

# ECCLESIASTES

## DEVOTIONAL



### DAY ONE

#### THE TEACHER

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 and take note of the speaker. As we learned from our study of Ecclesiastes 1 last week, the speaker is identified as “the Teacher”, the son of David, king in Jerusalem (1:1).

- Who is Teacher addressing in verse 1? Who is the focus of this whole passage?
- What else do you learn about him from this passage?
  - Where does he live?
  - What is his financial state?
  - How does he compare with other people in his time?

*Reflect: How often do you find yourself completely focused on yourself to discover meaning and purpose and what is good in life? Why is this our common tendency?*

*Prayer: As we continue this study and learn from what the Teacher has learned, pray for a heart of humility as you seek the Lord's wisdom.*



### DAY TWO

#### THE STRUCTURE

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 and focus on the big picture structure of the passage. When you break it up into paragraphs, what do you notice about the flow of the passage? Answer the following questions by summarizing the paragraphs in your own words.

- What is his goal, what is he trying to find out? (vs 1-3)
- How does he seek to undertake this test? (vs 4-9)
- What does he conclude at the end of the test? (vs 10-11)

*Reflect: Have you ever felt disappointed and defeated in your search for meaning and accomplishment in life? What have you learned from those experiences?*

*Prayer: As you pray today, what can you praise God for in light of this passage and what you know is true about His purpose for your life?*



DAY  
THREE

### **GREAT PROJECTS**

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. In his attempt to see if there is any meaning and good to be found in pleasure, the Teacher “undertook great projects”. (Note: the word translated “pleasure” in verse 1 is also translated as joy, gladness and happiness in other places such as Ecc. 2:26, 5:20, 8:15.)

- What does he build in verse 4-6?
- What pleasures and joys does he describe in verses 6-8?

*Reflect: The Teacher seems to be trying to build his own paradise in order to gain meaning (see Genesis 2:8-25 where God created the Garden of Eden as a perfect paradise for Adam and Eve). In what ways does our culture prompt us to do the same thing?*

*Prayer: What might you need to confess today as you think about your own attempts to build your own paradise?*



DAY  
FOUR

### **MIXED CONCLUSIONS**

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. Focus on the author’s conclusions in verses 10-11.

- Notice how his search has been holistic in its scope. What parts of his body are involved in this search?
- Read Ecclesiastes 2:24-26.
  - What is the “reward” or the “good” that he discovered from this test?
  - Why does he still conclude that pleasure is ultimately meaningless?
- How would you summarize the wisdom has the Teacher gained from his test?
  - How can you apply this to your own life situation? How does it change your head (thinking), your heart (desires and emotions), and/or hands (actions)?

*Prayer: As you pray today, praise God for the joy that he gives us in this life, but pray that ultimately it will point you to Him.*



DAY  
FIVE

### **WHAT JESUS HAS TO SAY...**

Jesus addresses a similar situation of a rich man and his pleasure in the New Testament.

- Read Luke 12:13-21.
  - What was the rich man's dilemma and how did he solve it?
  - Why does God call the rich man a fool?
  - What is the rich man forsaking in his life?

*Reflect: In our culture, we are constantly told that we should live for the joy of the moment and seek success and our own happiness. What wisdom can you gain for your own life from the Teacher's test in Ecclesiastes 2 and Jesus' story in Luke 12? How do these texts challenge or convict you personally as you survey the pursuits of your life?*

*Prayer: As you pray today, seek the Lord's wisdom and pray that you may be rich towards God instead of the material things of this world.*