



# Adult and Teen Life Groups Conferencing Guide

SERMON DATE: 01/21/2018  
DISCUSSION DATE: 01/28/2018  
TEXT: ECCLESIASTES 1:12 - 2:11

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## I. IN SEARCH OF ULTIMATE GAIN – EVALUATING THE PASSIONS WHICH RULE THE HEARTS OF MEN (PART ONE).

### *A. Ultimate Gain is not found through Achievement / Our heart will never be satisfied by accomplishments, v.v. 12-15.*

1. Listen to the King – His position provided him the opportunity to explore this question that none of us will ever have.
2. Listen to the King's conclusions:
  - a) God has given us an unhappy task to perform, v. 13b
  - b) We are all frustrated by our efforts to find meaning in achievements, v. 14.
  - c) There are many problems we cannot solve and much knowledge that we will never obtain, v. 15

### *B. Ultimate Gain is not found through Wisdom / Our hearts will never be satisfied by intelligence, v.v. 16-18.*

1. Listen to the Sage (i.e. the wisest man to ever live) – His wisdom has no equal among men.
2. Listen to the Sage's Conclusions, v.v. 17b-18:
  - a) Wisdom cannot bring satisfaction, we were made to enjoy the gift of life not use life as a means of gain.
  - b) Folly cannot bring satisfaction; we were made to enjoy life as gift from God not as a means of pleasure.
  - c) Increased Wisdom brings increased sorrow with life in a fallen world.

### *C. Ultimate Gain is not found through the pursuit of Pleasure/ temporal things cannot provide meaning or purpose, ch. 2 v.v. 1-11.*

1. Flesh gratifying pleasures are deceptive – it takes Biblical wisdom to avoid their snare.

2. Flesh exalting possessions are deceptive – they make you look good before men but have no value before God.

What does God want us to desire/value?



What does God want us to know?

What does God want us to do?

## ASKING GOD FOR WISDOM TO APPLY HIS WORD TO OUR DAILY

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1. What do the lives of people you know reveal about what they think will make them happy – what they believe is worth living for?
2. What guided Solomon's evaluation of this question? (i.e. what does it mean that "by wisdom he examined all that is done under the sun")
3. What is the burdensome task that God has given to humanity? Why is it a burden?
4. How does this task keep humanity busy? Doing what?
5. Why does great wisdom fail to provide great satisfaction with life? What can't wisdom do?
6. What kind of madness and folly do men devote their lives to pursuing today?
7. How does increased wisdom result in greater sorrow over life in this fallen world?
8. What kind of pleasures did Solomon experience? Can anyone duplicate his efforts or do more than Solomon?
9. In what ways are we still trying to provide Solomon wrong?
10. Did Solomon give himself over to life devoted to fleshly pleasures? If not, what kept him from doing so?
11. What fleshly gratifying pleasures are dominating our culture?
12. What possessions make a person to be envied (i.e. look good to others)? How can owning such possessions be deceptive?
13. What are key indicators that we have believed a lie about what is important in this life and have begun pursuing them?
14. When believers stop spending personal time alone with the Lord, in His Word, what happens to our priorities? What happens when we begin sowing to our flesh?
15. Do we believe that that our hearts will never be satisfied with achievements, wisdom and/or pleasures? How do we know?  
What strategies do people use to avoid the reality of death? Why do we have to live in light of our death in order to know how to live?