



Study Guide for
David Gibson's *Living Life Backwards*

Preface and Chapter 1: Let's Pretend:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. What ultimately provides a true perspective on life? Why? What does Ecclesiastes teach us in light of this perspective on life?
2. What does it mean for life or aspects of it to be described as "vanity of vanities"? How does the brevity of life benefit to us?
3. What's the most important question for us to be asking of our lives as believers?
4. What good comes from life being repetitive? The bad?

5. What are too many people seeking? What are you seeking?

Chapter 2: Bursting the Bubble:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. How does life change when one becomes a Christian? Remain the same?
2. What's the message of Ecclesiastes in a nutshell?
3. What methods and means do you use to console yourself in a fallen world?
4. What does the Preacher mean when he calls us to "eat, drink, and be merry"?
5. How can we take joy in temporal things?

Chapter 3: Doing Time:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. How do the different seasons and/or aspects of your life contribute to God's larger redemptive story?
2. Why is God's judgment of our works in death a good thing for us in this life?
3. How does our finiteness help us to worship God?
4. What do you spend most of your time pursuing and for what purpose?

Chapter 4: Living a Life Less Upwardly Mobile:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:1-16

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. How is your thinking shaping who you are in reality?

2. How does life in community help us live and die well?

3. Whose legacy are we living and dying for?

4. What barriers are you experiencing to community? Legacy?

Chapter 5: Looking Up, Listening In:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. How do we become more human? Grow in a posture of listening rather than just speaking and acting?

2. How important is corporate worship to how we live and die?

3. How should we speak to God?

Chapter 6: Learning to Love the Limitations of Life:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 7:1-25

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. What's the message of Ecclesiastes 7? Which are you more prone to be: an escapist or a theological snob? Why?
2. What is death truly about for the believer? How does it help clarify life?
3. What role should nostalgia play in our lives?
4. What limits of life are you most afraid of or frustrated with?

Chapter 7: From Death to Depth:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:1-12

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. What does Ecclesiastes 9:7 teach us?
2. How does God go about destroying our idolatries?
3. How do we die well? What gives our lives meaning?
4. What gifts has God given you? For what purpose? Are you faithfully using them for this purpose?

Chapter 8: Things to Know When You Don't Know:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. What time orientation is to govern our lives? Why?
2. What role do uncertainties to play in our lives? What are some of your uncertainties?

3. What certainties are shaping your life at current?

4. What does a life fully lived look like? What are you doing to cultivate this kind of life?

Chapter 9: One Foot in the Grave:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. How should the eventual failure of your body affect how you live now?

2. What most brings you joy, happiness, and delight?

3. What most reflects our grasp of the goodness of God?

4. How should we live in light of this world being fallen? What does this say about God as Creator?

Chapter 10: Getting the Point:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. What role do words play in how we live and die?

2. What role does pleasure and pain play in how we live and die?

3. How does Ecclesiastes shape our perspective and prepare us for life and death?