

100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

SESSION 2 — THE EMPTINESS OF PLEASURE (ECCLESIASTES 2:1-11)

INTRODUCTION

In the first half of this book, Solomon’s goal is to convince us that life merely lived “under the sun” is _____. One of the many proofs he uses to convince us is found in Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. There he teaches us that the vanity of life merely lived “under the sun” is clearly illustrated by the _____ of pleasure.

THE _____ : THE EXPLORATION OF PLEASURE (vv. 1-10a)

1. _____ (v. 2)

2. _____ (v. 3a)

3. _____ (v. 3b)

4. _____ (v. 4-8b)

He didn’t _____ any of these possessions.

He didn’t _____ accumulating possessions.

So, if possessions didn’t fulfill him, they won’t fulfill anyone.

a. _____ (v. 4)

b. _____ (vv. 5-6)

c. _____ (v. 7a)

d. _____ (v. 7b)

e. _____ (v. 8a)

f. _____ (v. 8b)

5. _____ (v. 8c)

So, when it comes to seeking pleasure, Solomon's been there, done that (cf. vv. 9-10). He walked the entire path "under the sun" to see if it really could deliver on satisfying him in a lasting and ultimate sense. What did he discover?

THE TEST _____ : THE EMPTINESS OF PLEASURE (vv. 10b-11)

After detailing his exploration of pleasure, Solomon offers his perspective in verses 10-11—in a nutshell, he found that pleasure was ultimately _____, unable to satisfy him deeply. He wants all his readers to read his test results, which he clearly records—on the one hand, the pursuit of pleasure had to a small degree made him happy; on the other hand, it had left him empty. Like an ignorant little child who chases the wind, Solomon had run after fulfillment and returned grasping _____.

CONCLUSION

The pursuit of pleasure is nothing new. God has wired into the very fiber of our being a _____ to be satisfied and fulfilled (Ecclesiastes 3:11). And He also provided the solution in _____ (cf. Genesis 3:8). Psalm 16:11 promises us, not momentary satisfaction, but eternal fulfillment—"In Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (cf. Jeremiah 2:13; Psalm 73:25-26; Lamentations 3:21, 24-25).

And today, God offers us the realization that escaped Solomon for so long—_____ pleasure in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Earthly pleasure is empty, but eternal pleasure is found in _____!

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP (*resource: singlefocusindy.org/ecclesiastes)*

Thoughtfully read through and answer the following questions:

- Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 — In what areas of life does Solomon admit that he searched for satisfaction?

Notice that Solomon admits that in his search for pleasure (v. 1), he found pleasure (v. v. 10); but he realized that he was actually wanting more than pleasure — he wanted satisfaction, and that still alluded him (v. 11). Why is pleasure satisfying for some and not for others (cf. 2:24-26; 3:13; 5:18-20; 6:2)?

What are some “self-indulgent pleasures” (i.e., idols) that you are tempted to look to for ultimate fulfillment and meaning?

- Read Psalm 16:11; Jeremiah 2:13; Psalm 73:25-26; Lamentations 3:21, 24-25 — What do these verses say about the source of lasting satisfaction?

What do these verses say about the things you listed above that you’ve been trusting in for satisfaction?

- Read Psalm 103; Ephesians 1:3-14 — What are some ways in which God can truly satisfy us?

Pray for God to forgive your idolatry (i.e., seeking satisfaction in something/someone other than Him) and to help you seek Him alone.