

# ***Sermon on the Mount, Week 4***

## **Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Oct 4th**

### **OCT 4TH SERMON SUMMARY**

#### **IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE (Ecclesiastes 1-1-30, message by Pastor Gary)**

In Ecclesiastes, Solomon searches for meaning in life and finds futility. But we can turn to the words of Jesus and find meaning.

- **Work** - Eccl 2:11 says hard work doesn't necessarily lead to success; life is more complicated. But in John 4:34, Jesus tells us we meaning in work comes from relating our work to God's Will, serving God's eternal purposes in reaching people.
- **Pleasure** – Eccl. 5:10 says wine, women, money, pleasures don't satisfy; they are never enough. But in John 10:10, Jesus offers fullness of life.
- **People.** Solomon didn't find meaning, but Jesus found it in people. He was preoccupied with people, even on the cross. What's most important in life, what really matters, is people.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**I. INTRODUCTION:** Share briefly something that made you feel blessed this week.

#### **II. THINK AND REFLECT.**

**Read the description of Solomon's success in I Kings 10: 23-25 (below):**

**23** King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. **24** The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. **25** Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift—articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules.

1. If you were Solomon, how would you be feeling about life? What would you like or dislike about living this lifestyle?

**Solomon (the Teacher) begins Ecclesiastes with v. 1-9 (below):**

**2** “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher.  
“Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”  
**3** What do people gain from all their labors at which they toil under the sun?  
**4** Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.  
**5** The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises.  
**6** The wind blows to the south and turns to the north;  
round and round it goes, ever returning on its course.  
**7** All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full.  
To the place the streams come from, there they return again.  
**8** All things are wearisome, more than one can say.  
The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.  
**9** What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again;  
there is nothing new under the sun.

2a. What is the tone of these verses?

b. What is Solomon feeling? Why?

c. Discuss the relationship between Solomon’s wealth and success and his outlook on life.

d. Why doesn’t success always bring happiness? How have you seen this to be true in your life, or in the lives of people you know?

3. Pastor Gary said what’s really important in life is people.

a. Think about the people in your life. Who brings you joy? Share an example.

b. How would Solomon’s outlook be different if he understood this?

4. Think about the past few sermons/discussions in The Sermon on the Mount. How might the teachings of Jesus in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11 (“A Happy and Humble Heart”) relate to the search for meaning in life?

**III. PERSONAL APPLICATION** (Choose 1 of the following if time is limited)

5. Pastor Gary shared this quote. How does it challenge or inspire you to see that people matter and bring meaning to life?

People who give themselves to relational greatness – people who have deep friends whom they laugh with and cry with, with whom they learn together, with whom they fight and forgive, with whom they dance and grow and live and die – these are the human beings who lead magnificent lives, whether or not they are ever noted in society. And when they die, not one of them regrets having devoted themselves to people – to their friends, to their children, to their family – not one.

6. How would you like to see God's eternal purposes in your work or other relationships? Are there people you would like to reach out to or invite to church?

7. How have you felt challenged, convicted, or blessed in the sermon, in your group's discussion, or in your own life, about the importance of people?