

WEEK OF
OCTOBER 5,
2008



JOURNEY GROUP QUESTIONS

OUR MISSION: *Leading people on a life-changing journey to follow Jesus Christ. [Matthew 11:28-30]*

JOURNEY OUR WEEKLY JOURNEY TAKES FOUR STEPS IN FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST:

Love God. [matthew 22:37] through WORSHIP **Grow** in God. [2 john 1:6] through GROUPS

Serve God. [1 peter 4:10] through TEAMS **Share** God. [acts 1:8] through OUTREACH

TITLE: OUT ON THE FRONT LINE

INTRODUCTION

Many of us right now are "spent". Long gas lines, uncertainty in the national economy, and changes coming in our national leadership have all impacted us and caused many of us to feel spent. We see in the book of Ecclesiastes another man that was spent. His name was Solomon. We can learn from Solomon. Solomon learned that when we look for meaning in the wrong places such as in knowledge, pleasure, drugs, alcohol, material things, power, and financial security we feel as if life is meaningless. As a result, we lose hope when our trust is misplaced. Therefore, we need to give up trying to find meaning in the wrong places, surround ourselves with encouraging people, and trust in the One that gives us hope.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Review the places Brian mentioned that people try to find meaning. Have you ever tried to find meaning to life in one of these areas or looked to one of these areas to satisfy your desires in life?
2. **Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-8 and Ecclesiastes 2:1-26.** (Note: These verses are from Solomon's personal experience. Solomon's kingdom was in its golden age, but Solomon wanted the people to understand that success and prosperity don't last long. All human accomplishments will one day disappear. We must keep this in mind in order to live wisely. If we don't, we will become either proud and self-sufficient when we succeed or sorely disappointed when we fail. Solomon's goal was to show that earthly possessions and accomplishments are ultimately meaningless. Only the pursuit of God brings real satisfaction. We should honor God in all we say, think, and do. – from Life Application Study Bible notes)
3. What is your attitude about what you do, your goals, your dreams? Do you find satisfaction in them or do you feel more like Solomon?
4. Do you know the real reason you are working so hard?
5. Do you have hope right now? Where does your hope come from? **Read Romans 15:13.** According to this verse, as followers of Christ, where does our hope come from?
6. How do you give up trying to find meaning in the wrong places and find meaning solely in God?
7. Are you surrounding yourself with encouraging people? What difference does this make?
8. How have you placed your full trust in God? How do you do this on an ongoing basis?
9. Talk about some practical things you and your group members can do this week to live this out and hold each other accountable in these areas.

Meditate and Memorize

Romans 15:13 – "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

This page is for a personal devotional reading for the week.

We encourage you to get a good study Bible like the NIV study, Life Application Study Bible, or Quest Bible to help you as you study God's word.

Day One

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1- 5:20

Think About It

God has a plan for all people. Thus He provides cycles of life, each with its work for us to do.

What will you do?

If you face problems this week that seem to contradict God's plan, see them as opportunities to place your trust in Him and in His plan and His provision. Ask him to help you trust Him and ask for His guidance today in doing the work He has for you.

Changing your mind

Ecclesiastes 3:1 "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven."

Day Two

Read Ecclesiastes 6:1- 8:17

Think About It

Prosperity is not always good, and adversity is not always bad. But God is always good; if we live as he wants us to, we will be content.

What will you do?

When life seems uncertain and uncontrollable, don't despair- remember that God is in control and will bring good results out of your struggles. Express this to God in prayer today.

Changing your mind

Ecclesiastes 7:1 "When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future."

Day Three

Read Ecclesiastes 9:1 – 10:20

Think About It

Ecclesiastes explains what happens in our sinful and imperfect world. We must keep our perspective. Don't let the inequities of life keep you from earnest, dedicated work. We serve God, not people.

What will you do?

Find the area of your life where you "ax" is dull, and sharpen your skills so you can be more effective for God's work.

Changing your mind

Ecclesiastes 9:10 "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."

Day Four

Read Ecclesiastes 11:1 – 12:14

Think About It

The book of Ecclesiastes cannot be interpreted correctly without reading these final verses. No matter what the mysteries and apparent contradictions of life are, we must work toward the single purpose of knowing God.

What will you do?

Make your sole purpose and heart's desire in life to know God, and to love Him for His glory. Express this in prayer today.

Changing your mind

Ecclesiastes 12:13 "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

(Many of these study notes and additional notes can be found in the NIV Life Application Study Bible)

If you are using this daily study and have found it helpful, please email rodneyh@westridge.com.