

## **WHY NOT JUST ME?**

**ARRIVAL / CONNECTING and SNACK:** (15 minutes) Spend time catching up and socializing with one another. Follow up on prayer requests and any action steps from your last time together.

**SHORT OPENING PRAYER FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER:** (2 minutes)

**SCRIPTURE and DISCUSSION:** (40-50 minutes) With each Scripture passage, have a different person read slowly enough for everyone to enjoy, reflect quietly for a moment, then discuss the questions.

**Ecclesiastes 4:1-3** “Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors—and they have no comforter.<sup>2</sup> And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive. <sup>3</sup> But better than both is the one who has never been born, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun.

1. Describe what your life would look like without God?
2. How do people come to a point of hopelessness in this world?

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** <sup>“<sup>3</sup></sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,<sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”

3. How has God designed community to comfort those who are hurting?

**Ecclesiastes 4:4-8** <sup>“<sup>4</sup></sup> And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person’s envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.<sup>5</sup> Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves.<sup>6</sup> Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.<sup>7</sup> Again I saw something meaningless under the sun:<sup>8</sup> There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. “For whom am I toiling,” he asked, “and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?” This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

4. How do people try to replace Christian relationships for riches?
5. Have you ever seen a person achieve their dreams only to find themselves even more empty than before?

**Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** <sup>“<sup>9</sup></sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor;<sup>10</sup> If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.<sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?<sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

**SURRENDER:** (15 minutes)

6. How do strong Christian friendships become force multipliers for God’s kingdom?
7. Do you have any strong (actively growing) Christian friends who hold you accountable? How have they helped shape your spiritual character?
8. What is your plan for being in community with strong Christians this fall?

**PRAYER:** (10 min) Pray for one another in light of what has been shared.