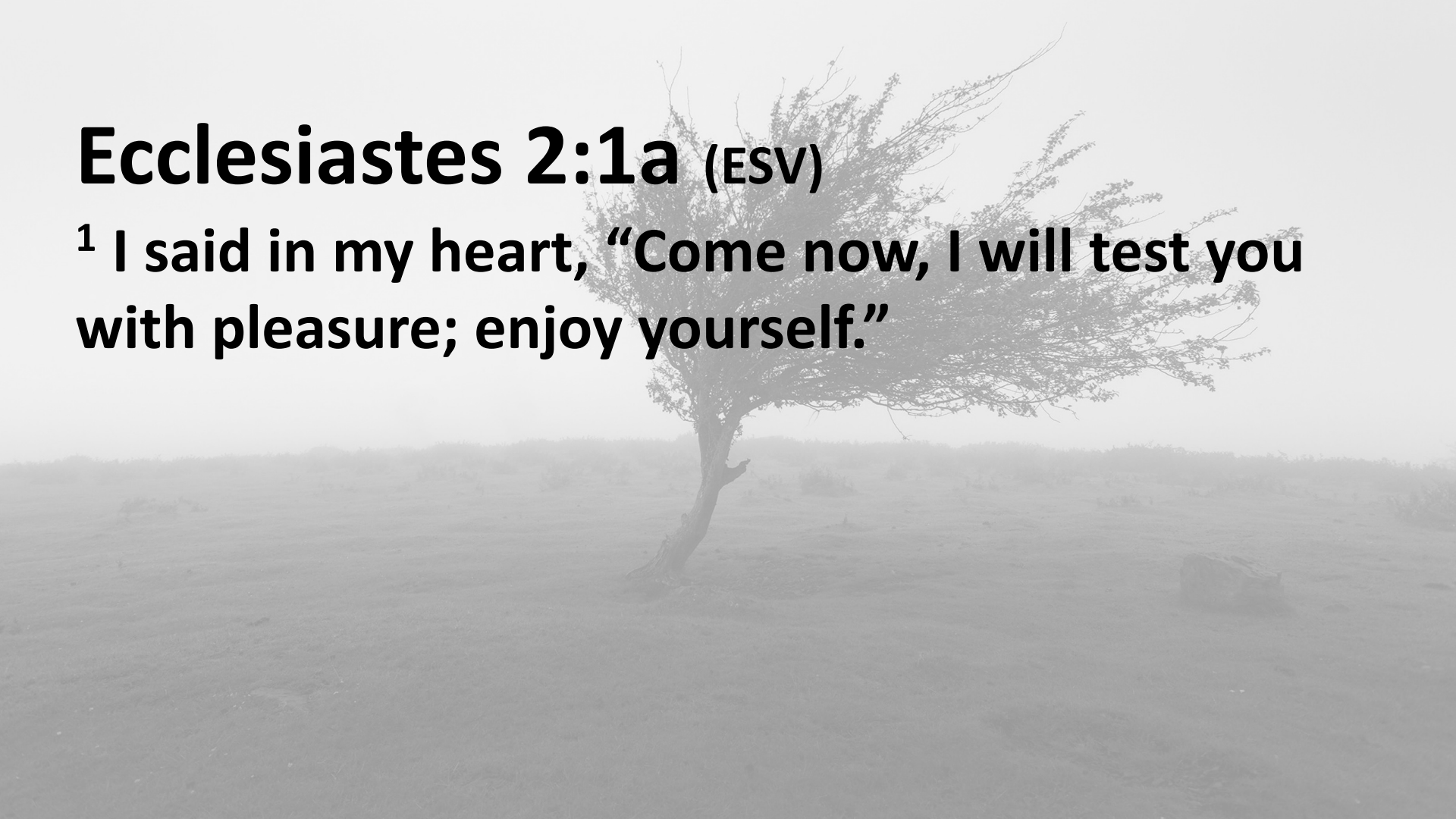
**also is but a striving after wind. <sup>18</sup> For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.**





# **Ecclesiastes 2:1a (ESV)**

**<sup>1</sup> I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.”**



A grayscale photograph of a lone, gnarled tree standing in a vast, misty landscape. The tree is the central focus, with its branches reaching out to the right. The ground is flat and covered in low-lying vegetation, and the background is a hazy horizon line. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**Is meaning found in pleasure?**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:4-6 (ESV)**

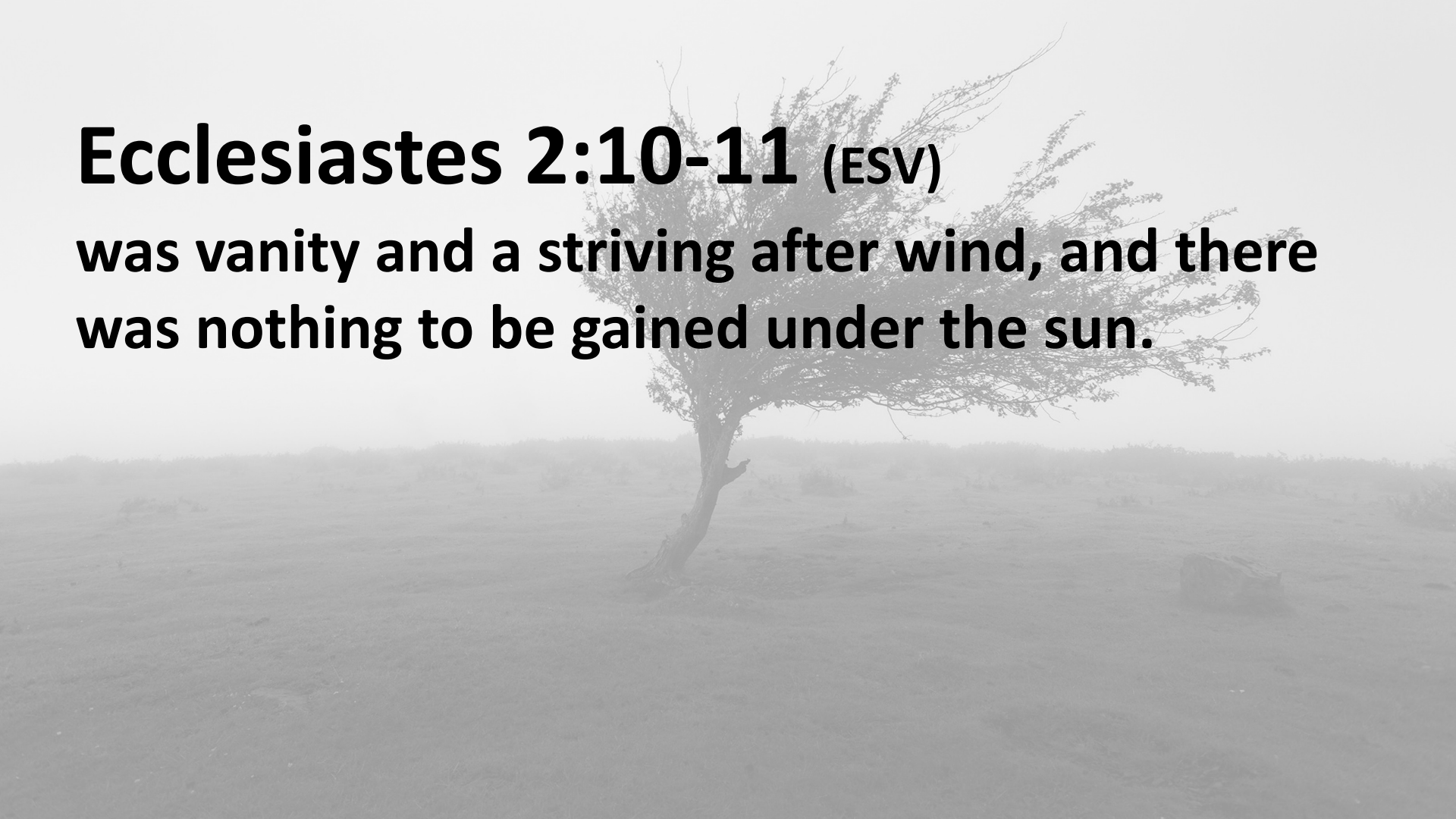
**<sup>4</sup> I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. <sup>5</sup> I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. <sup>6</sup> I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees.**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 (ESV)**

**<sup>10</sup> And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. <sup>11</sup> Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all**

# **Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 (ESV)**

**was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.**





# **Ecclesiastes 2:13 (ESV)**

**<sup>13</sup> Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness.**

A grayscale photograph of a tree in a field, serving as a background for the text. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out. The ground is a flat, open field, and the background shows a line of trees in the distance under a bright sky.

A grayscale photograph of a lone, gnarled tree standing in a vast, misty landscape. The tree is the central focus, with its branches reaching out to the right. The ground is flat and covered in low-lying vegetation, and the background is a dense fog that obscures the horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**Is meaning found in wisdom?**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:14-16 (ESV)**

**<sup>14</sup> The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I perceived that the same event happens to all of them.**

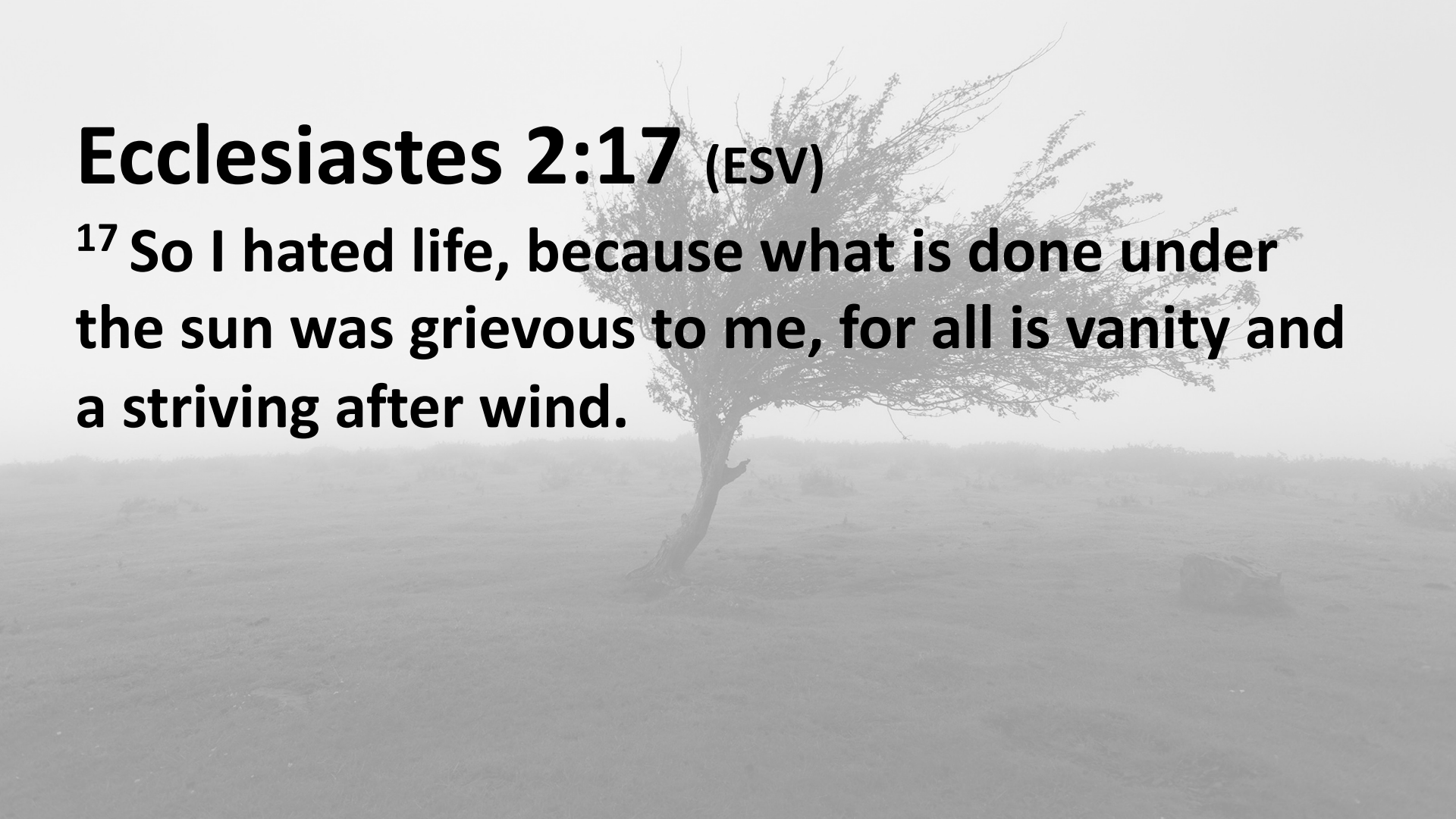
**<sup>15</sup> Then I said in my heart, “What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?” And I said in my heart**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:14-16 (ESV)**

**that this also is vanity. <sup>16</sup> For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool!**

# **Ecclesiastes 2:17 (ESV)**

**<sup>17</sup> So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.**

A grayscale background image of a lone tree in a vast, open field under a bright sky. The tree is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with its branches spreading out. The ground is flat and extends to a distant horizon line. The overall tone is somber and contemplative, matching the text of the Bible verse.



## **Ecclesiastes 2:18-23 (ESV)**

**<sup>18</sup> I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, <sup>19</sup> and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. <sup>20</sup> So I turned**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:18-23 (ESV)**

**about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun,<sup>21</sup> because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.**

## **Ecclesiastes 2:18-23 (ESV)**

**<sup>22</sup> What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun?**

**<sup>23</sup> For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.**

A grayscale photograph of a lone, gnarled tree standing in a vast, misty landscape. The tree's branches are sparse and reach out to the right. The ground is flat and covered in low-lying vegetation, all shrouded in a thick, white fog that obscures the horizon. The overall mood is one of isolation and contemplation.

**Is meaning found in work?**

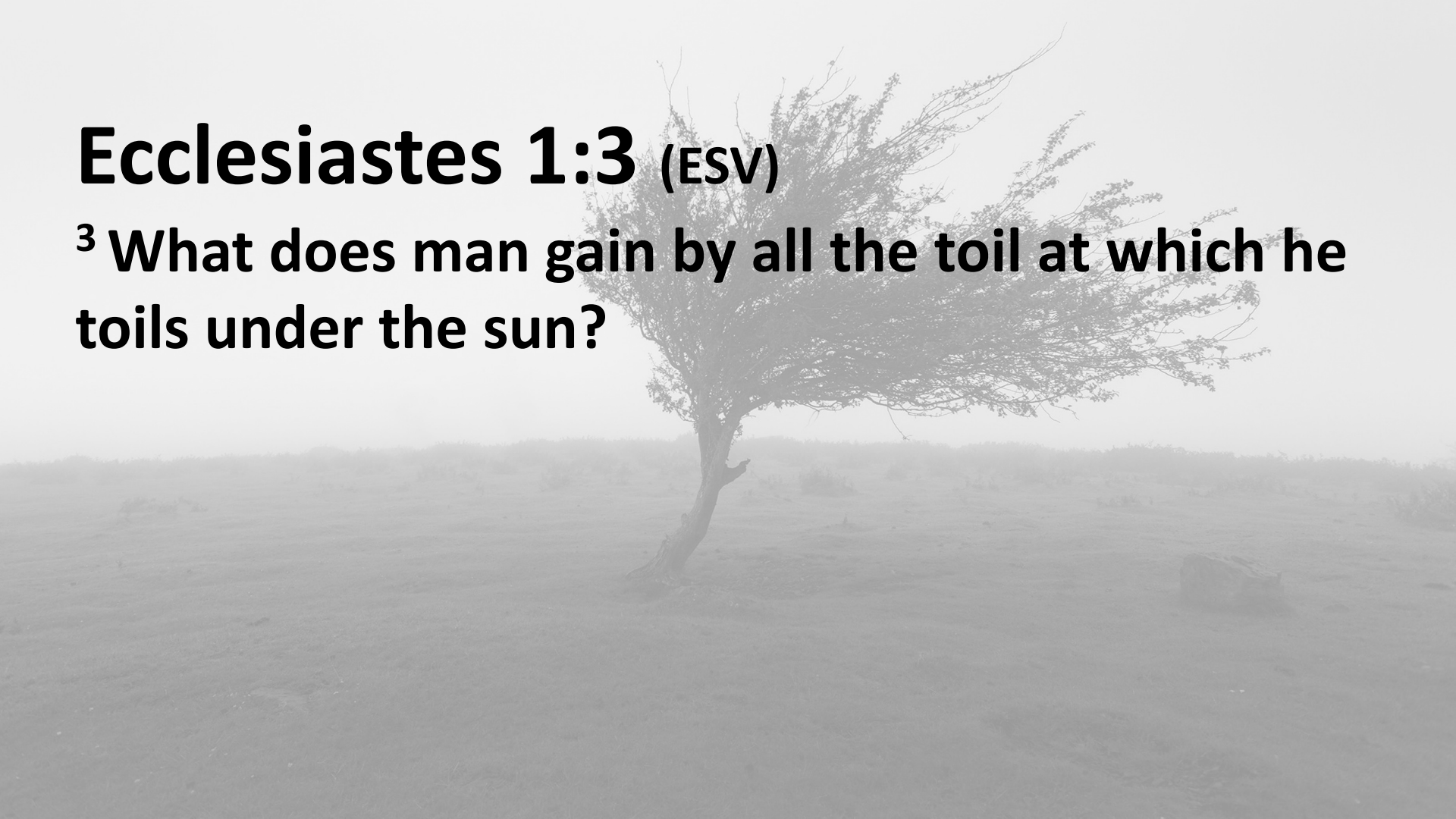
## **Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 (ESV)**

**<sup>24</sup> There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God,  
<sup>25</sup> for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?**



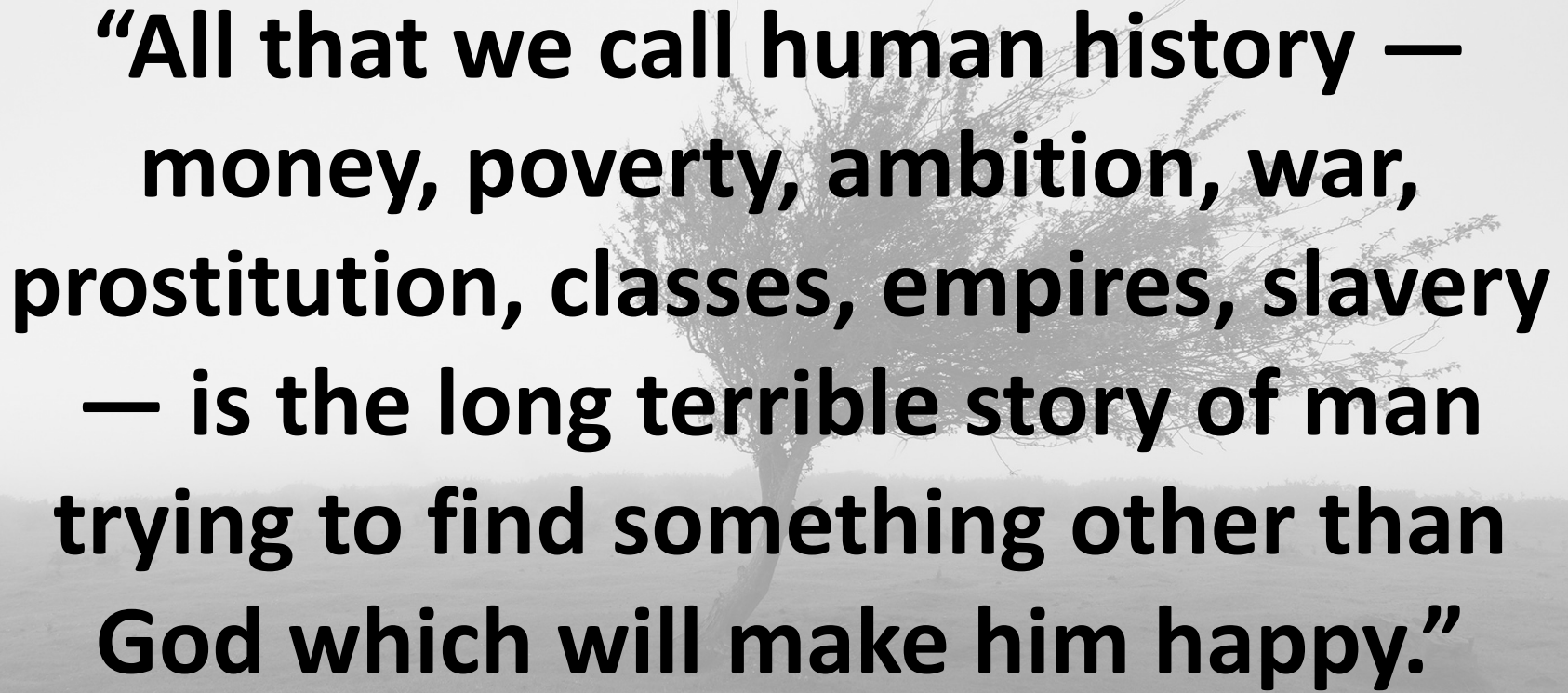
# **Ecclesiastes 1:3 (ESV)**

**<sup>3</sup> What does man gain by all the toil at which he  
toils under the sun?**



A grayscale photograph of a lone, gnarled tree standing in a misty, open landscape. The tree is the central focus, with its branches reaching out. The background is a soft, hazy expanse of land and sky. Overlaid on the image is the text "Meaning cannot be gained, but it can be given." in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**Meaning cannot be gained, but it can  
be given.**



**“All that we call human history —  
money, poverty, ambition, war,  
prostitution, classes, empires, slavery  
— is the long terrible story of man  
trying to find something other than  
God which will make him happy.”**

**-CS Lewis**

**If you would like to talk to Chuck about the sermon, please feel free to call him or email him.**



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