

**100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEED**

**SESSION 1 — THE SEARCH FOR SATISFACTION: THE DISAPPOINTMENT  
OF THE HOLLOW CHOCOLATE EASTER BUNNY (ECCLESIASTES OVERVIEW)**

**INTRODUCTION**

In a nutshell, the message of Ecclesiastes is discovered in the second verse—“Vanity of vanities; all is \_\_\_\_\_”! Yet, throughout this book, we learn that although life sometimes seems to have little or no meaning, Solomon concludes that it is because of a misdirected \_\_\_\_\_. See, God has “put eternity into man’s heart” (Ecclesiastes 3:11), and so only the eternal \_\_\_\_\_ can satisfy the eternal longing that has been programmed into the very fiber of our being.

**THE SEARCH FOR SATISFACTION**

Solomon’s purpose is clear—he seeks to demonstrate that there are \_\_\_\_\_ ways to live: “under the sun” or in “the fear of God.”

**1. Life “under the sun” (first half of the book)**

This path is made up of the ceaseless cycle of existence (1:1-11), the \_\_\_\_\_ of pleasure (2:1-11), the limitations of wisdom (1:12-18; 2:12-17), the frustrations of labor (2:18-26), the elusiveness of life (3:1-15), the bitterness of misfortune (3:16-4:16), the disappointment of \_\_\_\_\_ (5:8-20), and the frailness of being human (6:1-12).

Solomon describes the path “under the sun” or “under heaven” with these words: “vanity,” “no advantage,” and like someone who is foolishly “striving after \_\_\_\_\_,” hoping to catch it in his hand.

## 2. Life “in the fear of God” (second half of the book)

Solomon understands the mysterious nature of life, and to help us follow it’s twisted plot, he recommends this way to live—“the fear of God.”

“The fear of God” is a simple blend of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_—wisdom that recognizes the existence of God and our accountability to Him, and righteousness in the way we live our lives before Him. Cf. 3:14; 5:1-7; 8:12-13; 9:1; 11:9; 12:1, 13-14

### THE SOURCE OF SATISFACTION

Solomon’s purpose in Ecclesiastes was less to be light and more to make the darkness intolerable. However, it very clearly does point to the light, which the New Testament unveils in brilliant clarity. Read Romans 9:20-24a. See, the purpose of futility/vanity is to point people to \_\_\_\_\_ beyond the seeming meaninglessness of earthly life “under the sun”—to point people “\_\_\_\_\_ the sun” to the eternal salvation through \_\_\_\_\_. The vanity here is meant to make us look up—to Jesus!

Jesus is “the way” that leads to meaning, satisfaction, and life (John 14:6)! He is the One who came so that we might “have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10)!

### CONCLUSION

So, is life really worth living? Well, it depends on how you live it. There are only two ways to live—life “under the sun” and life “in the fear of God.” What a privilege we have to read the black and white book of Ecclesiastes with our eyes focused on the color, the fulfillment, the goal—\_\_\_\_\_!

## **PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP (*resource: [singlefocusindy.org/ecclesiastes](http://singlefocusindy.org/ecclesiastes))***

Psalms 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, and Proverbs 9:10 all offer us the same instruction—“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Wisdom is “skillful living” or the God-given ability to navigate the frustrations and mysteries of life in a beneficial way. These verses are saying that if you don’t “fear God,” you won’t have “wisdom,” because the “fear of the Lord is the beginning [or starting point] of wisdom.” Thoughtfully read through and answer the following questions:

- Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-5 — What changes do you need to make in the way you view God and interact with God, if you want to “fear God” (v. 7)?
- Read Ecclesiastes 12:1, 13 — According to these verses, “fearing God” involves two responses: (1) remembering God and (2) obeying God. How can you actively work to “remember God” in your daily life?

In what areas are you failing to “obey God”?

- Read Ecclesiastes 8:12-13 — What promise does it give to those who “fear God” and to those who do not “fear God”?
- Read Ecclesiastes 11:9; 12:14 — What motivation is given for us to “fear God”?

Pray for God to forgive your lack of “fear” before Him and to help you respond in the ways you mentioned above so that you do “fear Him.”