



SMALL GROUP STUDY

The Grand Search

Why are we here? What is the purpose of life? The book of Ecclesiastes is written by the wisest man, King Solomon. He is searching for the meaning of life. In this book we catch a glimpse of what a pessimist he was. He writes, “what profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?” And, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” After all his pessimism he does end with what to do now, “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.” So, enjoy your life, but don’t forget what is ahead.

Solomon’s Search (1-4)

Solomon is very open and honest. He looks at life through his various experiences and determines that everything he has tried is vain and empty.

Discussion Questions:

- a. Ecclesiastes 1:2; How is this statement like soap bubbles?
- b. Why do we search for purpose and meaning in life?
- c. How does the focus of your gaze determine your outlook on life?
- d. Examine your heart: Has your life become tasteless and boring?

Solomon’s Sayings (5-10)

Solomon gives pearls of wisdom. He looks at money, the soul, mourning and laughter, the unfairness of life. Solomon is an interesting character; He is the richest and the wisest man who lived up until that time. But everything in his life had lost its shine, pleasure and purpose.

Discussion Questions:

- a. Examine your heart: Compare your relationship to money with your relationship to Jesus.
- b. What are some practical ways that you can increase the health of (feed and exercise) your soul?
- c. How does death remind us of what is important?
- d. In what way have sorrows created depth in your character?

Solomon’s Solution (11-12)

Up to this time Solomon has only looked at the observable data to draw his conclusions. Now he looks at the unseen and concludes: Without God life is a random set of events that don’t make sense. Solomon sums up his conclusion, “...Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”

Discussion Questions:

- a. Ecclesiastes 12:2-7: How are these verses a metaphor for old age?
- b. Examine your heart: What practical changes will you make in your life based on what you’re learning from this wise man’s journal?