

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Look over the suggested questions to the right. Ask God to guide you to the ones that will work best for your group.
- Be prepared to get the discussion going in your group if they're not feeling it today.
- Don't feel like you have to know all there is to know about scripture. Use this week's study notes to prepare yourself. But, if something arises that you can't answer, tell your group, "That's a great question. I'll research that and get back with you." Then, email eddie.mosley@lifepointchurch.org for help.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

Don't waste your life.

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:

As we continue 1 Kings, read about the division of Israel into two kingdoms and the miracles performed by the prophet Elijah.

AS YOU READ...

...Think about who in your life needs to hear about the things you're reading.

CONNECT**(10 min.)**

Choose one or both of the following questions to begin your time together as a group.

1. **What was the first large purchase you worked and saved all your money for?**
2. **What would you like to be remembered for after you are long gone? If you continue living your life as you are, for what do you think you will be remembered?**

EXPLORE**(40 min.)**

Say something like, "Today we will discuss God's purpose for our lives." Then guide your group through these questions.

3. **If you were in worship this week, what statement or experience stood out to you? What stood out during last week's reading?**

(**Leader:** Take some time to discuss any questions that may have arisen as your members read through this week's assigned reading.)
4. **Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 and Mark 8:36. What parallel do you see between the words of Solomon and Christ?**
5. **Ecclesiastes 1 points out three consequences of not knowing your purpose: life will seem tiresome, unfulfilling, and uncontrollable. With which of these three do you most identify? Why?**
6. **Read Ephesians 2:10. What does this verse tell you about God's purpose for your life? How should this truth affect the way you live? What are some "good works" you, your family or your small group can begin to do?**
7. **Read Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. What conclusion did Solomon reach at the end of his life? How can our church or small group help you live these verses?**
8. **Read 2 Timothy 4:6-8. Do you share Paul's hope for the future? How does it motivate you now? What are some practical ways we can live life here on earth in preparation for life in eternity?**

TRANSFORM**(10 min.)**

Wrap up your time by recalling a few things from your meeting that stood out to you. Then, ask the following question and pray together.

9. **What did you learn about God from our discussion? About people? What will you do with what you learned?**

This Week's Study Notes:

Scripture Notes

Ecclesiastes 1:1

Futility. This concept is the main theme of Ecclesiastes. Occurring 38 times in the book, "absolute futility" emphasizes the uselessness of life apart from God. In Hebrew, futility (or vanity) means "breath" or "vapor." Thus, Ecclesiastes repeats the theme of wisdom literature—that all our concerns are temporary as the morning mist.

Ecclesiastes 1:3

What does a man gain? The rhetorical question in this verse demands the answer "nothing." All the work people do on earth amounts to nothing. Jesus expands on this concept in Mark 8:36-38, under the sun. This key phrase is used 29 times in this book to refer to our limited view of life.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Fear God and keep His commands. All the Teacher's investigations have led to this truth: life's meaning is found in God alone. God's commands provide all the meaning and truth we desire.

Leader Tips

AS YOU READ THIS WEEK...

- Think about and pray for each member of your small group.
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Whom does God bring to mind as I read these verses? Why?
 2. What needs to change in my own life as a result of what I'm reading?
 3. Whom do I need to tell about these verses?

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY WE RECOMMEND...

- Bible Commentary: Bible.org
- Bible Commentary: DesiringGod.org
- Pronouncing Biblical Words: Netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm

* Scripture Notes adapted from and used by permission of Serendipity House Publishing, 1 LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee

