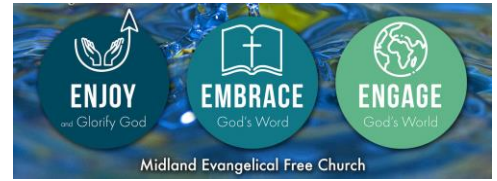




**Life Group Questions**  
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Date: September 12, 2021

Scripture: Ecclesiastes

**Main Idea:** If at all possible, please read the whole book of Ecclesiastes. If you haven't read it by your Life Group's meeting, please use the info below to help answer the big-picture questions, then go back home and read the book over the course of the next week. Consider reading it in a dynamic translation like the New Living Translation or the Message.

What topics jump out at you?

What do you believe is the main idea or theme?

How does the following relate to the Message of Ecclesiastes?

Mark 8:33 (NLT)

<sup>33</sup> Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. "Get away from me, Satan!" he said. "You are seeing things merely from a human point of view ["under the sun"], not from God's."

Mark 8:35 (NLT)

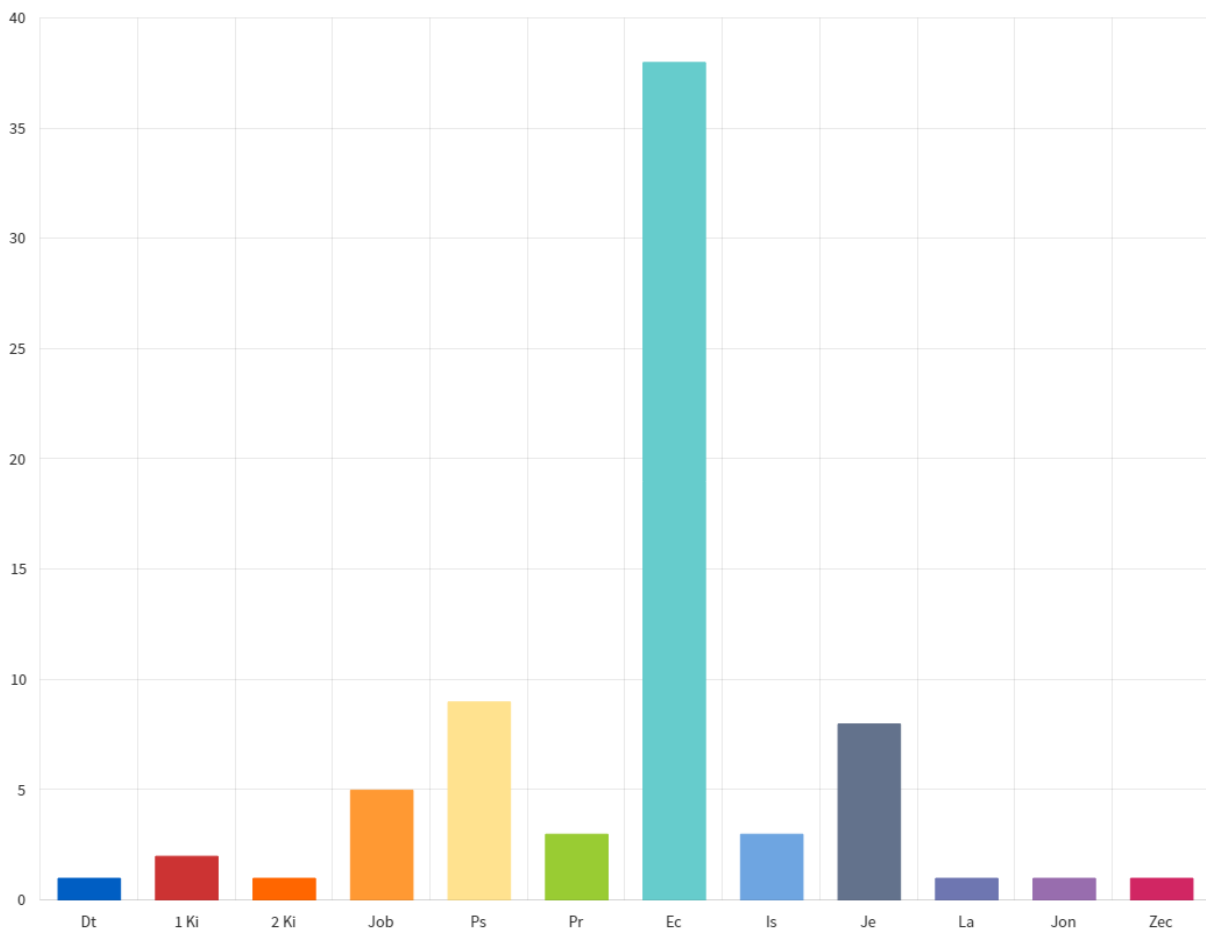
<sup>35</sup> If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.

**Main Idea – Data.**

הֶבֶל [hebel,]

Occurrences

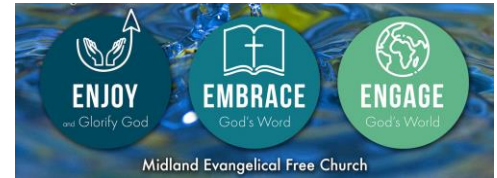
- Dt. (1), 1 Ki.(2), II Ki. (1), Job (5), **Ps. (9)**, Pr. (3), Is. (3), **Je. (8)** La. Jon. Zec (1);
- Eccl (38x's!)



Translations.: *Meaningless* (NIV), *Vanity* (ESV) *Futility* (HCSB), *Absolutely Pointless* (GW),

PSALMIST – Ps. 144:4

Man is like a **breath** הֶבֶל [hebel,];  
 his days are like a **passing Shadow**.



## Keys to Ecclesiastes—

### **Key Word: Vanity**

Looked at “under the sun” (8:17), Life’s pursuits lead only to frustration....The key word is *vanity*, the futile emptiness of trying to make sense out of life apart from God.

Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983), 168.

The perspective of the natural man who only sees life “under the sun,” the conclusion is, “all *is* vanity.” **Life’s every activity**, even though pleasant for the moment, **becomes purposeless and futile when viewed as an end in itself.**

**Key Chapter (12)**—At the end of the Book ... Chapter 12 resolves the book’s extensive inquiry into the meaning of life with the single conclusion, “*Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man*” (12:13).<sup>1</sup>

Only when....views his life from God’s perspective “above the sun” does it take on meaning as a precious gift “from the hand of God” (2:24).

### **Key Verses (2:24; 12:13–14)**—

- “*There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God*” (2:24).
- *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For **God** will bring every work into **judgment**, including every secret thing, whether it is good or whether it is evil”* (12:13–14).

Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983), 170–171.

## Ecclesiastes 1:3 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup>What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

What do you spend most of your time doing?

Do you consider it work?

Is work fulfilling? Why or why not?

What makes it so?



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What continues beyond death?

If, what continues matters most, how then does that arrange our priorities?

What differentiates *living for enjoyment* and *enjoying life*?

Which one does the author of Ecclesiastes commend to us?

Why?

**How does the message of Ecclesiastes fit with our Mission?**

*Hint: Question 1.* What is the chief end of man?

Man's chief end is to glorify God, (1 Cor. 10:31, Rom. 11:36) and to enjoy him forever. (Ps. 73:25–28)<sup>1</sup>

**How does Ecclesiastes enhance our understanding of what it means to “Enjoy God”?**

What are some examples of ways that you can enjoy and glorify God in daily living?

What are some examples of enjoying little things that give glory to the Giver?

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<sup>1</sup> *The Westminster Shorter Catechism: With Scripture Proofs*, 3rd edition. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996).