

Series: Living the Dream.

Scripture and Background Information for March 28-April 01.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we will finish our series: Living the Dream: The Power and Pitfalls of a God-Sized Life. Our series dealt with the observation of Solomon's life, his blessing from God but also his downfall. Today, we will look at **Ecclesiastes 1**, the conclusion of Solomon, about his own life.

Background for Ecclesiastes 1:

The content of Ecclesiastes seems to indicate that Solomon wrote the book at the end of his life, reflecting on what he had learned. Remember last week's sermon; Solomon was blessed by God and became the wisest man to be ever lived on earth. Despite two encounters with God, Solomon turned away from God. Although Solomon encountered God and experienced His blessing, he lived a life as if God did not exist. Now, Ecclesiastes gives us insight into Solomon's conclusion about his godless life. Solomon observes his life and concludes that all we do, all we work for, seems to be an endless, meaningless, insignificant cycle of things that other people already did or will do (1:14). He realized that life is short, fast over, and will soon be forgotten (1:11). The whole book seems depressive and negative, but it offers an important observation and conclusion (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Some questions to engage with the text:

1. Hebrew writers used different techniques to emphasize the points they are making. One of their methods was repetition. When looking into our text, what is strongly emphasized?
2. When Solomon observes different life situations, what is he referring to with "vanity?" Why does he think everything is in vain?
3. How does Solomon's conclusion in 12:13-14 change his whole approach to life?

Remember: Solomon realized that a life apart from God has no meaning since it ends in "nothing." (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) So, apart from God, all our doing has no lasting impact. Although life seems to be a meaningless cycle, Jesus breaks the cycle of insignificance and gives our life an eternal perspective. Note, Jesus' "giving of significance" functions as a purpose giver for our own life, but also our mission! We are to share of the "purpose-Giver" for other people by participating in His mission!