



One Page Sermon

By Rev. Robb McCoy

October 13, 2024

Charlie Brown, the seeker

Recap of sermon from October 13, 2024

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 1:3-11

Peanuts, which was first published on October 2, 1950, was a groundbreaking comic that has remained witty, insightful, and compelling 74 years later. From the first comic, when Shermey declared about Charlie Brown, “how I hate him,” there was something different about it. It was a comic about kids, but it wasn’t for kids. And, it was a comic that about kids, but didn’t romanticize them. The kids of the *Peanuts* were thoughtful, insulting, threatening, sullen, and even cruel.

Charlie Brown became known as the lovable loser. He couldn’t beat Lucy in checkers. He couldn’t win a baseball game. He couldn’t keep a kite in the sky. And of course, he couldn’t kick a football, at least not one that we being held by Lucy. The whole gang had faults and disappointments. Charlie Brown longed for the attention of the little red-headed girl. Lucy pined over Schroeder. Sally was constantly rejected by her “sweet baboo.”

Despite all of the gang’s failures, it was Charlie Brown who remained a notch above them all when it came to his failures. Read the comic below, and I think we can get an idea of why he became so beloved. This comic captures so poignantly the isolation that life can be sometimes. Sitting alone, watching others enjoy themselves, longing for a meaningful interaction; this is an emotion that is difficult to capture but easy to identify with.

We have all been there, and in this moment when we watch Charlie Brown sit and suffer, we know that we are not alone. In every endeavor, we can see ourselves in Charlie Brown. Struggling to get a kite up in the air, desperately trying to win a ball game, hoping that this time we won’t be disappointed as we steam toward the football. We have been there. Life is full of disappointments. Charlie Brown understood this. We understand this, and the writer of Ecclesiastes understood it too.

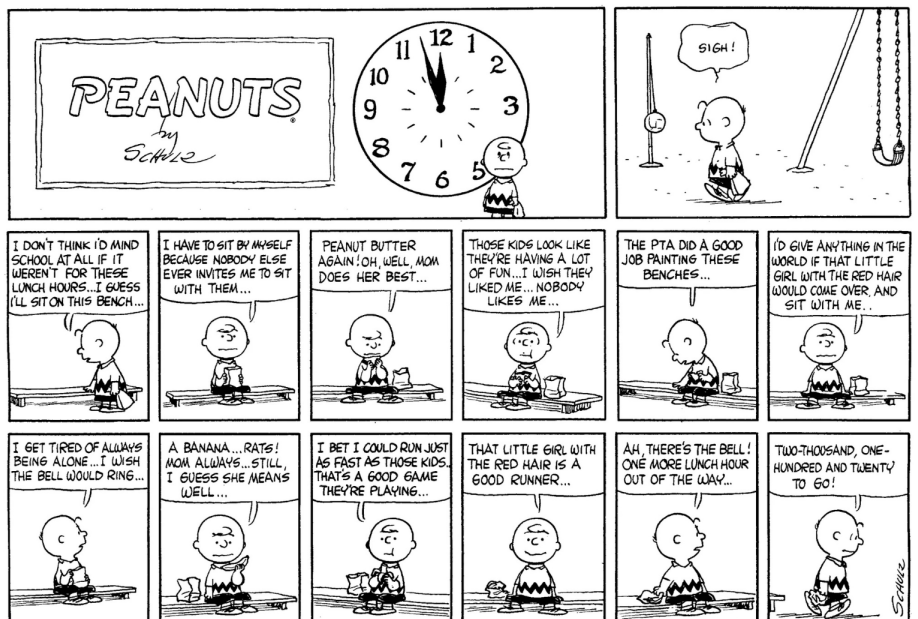
Ecclesiastes is an enigmatic book. Its very inclusion in our Bible was a highly controversial

decision. It falls in the category of wisdom literature, and like its more famous wisdom cousin, Job, it is difficult to understand. It is the story of a seeker trying to find meaning in life.

Through all of their exploits, they come up short. They never find meaning or purpose in life. The first chapter really does sum up the entire work nicely. There is nothing new under the sun, and all of life is temporary. There is no obvious “good news” to be found in Ecclesiastes. It is simply a reminder that life is fleeting, suffering is inevitable, and meaning is only what you make of it.

And while the *Peanuts* cartoons and TV specials usually ended with some meaningful resolution, the comics—like the one below—rarely did. Charlie Brown suffered endlessly, and without much hope. The *Peanuts* comic, frankly, did not have a lot of good news. It, like Ecclesiastes, defied easy summaries and poignant explanations.

Yet there is something gratifying about identifying with the poor kid who seemed to never get things right. And this might be the good news we finally find. We are not alone. There is someone out there like us struggling too. As we sit on the bench lonely, longing for connection, we end up finding what we were looking for. We are connected—to all the other lonely wanderers seeking meaning and connection. It is in the seeking we find meaning, and hopefully a smile along the way.



Next Week: The Gospel According to Peanuts
Lucy Van Pelt, the Foil, Judges 4:17-21 and Romans 7:15-25