

friday

Read Ecclesiastes 12:11–14. What does Solomon say is the most important part of life, when all is said and done?

How are you doing in this area?

How does it make you feel to know that God will judge everything we have done?

How does this correspond to the idea of grace — that we are saved not by our deeds, but by God’s mercy? (Hint: Why would God want to evaluate our deeds, other than just salvation?)

Renew your devotion to God today: Put Him first in your life! Ask Him to help you stay motivated to follow him because of the many gifts He lavishes upon you to enjoy, including salvation — and every other good thing in life!

saturday

Looking back over the One Month to Live series, what would you say are the biggest effects it has had on your life? Go back over your notes from the series, and skim the guidebook if you have it.

Ask God to give you one or two truths from the series to which you can cling as we move on to our Psalms series (“Soul Food”) this weekend! Please pray that God blesses our services.



WEEK 6
living a full life

FEBRUARY 19 & 20, 2011 • RENÉ SCHLAEPPER

Death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart.
Ecclesiastes 7:2 NIV

solomon’s search for meaning

I wanted to see what was good for people to do under the heavens during the few days of their lives. *Ecclesiastes 2:3b NIV*

- _____
I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with **pleasure**” . . . I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly . . . a harem as well — the delights of a man’s heart. I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no **pleasure**. *Ecclesiastes 2:1,3,8,10 NIV*
- _____
I undertook great **projects**: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. *Ecclesiastes 2:4 NIV*
- _____
I also **owned more** herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the **treasure** of kings and provinces. *Ecclesiastes 2:7–8 NIV*
- _____
I became **greater by far** than anyone in Jerusalem before me. *Ecclesiastes 2:9a NIV*

Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind . . .
Ecclesiastes 2:11

1.

So I decided there is nothing better than to **enjoy** food and drink and to find satisfaction in work. . . **these pleasures are from the hand of God.**

Ecclesiastes 2:24 NLT

So go ahead. Eat your food with **joy**, and drink your wine with a **happy** heart, for **God approves of this!** *Ecclesiastes 9:7 NLT*

So I commend the **enjoyment** of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then **joy** will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him. . . *Ecclesiastes 8:15*

So I recommend having fun. . . *Ecclesiastes 8:15a NLT*

However many years anyone may live, let them **enjoy them all.** . .

Ecclesiastes 11:8 NIV

Avoid “_____ and _____” thinking

Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. *Ecclesiastes 4:6*

2.

There is a time for everything, and a **season** for every activity under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV

He has made everything beautiful **in its time.** *Ecclesiastes 3:11a NIV*

Do not say, “**Why were the old days better than these?**” For it is not wise to ask such questions. *Ecclesiastes 7:10 NIV*

The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and **patience** is better than pride. *Ecclesiastes 7:8 NIV*

3.

I know that there is nothing better for people than to **be happy** and to **do good** while they live. *Ecclesiastes 3:12 NIV*

4.

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: **Fear God and keep his commandments**, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing. . .

Ecclesiastes 12:13–14a NIV

[Jesus:] “. . .now one **greater than Solomon** is here.” *Matthew 12:42b NIV*

Jesus answered, “**The work of God is this:** to **believe** in the one he has sent.” *John 6:29 NIV*

monday

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2–9. As this book of the Bible begins, Solomon despairs of ever finding happiness! Have you ever felt this way? When?

In a sense, Jesus answer’s Solomon’s question in Matthew 5:3–12; the word “blessed” in these verses can also be translated “happy.” What does Jesus say in those verses will bring happiness?

How is this different from what Solomon pursued?

What would both Solomon and Jesus say to today’s society? To you?

Thank God specifically for things around you today that can bring you joy.

tuesday

Read Ecclesiastes 2. Do you see people around you trying to find happiness in any of the ways tried here by Solomon? How about you?

What is the result of these pursuits, in your observation?

Why do we still try this stuff when it’s clear from our own experiences and the lives of those around us that these things do not satisfy?

Thank God that He is our satisfier! Ask Him for the gift of enjoying little things.

wednesday

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1–11. How can an understanding of the seasons of life help your frustration level go down and your serenity level go up?

Why is it helpful to see “bad times” as seasons? Give an example from your life.

Why is it helpful to see “good times” as seasons? Give an example.

What good season are you in right now that you need to be enjoying more while it lasts?

thursday

Read Ecclesiastes 3:12–13. Solomon has done it all. What does he say is the best kind of existence?

Is this easy for you to do? Why or why not?

What keeps you from enjoying the “little things” you already have?

Throughout the day today, thank God many times for the “little things” you see and experience that can bring joy!



Better one handful with tranquillity than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. *Ecclesiastes 2:6 NIV*