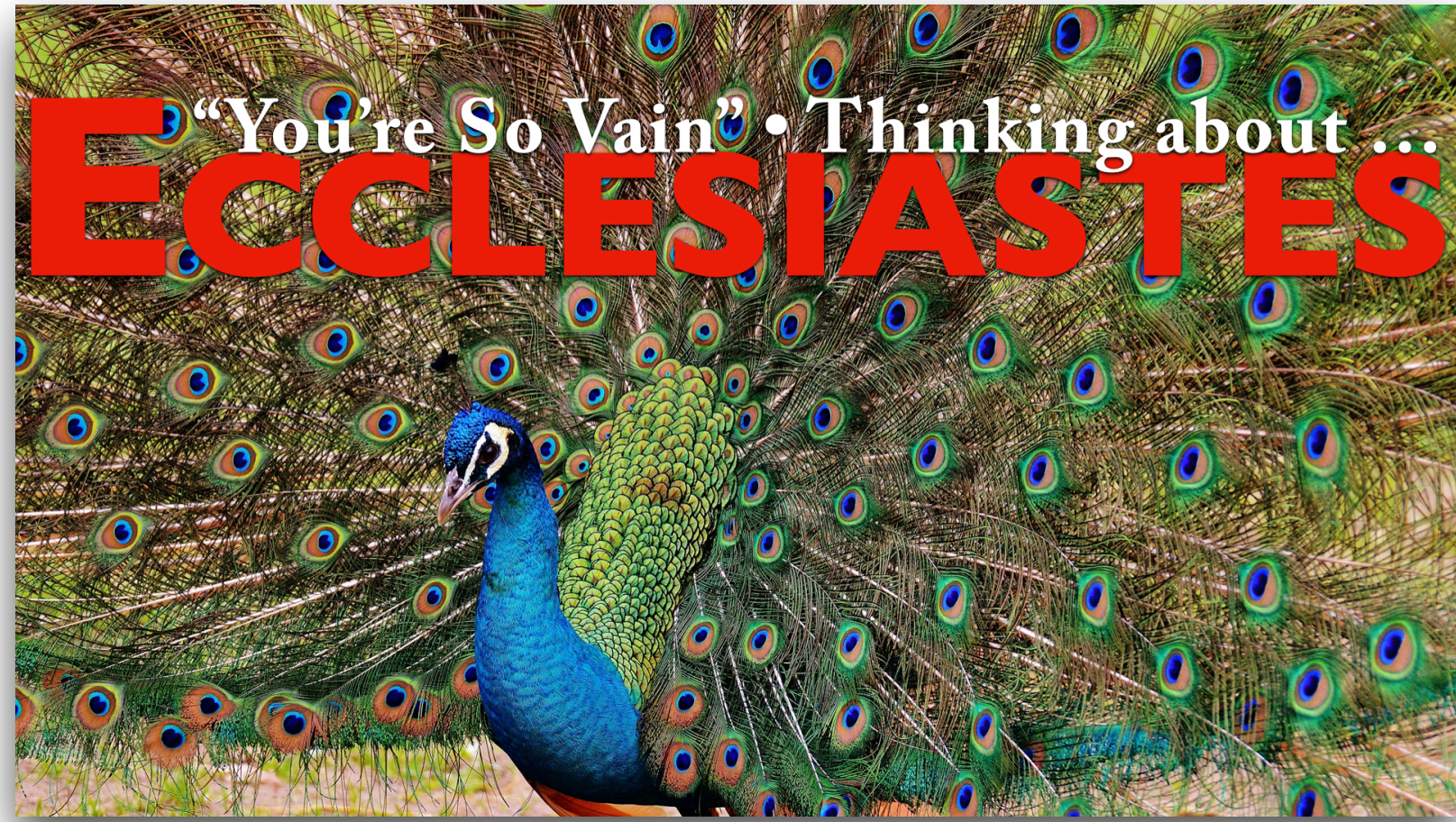


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“You’re So Vain” • Thinking about ...

ECCLESIASTES



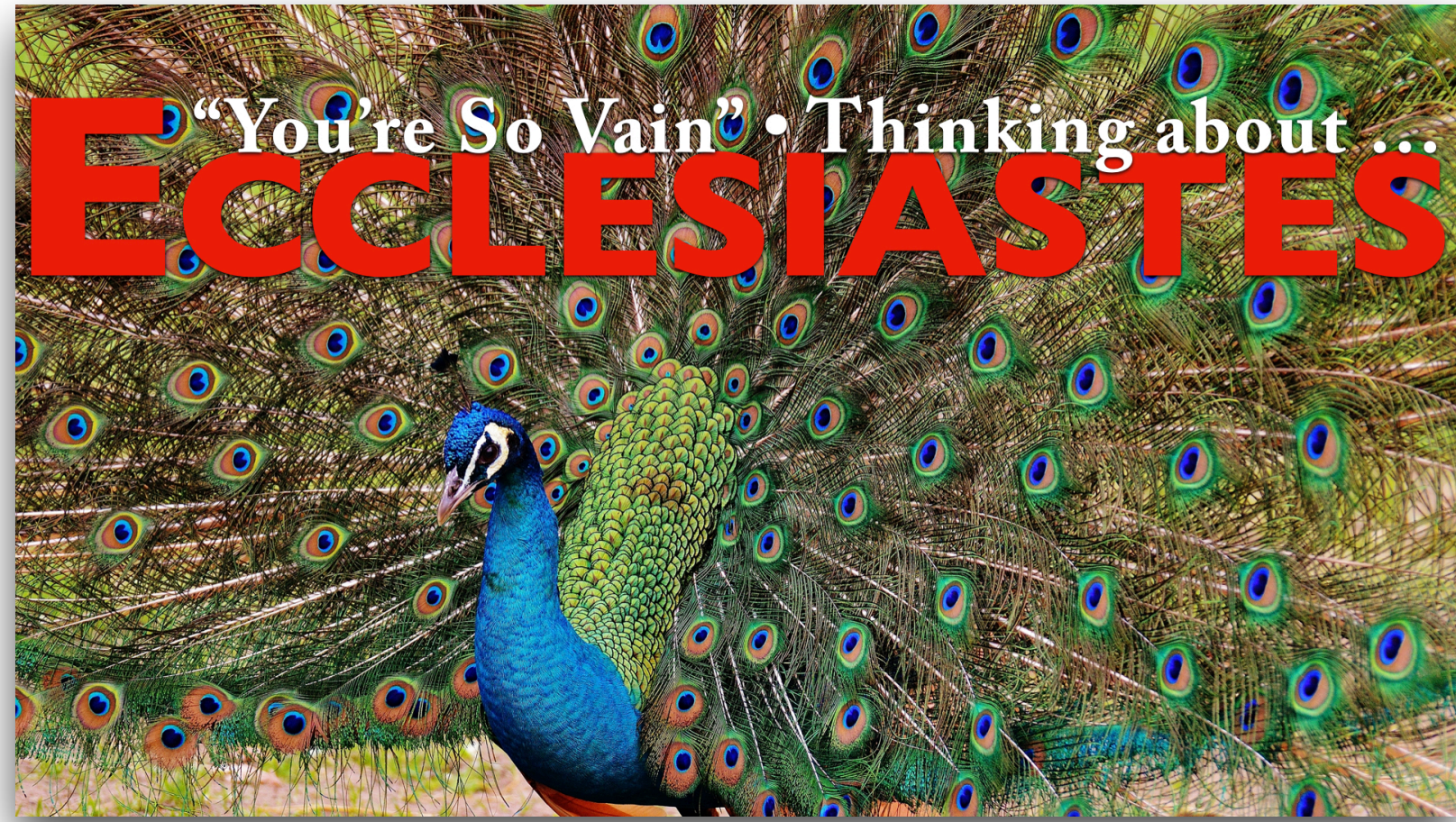
“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

What is life ...

“Life, living matter and, as such, matter that shows certain attributes that include responsiveness, growth, metabolism, energy transformation, and reproduction.” (EB)

“Life is a swirling sucking eddy of despair, with fleeting moments of false hope in an ever darkening universe.” (unkown)

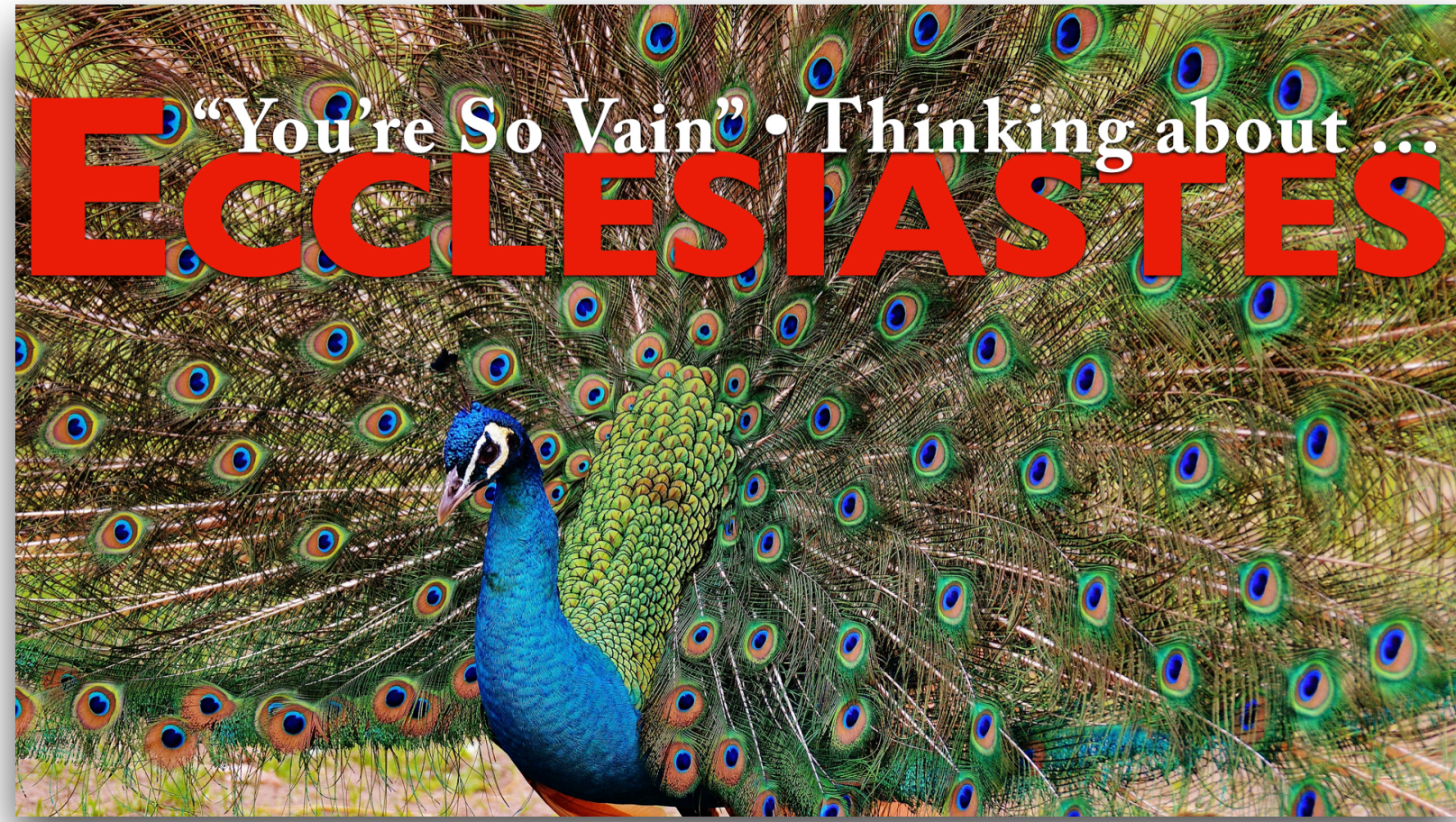
The second “quote” reflects *one major* line of thought in Ecclesiastes.



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

Ecclesiastes reflects, *in part*, a search for the meaning of life that yields ...

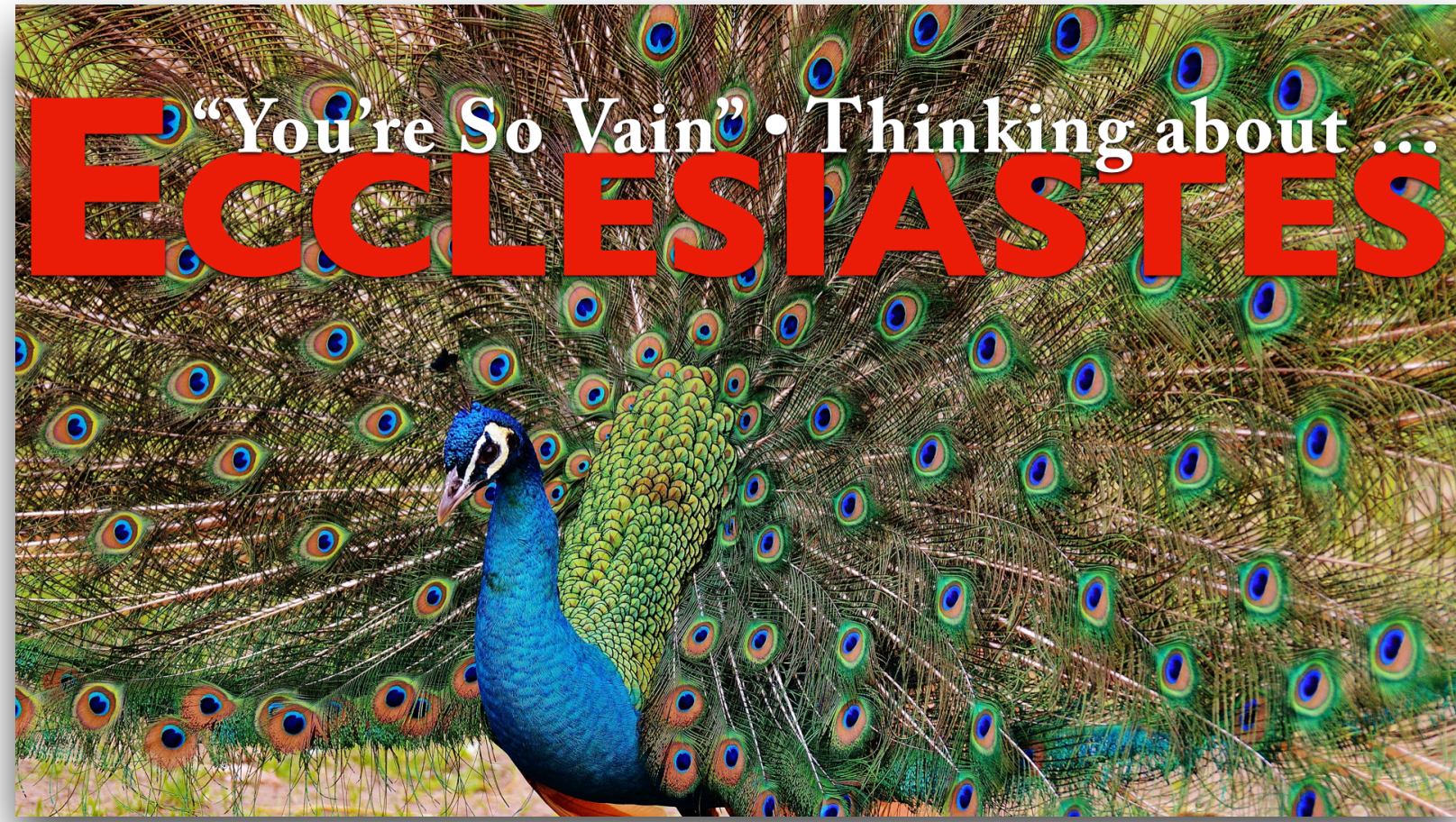
- Questions (about *everything*) • Skepticism • Doubt
- Disillusionment • Despair • Worry (about *everything*)
- Hopelessness • Anchorlessness • Agonizing about the future
- **Futility** — ie., the ***vanity*** and ***absurdity*** — of every pursuit in life (cf Jer 16.19)
- Life is: “chasing the wind” • “without profit”/without *real* value • “meaningless” • pointless • senseless • fleeting • frustrating • without purpose/*real* purpose • ends at death for all (“*under the sun*” the rich **and** the poor, the wise **and** the fool **all die**)



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

One singular conclusion about life ... “all is vanity”

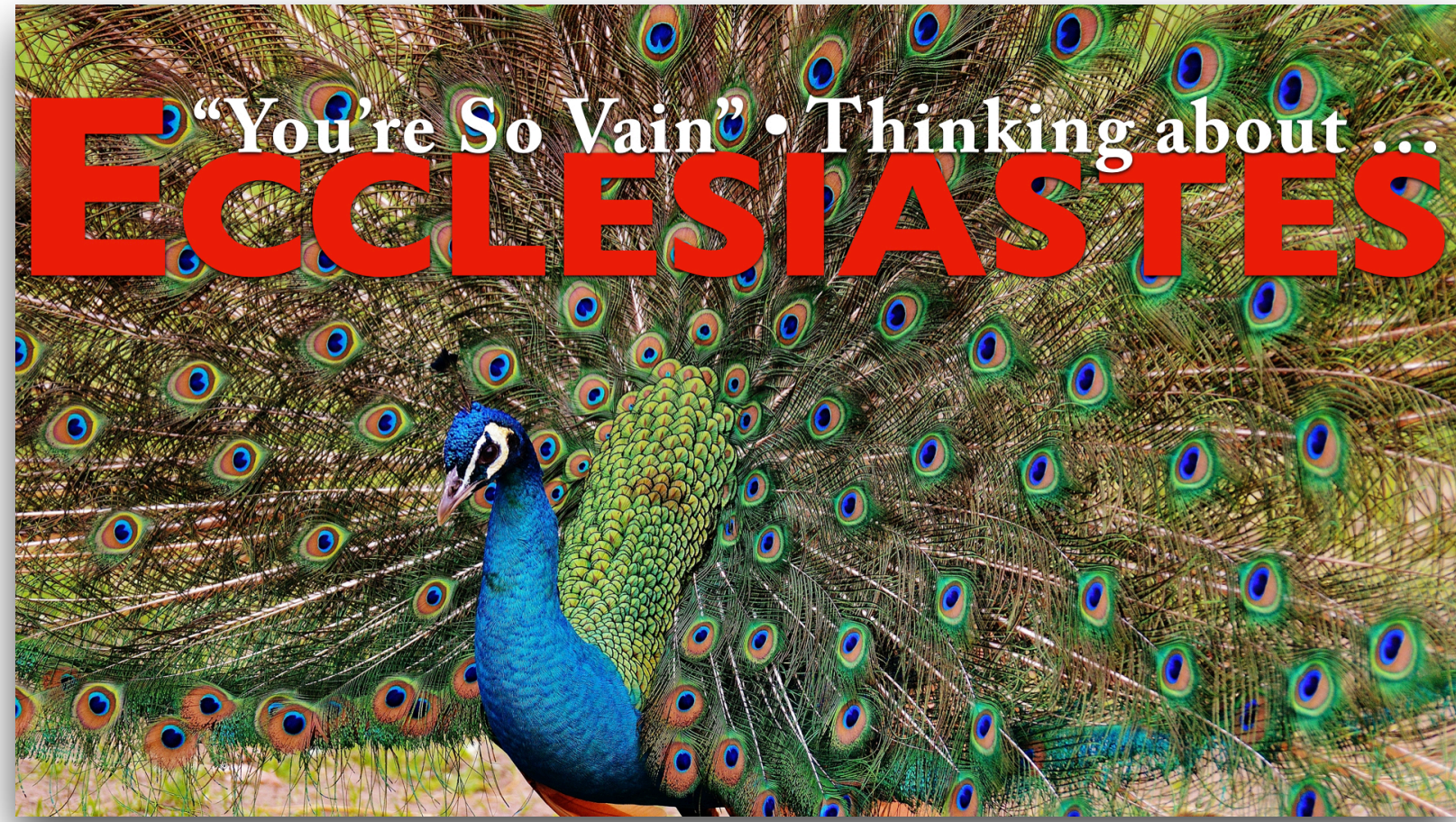
- **All is vanity**, grasping for the wind (1.2, 14)
- Mirth, pleasure (2.1)
- All of our labor/works (2.11)
- What happens to the wise and what happens to the fool (2.15)
- Work only distresses us (2.17)
- Worrying about what our children will do (2.19)
- Working hard for what you attain ... with wisdom, knowledge, skill ... and then leaving it to someone “who has not labored for it” (2.21)



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

One singular conclusion about life ... “all is vanity”

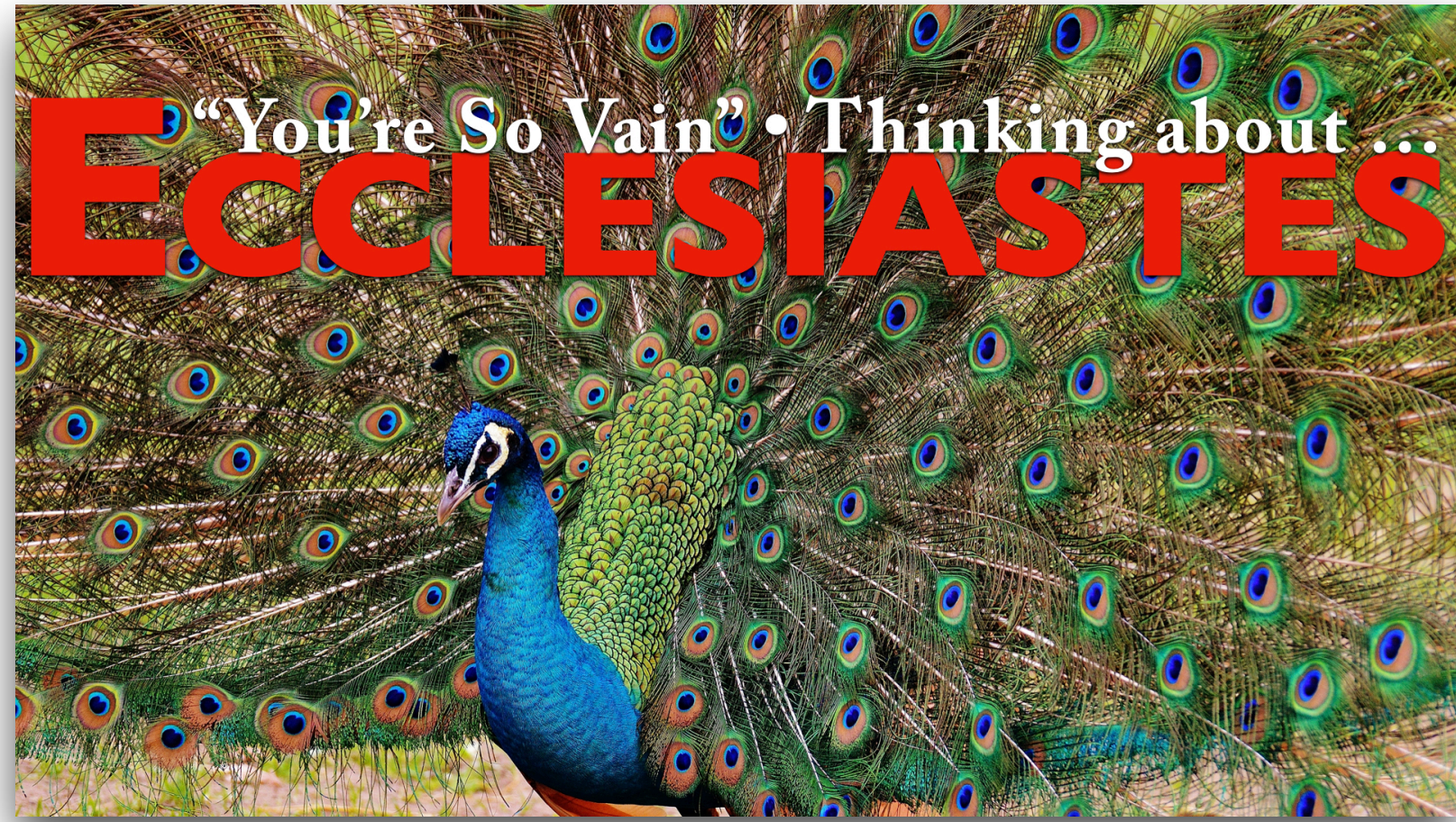
- **All is vanity**, grasping for the wind (1.2, 14)
- Sorrowful days, burdensome work, no rest at night (2.23)
- Wisdom and knowledge and joy to a “good” man (2.26)
- Work of gathering/collecting to “the sinner” to give to the “good” man (2.26)
- What happens to man—death—happens to animals/man has no advantage (3.19)
- All toil and skill just causes our neighbor’s envy (4.4)
- Loneliness (4.8)
- Endless labor (4.8)



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

One singular conclusion about life ... “all is vanity”

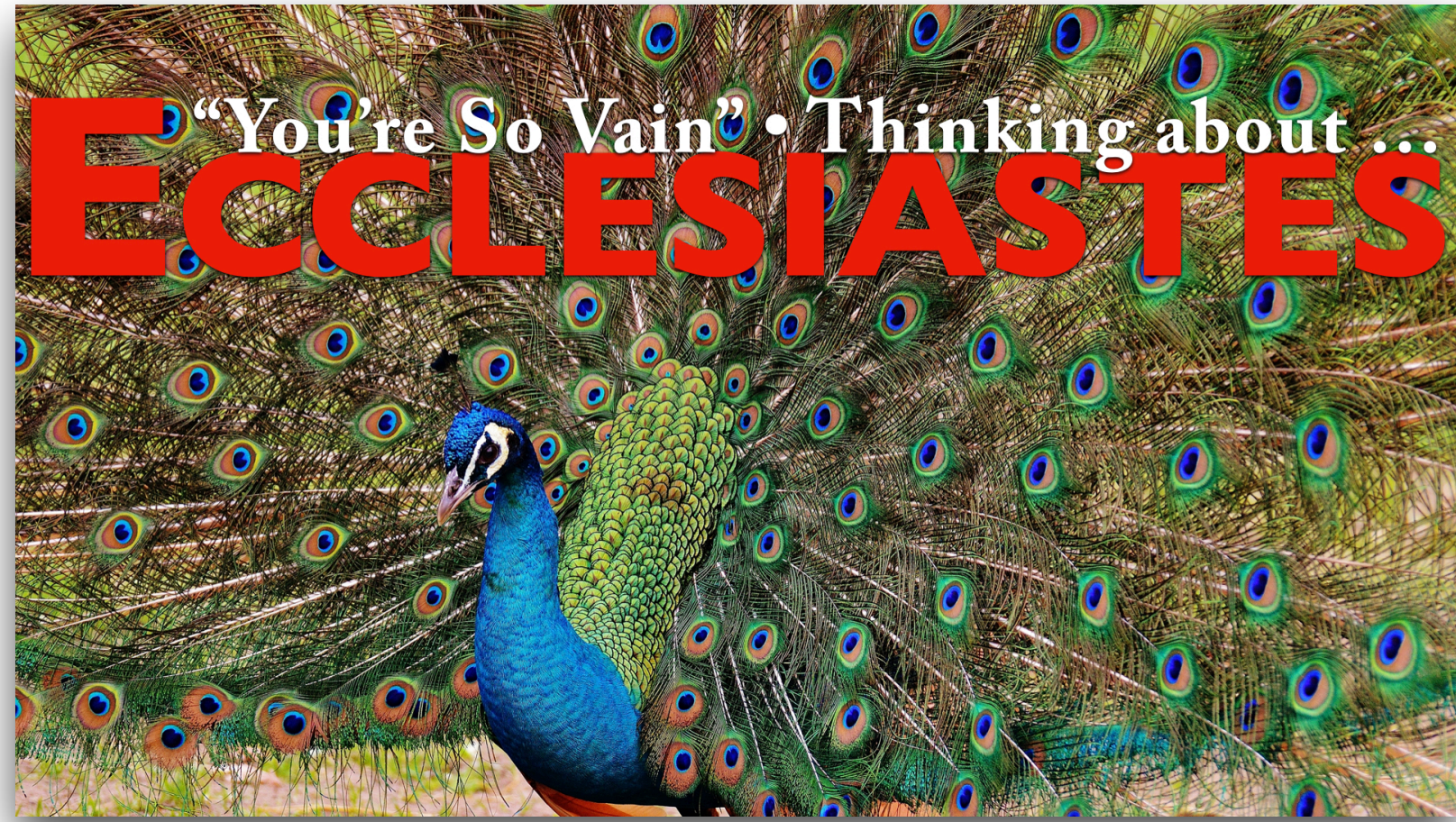
- **All is vanity**, grasping for the wind (1.2, 14)
- Never satisfied with riches (4.8)
- Powerful/influential kings die and are forgotten (4.16)
- Many dreams and many words (5.7)
- Loving silver (wealth), increasing wealth (5.10)
- Having riches, wealth, honor — lacking nothing — but not appreciating it, losing it to another (6.2)
- Wandering desire (6.9)



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

One singular conclusion about life ... “all is vanity”

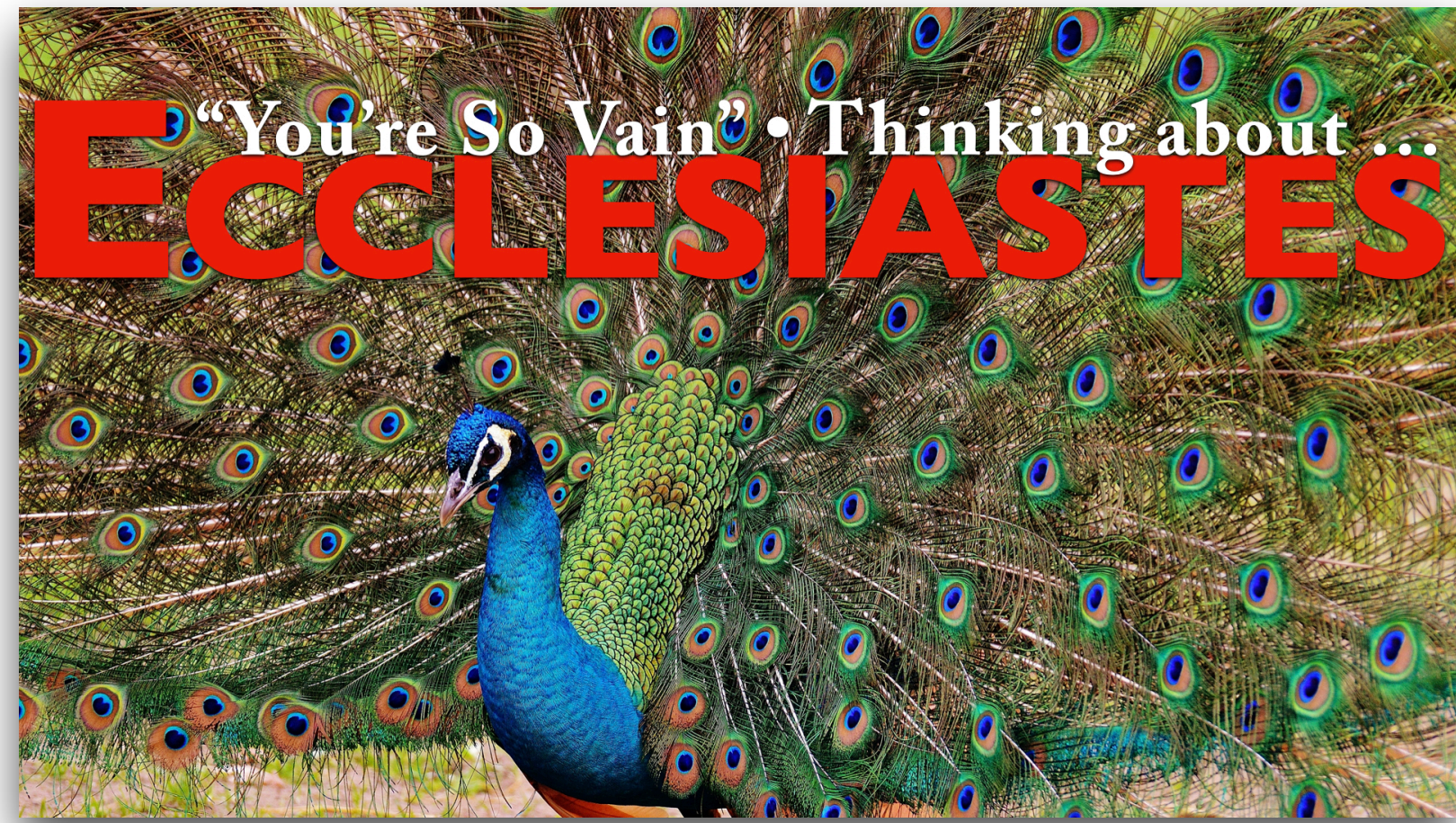
- **All is vanity**, grasping for the wind (1.2, 14)
- Fool’s laughter (7.6)
- Death of the righteous, long life of the wicked (7.15)
- Remembering/forgetting the wicked and/or the holy (8.10)
- Wicked treated as righteous/Righteous treated as wicked (8.14)
- The pleasures and joys of marriage/Labor under the sun (9.9)
- Rejoicing in life (11.8)
- Childhood and youth (11.10)



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

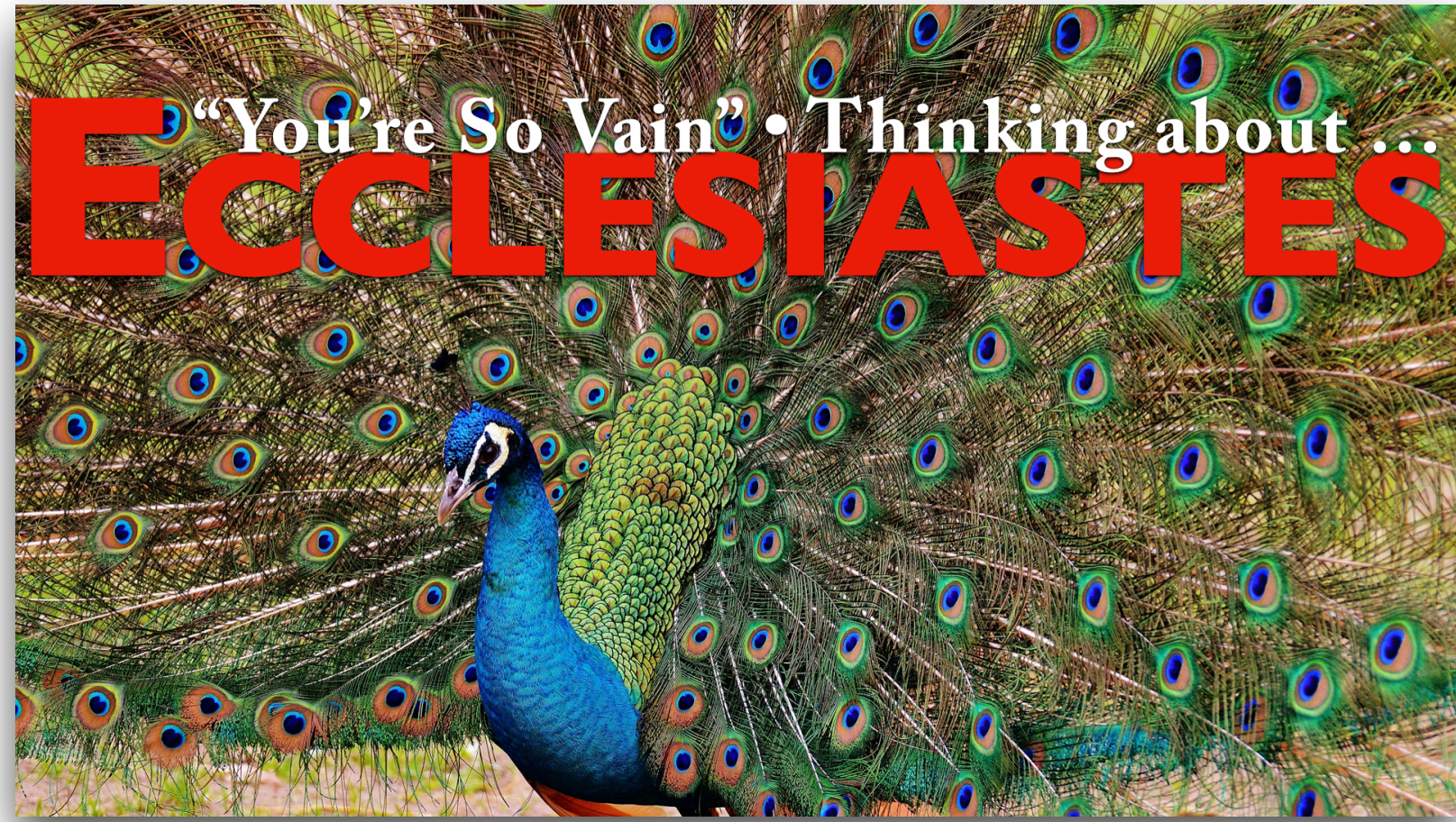
One singular conclusion about life ... “all is vanity”

- Ecclesiastes **ends** where it starts:
 - **All is vanity**, grasping for the wind (1.2, 14)
 - **All is vanity** (12.8)
- Ecclesiastes like Job:
 - Spends **most** of its time presenting ideas/beliefs/practices that **are out of sync** with the will of God ...
 - Only to be **corrected** at the **end** when God — or God’s representative — speaks



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

“a *good thing* turned into a *God thing* becomes a *bad thing*”



“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

The real conclusion, God’s perspective, ...

- Comes at the **end** of Job when **God finally speaks**
- Neither Job nor his friends had God’s vantage point
- Neither Job nor his friends saw the “beginning” or the “end” of life/creation
- **Conclusion: Trust** in God, regardless of what you see • feel • think • question
- Comes at the **end** of Ecclesiastes when the 2nd wise man, representing God, says ...
 - **Conclusion: Remember** your Creator (12.1) • **Fear God** and **keep** His commandments (12.13) • **This is man’s all** (12.13)

