

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker

Question: Was there a crazy stunt that you were known for during your youth?

Key factors in my decision-making:

- How much are the payments?
- Will I go to jail?
- How many carbs?
- Will it bark, cry or keep me up at night?
- Will I have to go to jail?
- Heads I go for it; tails I don't.
- Other: _____

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-17

How to Chase Pleasure

"Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." (Ecclesiastes 2:1)

This short book is about a quest for satisfaction and meaning in life, and he does this by giving himself to wisdom, to comedy, pleasure, alcohol, making things, having things... and throughout the book, he does find a measure of happiness, but it slips from his hands. Its like nailing a piece of jello to the wall. He gets it there, but its jello. So it falls to the ground.

Name all the things the preacher did to test his heart with pleasure?

What do the lives of people you know reveal about was they think will make them happy?

Question: The pursuit of pleasure has a few motivations that were mentioned in the sermon. Which one do you tend to identify with?

- Fear of responsibility
- A dependence on consumption
- A turn to escapes
- Other: _____

Question: What is the most important project you have undertaken in the last year? How do you measure success in that particular project?

Question: Why is the preacher in Ecclesiastes so unhappy with what many would call success?

How to Find Satisfaction

Question: What do these key phrases tell you about the perspective of this passage?

- "The few days of of their life" (vs 3)
- "Under the sun" (vs 11)
- "In the days to come" (vs 16)

We are introduced to death in verse 14:
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.

What strategies do you think people, including yourself, use to avoid facing the reality of death?

How can thinking more about death help us enjoy more of life?

Question: Is the death of the fool different from the death of the wise?

Psalm 16: 11

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (ESV)

Question: How does Jesus solve the problem of pleasure? How can we look to Jesus in this life? How can we help one another look to Jesus?

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:
