

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, August 21, 2005

Passage: Ecclesiastes 10

Memory Passage: Ephesians 5:17

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:3.** How is wisdom to be valued? How does it help in difficult situations? Why is wisdom better than strength?
- (b) Compare Ecclesiastes 9:18 and 10:1. How does a little sin or a little folly affect wisdom? Is this true? Give an example.
- (c) What *makes* a person wise or foolish according to 10:2? Compare this with Matthew 12:33-34. What *shows* a person's foolishness according to Ecclesiastes 10:3?
- (d) Read Matthew 15:1-20. What issue upset the Pharisees? What was the greater issue that Jesus brought up? How does our heart affect our worship (verse 8)? How does our heart affect our holiness (verses 17-20)?
- (e) What did Solomon tell us in Proverbs 4:23? How can we do this (Proverbs 4:20-27)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Ecclesiastes 9:18-10:3. Talk about the value of wisdom and how we gain wisdom. Is it okay to be "a little foolish?" What happens when we do this? How can we avoid this (Proverbs 4:20-27)? Pray that each will guard his heart from foolishness by following God's Word.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Ecclesiastes 10:4-7.** What is the situation that Solomon pictures in verse 4?
- (b) Read Proverbs 16:14, 25:15 and 15:1. What encouragement do these passages give us in the face of situations similar to Ecclesiastes 10:4? How does God's sovereign control in such situations give us encouragement (Proverbs 21:1)?
- (c) What is the problem in Ecclesiastes 10:5-7 (also see Proverbs 19:10; 28:12 and 30:21-22)? What happens when rulers rule with folly rather than wisdom?
- (d) Read Acts 6:3. What kinds of men were appointed in the early church? How is this to be measured? Consider James 3:17-18. What happens when churches choose leaders based on giftedness rather than on this kind of wisdom? How can this be avoided?
- (e) What kind of leaders does God desire for His church (1 Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:17-18)? How are these types of leaders the opposite of those Solomon is describing?
- (f) *Family:* Read Ecclesiastes 10:4 and Proverbs 15:1. Discuss what to do when someone is angry at you. Talk about some specific situations where dealing with someone's anger was difficult. How can our confidence in God protect us from making wrong choices when someone is angry at us? Pray that God would give you a gentle, patient spirit when dealing with difficult people and situations.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Ecclesiastes 10:8-10.** What is the common reason for the problems mentioned in these verses? How are they connected to wisdom and foolishness?
- (b) Consider these similar passages: Psalm 15:15-16; 9:15-16; 10:2; 57:6; Proverbs 26:27; 28:10. What do these tell us about the *reasons* for these events?
- (c) Read Amos 5:18-20. How does this passage use the picture of the serpent breaking through and biting?
- (d) Compare this to Amos 9:2, Isaiah 24:17-18 and Jeremiah 48:44. What do they tell us about God's *judgment* (Numbers 32:23; Galatians 6:7-8; Psalm 73:12-18)? Does this kind of judgment also come to believers (1 Corinthians 11:29-31)?
- (e) What is God's attitude toward those who ignore His wisdom (James 4:5; 1 Peter 5:5)? How is humility before God's Word *wisdom*? How is pride in light of God's Word *foolishness*?
- (f) *Family:* Read Ecclesiastes 10:8-10 and talk together about the pictures (situations) that Solomon is presenting. What is the main lesson from these verses? How are they related to wisdom and foolishness? What do they teach us about the judgment of God? Pray for someone who is not following God's ways and wisdom. Pray that they might repent before God's judgment comes upon them.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Ecclesiastes 10:11-15.** What is emphasized in these verses? What key words are repeated throughout this section?
- (b) Read Psalm 58:1-5. To what is the serpent compared in these verses? What effect does the charmer have?
- (c) How does Solomon contrast the words of the wise with those of the fool (Ecclesiastes 10:12; Proverbs 15:2; 29:11)? What is one characteristic of wise conversation? Compare this with Ephesians 4:29 and Colossians 4:6.
- (d) In Ecclesiastes 10:14-15, what is another common characteristic of the "fool?" What does James 4:13-16 tell us about this? What additional caution does Proverbs 10:19 give?
- (e) *Family:* Read Ecclesiastes 10:11-15. Discuss the importance of our words (Proverbs 12:15; 15:23; 25:11) and the importance of learning to be humble in our speech. Pray together that your speech may honor God this week.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read Ecclesiastes 10:16-19.** What is the problem with a king as a child? What problem occurs when “princes feast *in the morning*?”
- (b) Why does God sometimes allow this (Isaiah 3:1-5)? How is this similar to what we learned from the passages in Day 3?
- (c) Why is maturity important in leadership? Is age a guarantee of maturity? What brings maturity (Hebrews 5:11-14; Psalm 119:97-100)?
- (d) What attitudes and actions described in Ecclesiastes 10:19 will destroy good leadership? How are these warned against in 1 Timothy 3:3, 8?
- (e) Read Ecclesiastes 10:20. Should we honor government that is foolish? What caution does this verse give us? How should believers respect government (Romans 13:1-5; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Exodus 22:28)? Why?
- (f) *Family:* Read Ecclesiastes 10:16-20 and 1 Peter 2:13-17. Discuss the importance of having wise and mature leaders in government? What should be our response when leaders of our country are not wise? Pray together for our country and for its leaders.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. How is wisdom better than strength and even better than the weapons of warfare (Ecclesiastes 9:16, 18)? Discuss the effect that even a small sin has in destroying wisdom (9:18 and 10:1). Why is living by God’s wisdom so important for our lives? Pray for your church services tomorrow that many will hear and apply the Word of God to their lives.

DATE: August 21, 2005

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Living Wisely – In Every Situation!

“Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”