

1. The Experiment (v.1-10)

a. Meaning in *Pleasure*? (v.1-2)

b. Meaning in *Alcohol*? (v.3)

c. Meaning in *Work*? (v.4-6)

d. Meaning in *Money*? (v.7-8)

e. Meaning in *Sex*? (v.8)

f. Meaning in *Fame*? (v.9)

BUZZ GROUP: When you are not feeling happy and fulfilled, how do you look to solve the problem? Which of these six are you most tempted to run to in order to try and bring fulfilment and meaning and joy to your life?

2. The Verdict (v.11-16)

a. The Wisdom of God (v.11)

“What good is it for you to gain the whole world and yet forfeit your soul?”
(Mark 8:36)

b. The Reality of Eternity (v.12-16)

“God has set eternity in the human heart” (3:11)

“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11-12)

MINISTRY TIME:

Living a Wise Life

Six sessions applying Old Testament Wisdom Literature to 21st Century Living

Week 6: Wisdom about Life (*Ecclesiastes 2*)

¹ I thought in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.” But that also proved to be meaningless.² “Laughter,” I said, “is foolish. And what does pleasure accomplish?”³ I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly— my mind still guiding me with wisdom. I wanted to see what was worth while for people to do under heaven during the few days of their lives.

⁴ I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards.⁵ I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them.⁶ I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees.⁷ I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me.⁸ I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired men and women singers, and a harem as well— the delights of the human heart.⁹ I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me.

¹⁰ I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labour.¹¹ Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

¹² Then I turned my thoughts to consider wisdom, and also madness and folly. What more can the king's successor do than what has already been done?¹³ I saw that wisdom is better than folly, just as light is better than darkness.¹⁴ The wise have eyes in their heads, while fools walk in the darkness; but I came to realise that the same fate overtakes them both.¹⁵ Then I thought in my heart, “The fate of the fool will overtake me also. What then do I gain by being wise?” I said in my heart, “This too is meaningless.”¹⁶ For the wise, like fools, will not be long remembered; in days to come both will be forgotten. Like fools, the wise too must die! (Ecclesiastes 2:1-16)