



SDG Discussion Guide

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

June 3, 2018

For starters:

What is the most important date you ever forgot?

Which are you like at a party: (a) Party animal? (b) Party pooper? (c) Wallflower?

What was your favorite season or time of year growing up? Why? Which is your favorite now?

Interaction with the text: (The following questions are meant to provide points of further interaction with the respective sermon text. Feel free to forward the questions to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday. Group members may also find these questions in print on that Sunday.)

As you can, read aloud the passage in your group. Provided you can, read it aloud a second time but from a different Bible translation (eg, read from the ESV after first reading from the NIV). Before you begin your discussion, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

Now that you have read the text together, what points and questions arose? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these. What else did you notice? Explore and see how God may steer the discussion. The following are further questions for interaction.

1. In the list of opposites (vv 1-8), is the teacher describing what is, or prescribing what one should do? Why do you think so?
2. What is "the burden God has laid on man" (v 10)?
3. What does it mean to "set eternity in the hearts of men" (v 11)?
4. What is the teacher encouraging in verses 12-13?: Self-indulgent pleasure-seeking? Gratitude? Or what?
5. Toward what end does this passage point (vv 14-15)?
6. What is meant by "God will call the past to account" (v 15)?
7. What "time" is it for you now. For your small group? Your church? At what "times" (vv 1-8) do you doubt that God is in control (if ever)?
8. How do you differentiate enjoying yourself from going too far?
9. Does belief in God's sovereignty free you to enjoy life? How so?

Spend some time in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to usher you further into his presence -- where you may have a greater sense for what kind of a season it is for you or your group or both. Sit and be in silence a while. Ask God to provide you perspective regarding time and your life. What is important now and what is not so? What is controllable by you now and what is not? Be blessed and rest easy, knowing that things do move in his good ways... and in his good time.

*These questions were adapted from *The Serendipity Bible for Groups* (Zondervan, 1998).