

MEANINGFULL, PART I

ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2



ACCOUNTABILITY

- Over the past month, how have our discussions of Jesus' resurrection and its impact changed the way you live?

INTRODUCTION

- The reign of King Solomon is recorded in 1 Kings 1-11. Give your group members about 5-10 minutes to scan through it individually, to get an overview of his life. While they are reading, play some worship music in the background.

SERMON REVIEW

- Ecclesiastes teaches us about a chase that meaningless, or futile.
- As we study it, we'll learn that a life of meaning is not measured by what we get, but what we give.
- The book asks, "What's the point of everything?"
- Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon (Son of David, the King in Jerusalem), 1000 years before Jesus. It is one of the five books of wisdom literature.
- Within the book, in the original Hebrew, Solomon is called *koheleth* (wisdom, teacher).
- He was a king of great influence, that amassed incomparable wealth and fame. And this book is his reflection on that life.
- The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."
- This is not depression or disillusionment, it's a realization that meaning isn't measured by what you get. The temporal things of life are meaningless.
- "Under the sun" occurs 29x, to illustrate "in this life"; he's focusing on the things of this world, rather than things of eternity.
- Humanity is flawed in thinking, "If I could only have _____, then I'd be happy!"
- The words of Jesus in Matthew 6:19-21 are exactly what Solomon was anticipating in Ecclesiastes. They're asking, "Where is your heart?"
- Life is fleeting, it moves quickly, and the author is pleading that we don't waste that short life on anything that is meaningless.
- We have to run with purpose, disciplined enough to chase the things that matter (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

DISCUSSION

- Why is it important to know that Ecclesiastes is attributed to Solomon? How does it inform your reading?

- Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11. What catches your attention in these verses?
- Having an general understanding of Solomon's reign from 1 Kings (introduction activity), does his reflection on that reign surprise you? Or does it seem fitting?
- Throughout the book, Solomon will mention several things that proved meaningless to him. What chases in your own life have proved to be a waste of time? What things have you pursued and found to be "meaningless"?
- Compare and contrast these words of Solomon with the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:19-21. What are the similarities and differences? Are they essentially saying the same thing?
- How is a person's heart affected by (or connected to) their possessions or status?
- Paul points us toward meaning and purpose in 1 Corinthians 9:25-27. How does he describe purposeful living? How does the imagery help you?
- What are you hoping to get out of the rest of this series?

CHALLENGE

- Take a few minutes throughout the week to reflect on your life, and evaluate whether or not the things you've been pursuing have real significance or value.

CLOSING PRAYER