



The Hunt for Happiness

Series: The Search

Main Text: Ecclesiastes 2:1–11; Ecclesiastes 12:1, 13

Introduction

This guide can be used on your own or with a small group to reflect on the weekend message and apply it to your life. Choose the questions that work best for your group—there's no need to go through them all. To learn more, visit silverdalebc.com/smallgroups.

Icebreaker

What's something you were convinced would make life better—but after a while, the excitement wore off?

Leader's Note

Everyone is searching for happiness in one way or another. Solomon had the opportunity to pursue nearly every path imaginable, yet discovered that none of them could satisfy the deepest needs of the human heart. Today's discussion explores where lasting joy is—and isn't—found.\

Point 1: The Path of Pleasure

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:1–3

Discuss

1. Why do you think pleasure is often our first instinct when we're looking for happiness or relief?
2. What is the difference between enjoying God's gifts and depending on them to satisfy your soul?
3. How can we recognize when a good thing has quietly become our greatest pursuit?

Leader's Note

God created us to enjoy many good things, but pleasure makes a poor foundation for lasting joy. Temporary experiences cannot satisfy an eternal soul.

Point 2: The Path of Building Projects

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:4–6

Discuss

1. Why is it easy to believe that accomplishing "one more thing" will finally bring contentment?
2. What achievements are you most tempted to tie your identity to?
3. How can our work and accomplishments become acts of worship rather than sources of worth?

Leader's Note

Work and achievement are gifts from God, but they cannot provide the identity only God can give. Our value comes from belonging to Him, not from what we build.

Point 3: The Path of Accumulating Stuff

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:7–8

Discuss

1. Have you ever found yourself chasing the "next purchase" or financial milestone? What did you learn?
2. What are some practical ways to cultivate contentment in a culture that constantly encourages us to want more?

Leader's Note

Possessions can make life more comfortable, but they cannot make life meaningful. Contentment grows when our hearts are anchored in God's provision rather than in acquiring more.

Point 4: The Path of Being Entertained

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:8

Discuss

1. What role does entertainment play in helping you rest? When can it become an unhealthy escape?
2. How do you know when distraction has replaced genuine renewal?
3. What habits help you find true refreshment in Christ rather than simply staying busy or entertained?

Leader's Note

Entertainment can provide needed recreation, but it cannot provide lasting peace. Jesus invites us to find rest that reaches deeper than temporary distraction.

Point 5: The Path of Sexual Hedonism

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:8

Discuss

1. What messages does our culture communicate about where love and fulfillment are found?
2. Why is it dangerous to expect another person to satisfy needs that only God can meet?
3. How can believers encourage one another to pursue purity, healthy relationships, and Christ-centered contentment?

Leader's Note

God designed sexuality as a good gift within His design for marriage. When we look to sex or relationships to complete us, we place expectations on people that only Christ can fulfill.

Point 6: The Path of Popularity

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:9–11

Discuss

1. In what ways are people tempted to seek approval or recognition today?
2. How does seeking God's approval change the way we respond to praise or criticism?
3. What practical step could help you find your identity in Christ instead of in the opinions of others?

Leader's Note

Recognition is fleeting, but our identity in Christ is secure. The more we rest in God's acceptance, the less we depend on the approval of others.

The Solution for the Search

1: We Are Created with a God Shaped Void

Key Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:11

Discuss

1. What do you think it means that God has "set eternity in every human heart"?
2. What practices help keep your heart centered on your relationship with God?

Leader's Note

The emptiness Solomon describes is not evidence that something is wrong with us—it is evidence that we were created for God. Our deepest longing points us back to our Creator.

2: We Replace the Creator with Creation

Key Scripture: Romans 1:25

Discuss

1. What "good things" are most likely to become ultimate things in your life?
2. How can we regularly examine our hearts to make sure Christ remains first?

Leader's Note

Idolatry rarely begins with rejecting God outright. More often, it begins when we slowly allow God's gifts to take God's place in our hearts.

3: The Answer to Our Search Is Christ

Key Scripture: John 4:14; Matthew 11:28; John 6:35

Discuss

1. How has your relationship with Christ brought lasting joy that circumstances could not?
2. What is one practical way you can pursue Christ this week instead of chasing temporary satisfaction?

Leader's Note

Every path Solomon explored ultimately pointed beyond itself. Jesus alone offers the lasting satisfaction, rest, and relationship our hearts were created to enjoy.

Closing Prayer

Thank God for creating you with a purpose and for providing true life through Jesus Christ. Ask Him to reveal any pursuits that have taken His place in your heart, and pray for the grace to find your deepest joy and satisfaction in Him alone. Close by praying over any personal needs or requests shared by the group.