



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: Owing our Weariness

Pastor Derek Sanford

June 5, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What helps you feel comfortable enough to express your spiritual doubts and hang-ups with others?

Scripture: [Ecclesiastes 1:1-11](#)

1. This week we are reading the prologue portion of Ecclesiastes, and it sets us up with the idea that life is like a hamster wheel. How has the repetitive nature of life caused weariness in your own life?
2. The first use of the Hebrew word “hevel” shows up in verse 2 and will be repeated throughout the book. Hevel is often translated as *vanity* or *meaningless*, but the literal translation is *vapor* or *smoke*, and it’s used here to describe the fleeting and elusive nature of life. Which of your life goals and values are, in the end, hevel? (Does that automatically make them wrong?)
3. Ecclesiastes is the existential crisis (i.e. “Why do we exist!? What’s the point?!”) of the wisdom books of the Bible. Christopher Wright said the wisdom books, “compel us towards an honest faith that’s willing to acknowledge the presence of doubts we cannot dismiss and questions we can’t always fully answer given our human limitations.” What doubts and questions come to your mind when you think about life in light of today’s scripture?

Prayer: Have one person in the group pray out loud for the weariness and the struggles that were expressed today. Then pray in silence, asking God to open your heart toward him more and more through this series. Leader, close in prayer after a few minutes (or longer if that feels right for your group).

Next Steps: Whenever you find yourself feeling weary this week, stop and pray. Consider a quick breath prayer- God (on the inhale), You are greater (on the exhale)

*Leader- encourage your group members to search “whoisgrace” on the [YouVersion website](#) or app and use the 3-part Ecclesiastes plan during this series.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: The Quest for Wisdom

Pastor Sarah Burt

June 12, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What's the most serendipitous (randomly lucky) thing that's ever happened to you?

Scripture: [Ecclesiastes 1:12-18](#)

1. What's the point of wisdom?
2. On Q's quest for wisdom, he finds that wisdom only takes you so far before you hit a dead end. Why is Ecclesiastes a necessary correction to the book of Proverbs that directly precedes it?
3. How are the lives of the wise and the foolish different, and how are they the same?
4. If God is just, what does Q's quest for wisdom reveal to us about the justice of God?
5. Q's quest for wisdom pushes us to delight in God more than we delight in life. How does that challenge your current state of living?

Prayer: It's still good to ask God for wisdom with the understanding that it doesn't guarantee smooth sailing. Share prayer requests for an area in your life where you need more wisdom. Go in a circle and pray for the person on your right. Leader, close with this prayer:

"God, you guide the humble and light the path of the godly. In our doubts and uncertainties, give us the wisdom to ask what you want us to do. Through your Spirit of wisdom, save us from deceptions, foolishness, and temptation. Help us walk in the light without stumbling, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." *(This prayer has been adapted from the Book of Common Prayer's prayer for guidance.)*

Next Steps: Find Your Chair this week and ask the Spirit to give you wisdom and understanding that only comes from knowing Jesus.

*Leader- encourage your group members to search "whoisgrace" on the [YouVersion website](#) or app and use the 3-part Ecclesiastes plan during this series.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: The Quest for Success

Pastor Sarah Burt

June 19, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What part of this Ecclesiastes series has stuck out to you the most so far?

Scripture: [Ecclesiastes 2:18-26](#)

1. How do you define success? What's the point of success?
2. What drives you to pursue success, however you define it?
3. If we spend our lives building our own little kingdoms, when we die, it's over. But if we spend our lives building God's Kingdom, when we die, it begins. How does this shift in thinking reframe the things that are "hevel" (vapor) in your life?
4. [Ecclesiastes 4:6](#) says "Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind." Q is getting at the idea that rest or peace is far more satisfying than stacking up successes. Pastor Sarah encouraged us to work *from a place of rest* by yoking with Jesus. Read [Matthew 11:28-30](#). What does working from a place of rest look like practically for you?

Prayer: Ask God to give you the desire to build his kingdom more than your own. Use the Lord's prayer to launch into group prayer time. ([Matthew 6:9-13](#))

Next Steps: Choose one practical way that you will yoke with Jesus this week. Share with the group and ask for someone to check in with you.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: The Quest for Pleasure

Pastor Sarah Burtt

June 26, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What is your favorite thing to do for fun? How often do you get to do it?

Scripture:

[Ecclesiastes 2:1-11](#)

1. What's the point of pleasure?
2. Q had every pleasure of his day available to him in abundance, but he still declared it all "hevel." What sort of pleasures do you indulge in that ultimately leave you feeling unsatisfied?

[Ecclesiastes 2:24](#); [Ecclesiastes 3:12-13](#); [Ecclesiastes 8:15](#)

3. This sentiment is scattered throughout Ecclesiastes: eat, drink, and find enjoyment in your toil. (*He includes the enjoyment of material things in 5:19 and the enjoyment of your spouse in 9:9.*) Q acknowledges that pleasures, though fleeting, are a gift from God to bring momentary joy. How does savoring little moments of joy help us live well? Which pleasures actually bring moments of true joy?
4. What is the difference between pursuing pleasure and savoring a moment?
5. How does momentary joy give us a glimpse of and hope for eternity?

Prayer: Thank God and give Him praise for specific things that brought you joy this week.

Next Steps: Set an alarm on your phone or watch to remind you to savor the moment at a random time tomorrow. See where you can find joy around you.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: How Death Teaches us to Live

Pastor Derek Sanford

July 3, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What is one thing you hope people say about you after you die?

Scripture: [Ecclesiastes 9:1-4](#) and [Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:1](#)

1. How does death motivate you to *rejoice in life and remember your Creator*?
2. The NLT study Bible commentary says that Q is “not trying to destroy all hope but to direct our hopes to the only one who can truly fulfill them and give life meaning. [Q] affirms the value of knowledge, relationships, work, and pleasure, but only in their proper place. Everything temporal must be seen in light of the eternal.” How does this affect the way you will approach your relationship with God?
3. Q’s conclusion is that the greatest futility of all is a life that has not found the reason for living. What is your reason for living? (It’s ok if you’re still arriving at an answer!) Do you actually live like it?

Prayer: Encourage your group to turn their palms upward during prayer today. Take 2 minutes for silent confession followed by 3 minutes of silently asking God to realign our hearts to His. Have a volunteer close in prayer after the 5 minutes are over.

Next Steps: Cut out one time-waster this week - share with the group for accountability.



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Ecclesiastes: Getting the Point

Pastor Derek Sanford

July 10, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What is your biggest takeaway from this series on Ecclesiastes?

Scripture: [Ecclesiastes 12:9-14](#)

1. What is your reaction to verses 13-14 now that we've come to the end of Ecclesiastes? Are you satisfied with Q's conclusion - why or why not?
2. Pastor Derek said that one of the hardest things about Ecclesiastes is letting it instruct us that there are no immediate answers for some things in this life. All we know is that God will put everything right someday, and we need to spend this life preparing to meet him. How are you preparing? What changes do you need to make?
3. Derek reminded us that when Jesus came the first time, he didn't come to bring judgment, he came to take it. This is our hope! ([Romans 8](#)) Who can you share that hope with?

Prayer: Pray for the people you identified in Question #3.

Next Steps: Take a step toward sharing the hope of Jesus with the person you identified. Start by setting an alarm to pray for them for 3 minutes at 3:00 tomorrow!