

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Human Flourishing
Week 1: Meaning & Purpose
Ecclesiastes 1:1-2:23

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Top universities say they've finally discovered the six keys to a deeply satisfying life. Amazingly, King Solomon beat them to it by 3,000 years! In our study of the wisdom of well-being this week we discuss the key to finding meaning and purpose in life.

Kicking It Off:

What sport would you compete in if you were in the Olympics?

Discussion:

1. What does "making a difference" look like to you?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-14. What is the overall tone here? What conclusion does King Solomon draw about life "under the sun"?

"What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind." ~ Eccl. 1:13b-14 (NIV)

3. Now read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. As Jeff said and this shows, Solomon tested "living the dream." What warnings about worldly pursuits can you take from this passage?
4. In his sermon, Jeff described five ways Solomon found life to be meaningless apart from God. What were those? (Work is pointless. Life is monotonous. People are forgotten. Nothing is original. Ignorance is Bliss).
5. Let's look at one more passage for a suggestion from Jesus on how to shift our perspective on life by faith. Read Matthew 18:1-3. As the wisest, wealthiest person of power of his time, you could say that Solomon was the exact opposite of a child. Go back to the passages where Solomon calls aspects of life meaningless and discuss how approaching each one with childlike faith (as Jesus describes) could instead infuse it with true, lasting meaning.
6. Which aspect of meaninglessness in life do you relate to most? What could you do in the next week to apply a childlike perspective to that and engage with God to overcome the drudgery?

Wrapping Up:

The need for purpose is universal. Take some time in prayer today affirming the value of each person in your group. Encourage members to take turns sharing affirmations with each other.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." ~ Eph. 2:10 (NIV)