



Reclaim
Christian Church

Ecclesiastes Study Questions

Overview:

Ecclesiastes is an intriguing and engaging book in the Old Testament that is part of Wisdom Literature. That is to say, it aims to convey wisdom to its readers. And who better to write Wisdom Literature than Solomon, whom the Lord gave a “wise and discerning mind” (1 Kings 3:12). Solomon was the son of King David, and the Lord bestowed on him vast amounts of riches and honor too. For more on this, read 1 Kings 3:3-14! The following study provides questions to guide your group’s discussions on the 12 chapters of Ecclesiastes. Of course, feel free to deviate and discuss other verses and aspects of the book as they come up

Preparation:

Group members should ideally read the chapter of Ecclesiastes and answer questions prior to group. Depending on the frequency of when your group meets, you may decide to cover multiple chapters in one meeting in order to finish with the sermon series. Some of these questions suggest the use of resources such as a concordance. If you are unfamiliar with any of the resources or are unsure how to access them, this is a great question to ask your group members! The community group ministry leaders are also here to help anytime if you would like to learn more about resources for your group.

Chapter 1:

1. In Ecclesiastes 1:11 Solomon writes, “there is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.” Read Deuteronomy 32:7. Why do you think it is important that we learn from those who came before us? Share with your group 1-2 individuals who have passed away, or historical figures, whose lives have impacted you and what you learned from them.
2. As you read through Ecclesiastes 1, select a word that stands out to you e.g. vanity. Look the word up in a Bible dictionary or do a study on the word using a concordance. Share with your group what you have learned.

Chapter 2:

1. Solomon describes turning to a great number of worldly things to find pleasure and purpose. Among them: wine (2:3); material possessions such as houses, vineyards, and flocks (2:4-7); financial resources such as gold (2:8); and concubines (2:8). What are some things you have found pleasure in in the past? Were they worldly things, or godly? Are any of these things temptations today? Be honest. And if they are, this is a great opportunity to ask your group to hold you accountable.
2. One of the goals of community groups is that we would be counseling each other biblically. As you read through Ecclesiastes 2, imagine that Solomon were a member of

your community group. How might you counsel him, particularly with New Testament Scripture? (Share a verse or two with your group that you think would apply).

Chapter 3:

1. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. How has God grown you throughout various times in your life? Is there a time in particular you would like to share with your group? How would you describe the season(s) God has you in now?
2. In Ecclesiastes 3:9-14, Solomon very poetically describes God's sovereignty. Are you living and acting as if God is sovereign? Why or why not?

Chapter 4:

1. In Ecclesiastes 4:4 Solomon writes about man's envy of his neighbor. Envy and social comparison are very common experiences, but that does not mean we should ever accept them. In fact, Scripture warns on the danger of envy and the importance of guarding against it (e.g. Proverbs 14:30; Galatians 5:19-21; James 3:16). Have you, or do you currently, struggle with envy? If so, how are you trying to rid yourself of it (1 Peter 2:1)?
2. In Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 Solomon describes how two are better than one, as they can help each other out in times of need. In times of need, do you have a tendency to reach out to others or isolate? If it is the latter, how can your community group help you reach out?

Chapter 5:

1. Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 speaks pretty strongly about the need to fear God, who is holy. Read 1 Peter 1:15-16. How are you trying to live a holy life? Are there any areas in particular you need to work on? If so, what is your action plan and how can your community group help hold you accountable?
2. In Ecclesiastes 5:8 Solomon writes about violations of justice and righteousness. What else does Scripture say about justice and righteousness? You might pick one of those words and do a study on it, using a concordance to find verses or a Bible dictionary. Remember - always read verses in their context.

Chapter 6:

1. In Ecclesiastes 6:1-2 it is this writer's opinion that Solomon sounds frustrated - perhaps even angry - at God. Have you ever felt angry at God? If so, how did you work through that anger? And how did you grow from those experiences that made you angry?

2. Re-read Ecclesiastes 6:7. Why do you think it is that our appetite on earth is never satisfied?

Chapter 7:

1. Much of Solomon's wisdom in chapter 7 goes counter to worldly wisdom. For example, worldly wisdom might tell us the goal of life is to be successful and happy, and yet Solomon writes "sorrow is better than laughter." What are some other examples of this in verses 7-13? What wisdom do you follow - worldly wisdom, or the wisdom that comes from above?
2. In Ecclesiastes 7:14 Solomon writes that God has made the days of prosperity as well as the days of adversity. How do you react to days of adversity? Are you willing to submit to God and learn in times of adversity, or do you find yourself angry at the Lord and wishing things would change?

Chapter 8:

1. Ecclesiastes 8 touches on a hard truth of life: sometimes life does not appear to be fair, by human standards. As Solomon writes in v.14 "there are righteous people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous." Throughout the Bible, there are many followers of God whose lives were incredibly difficult. Pick one or two of them and read about them. For example, you might read about Paul, or any number of the prophets. What can we learn from their lives and how they handled difficult situations?

Chapter 9:

1. Despite the unpredictability of life, Solomon reminds us in Ecclesiastes 9:1 that "the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God." Do you live, and act, like this is true? Or, are you tempted to try and take things into your own hands?
2. The word "joy" comes up several times in Ecclesiastes 9. Take some time to do a study on the word "joy" in Scripture. You might use a concordance to find other instances of the word joy, e.g. 1 Peter 1:8-9, or James 1:2-3. What did you learn about joy? As Christians, can we be joyful in all things?

Chapter 10:

1. In Ecclesiastes 10 Solomon compares the wise and the foolish. In what ways have you been like the wise? In what ways have you been like the fool? How are you going to work on these areas?

2. In Ecclesiastes 10:20 Solomon writes “not even in your thoughts, do not curse the king.” Our thought lives are really important. What can we do to try and change how we think? Read Philippians 4:8 (maybe even memorize this verse!). How can we do our best to think about those things?

Chapters 11 and 12:

1. Ecclesiastes ends by saying “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (v. 13). Jesus speaks very similarly in John 14: 15-21. Are you keeping the commandments of God? Why, or why not? What needs to change?
2. Now that you are finished with Ecclesiastes, take some time and share your reflections on Ecclesiastes as a whole. What do you want to remember? What challenged you? What did you learn?