



the reality of better

Ecclesiastes 7

This discussion guide includes preparation BEFORE the group and some guidance DURING the group meeting. Preparation before the group will help you, your leader, and your group to engage and respond to the living and active Word of God.

PREPARATION BEFORE THE GROUP MEETS:

The aim of this preparation is to encourage good & prayerful observation of the text of God's word and the joyful experience of discovering its truth.

Pray & read Ecclesiastes 7

What are the two most striking things in this reading?

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What puzzles you the most in this reading?

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How does this reading make you **feel**?

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What do you **think** in response to this reading?

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What will you **do** in response to this reading?

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WHEN THE GROUP MEETS: Pray for your discussion time

Fill out this table:

	Good	Better	Best
Things I have			
Things I do			
Things I am			

Discuss why you rated the things the way you did. What measure do you use?

read Ecclesiastes 7.1-12 – [check to see if anyone had a stand-out or something puzzling from this section]

▸ verses 1-10 seem to revolve around death and how it gives perspective on the things of life that are ‘better than’. Would you change anything in your table above if this formed your obituary/eulogy?

▸ Do you value wisdom as much as the Teacher does in verses 11 & 12? What might this say about how you live?

read Ecclesiastes 7.13-18 [check to see if anyone had a stand-out or something puzzling from this section]

▸ If we are not in control where might we turn for true wisdom? (vv13-14)

▸ Give some examples of what you think the Teacher might mean by *over-righteous* and *over-wicked*. Is it better not to go to extremes? Who sets the standards? (vv15-18)

read Ecclesiastes 7.19-8.1 [check to see if anyone had a stand-out or something puzzling from this section]

▸ There are some difficult details in this reading but the big idea seems to be: ‘wisdom is best, but everyone seeks wisdom in unprofitable schemes’. Reflect again on your table and discuss if/how this betrays the fact that you have in fact *gone in search of many schemes*’ (v29).

read 1 Corinthians 1.18-31

▸ Everyone share one thing that stood out from this reading [make special note of anything here that completes or even contrasts with the teaching of Ecclesiastes]:

▸ Fill out the table again with a rating and measure shaped by the wisdom of God:

	Good	Better	Best
Things I have			
Things I do			
Things I am			

PRAYER time! Take time to thank God for his wisdom revealed in Jesus. Say sorry for going in search of many schemes and vain boasting about the temporary, fleeting, elusive things of this world. Ask God to continue to help you embrace and live out his wisdom, and to turn your boasting into boasting in the Lord.