



Enjoying the Enjoyable

Open it

1. What is your favorite possession? What makes it enjoyable to you?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read Ecclesiastes 6:1–12.

2. What is the “evil that lies heavy on mankind” that Solomon talks about?
3. Where does the ability to enjoy things come from?
4. How does Solomon describe the appetite of the person who constantly works to build wealth?
5. How does Solomon describe how our lives pass by?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Boredom

Read Ecclesiastes 6:1–6.

It was quiet. I finally had the moment I had been wanting for a while. The kids went to bed early. My wife was out with her mom and sisters. I had the whole evening to just do whatever I wanted. “What should I do first?” I thought to myself. I grabbed my Xbox controller, pressed the power button, and fired up some Madden. Ten minutes later : “I don’t feel like playing anymore.” I turned on “The Show” and played about two innings of baseball until, “I don’t feel like playing anymore.” Maybe I’ll read *Lord of the Rings*! Nah. Watch a movie! Nah. Any TV shows I wanna watch? Nah. Clean? Super nah.

I had everything I’d been wanting for so long: peace, quiet, opportunity, freedom. And yet in the midst of all that, I didn’t “feel” like doing anything. I was bored.

Solomon tells us about a man (maybe himself?) who, like me in that moment, had everything he could desire —wealth, possessions, honor, not lacking in any of his desires—and yet he was bored. He wasn’t able to enjoy the blessing of each of those things because God hadn’t given him the power to do so.

It got me thinking about my own situation and how desperately I had longed for just a little “me” time to not worry about crying toddlers, that I could just do whatever I wanted to do. And then when I got it, it totally fell short of what I had expected it to be! I wonder if God was teaching me something about life—that true happiness and satisfaction isn’t found in experiences or entertainment, but that if we’re going to enjoy anything about life, that enjoyment comes as a gift from God.

I felt so frustrated not being “happy” in the midst of the moment I had desired for so long. How hopeless and frustrating must it feel to have all your heart could desire and still be ... bored?

6. Can you relate to my situation that I talked about or with Solomon’s “man” that he talks about? Describe a time or possession or person that you had but weren’t able to really enjoy. What kept you from enjoying it?

7. What do you think about Solomon’s statement in Ecclesiastes 6:2, that God hadn’t given this man the power to enjoy those blessings? Do you think it’s possible to enjoy things apart from God?

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Thanksgiving Sandwich

Read Ecclesiastes 6:7–9.

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays, probably because sometimes my birthday falls on Thanksgiving Day, and I like to think the whole country is being thankful for me that year. Silly, I know. But seriously, Thanksgiving is great. Lots of good food: turkey (when it isn't dry), mashed potatoes with delish gravy, stuffing (the bomb), homemade rolls, scalloped corn, not to mention all the desserts! The worst part about it is there always comes a point where you are stuffed, sometimes so stuffed you start to feel sick. There's still so much to enjoy but you just can't do it. Until later. That's when my brother "invented" (someone else probably has too) the Thanksgiving Sandwich—two pieces of bread and in between, ALL the Thanksgiving fixings. It's a Thanksgiving meal in sandwich form! Sounds kind of sickening talking about it right now....

Despite being so full, there always comes a point again where we all say, "Ehh, I could eat." Despite filling up on these great feasts, our appetites are never eternally satisfied. The "appetites" of our heart are kind of the same way. We may feel full from time to time, but there always comes a time when we gotta go back for leftovers.

And round and round this process goes until one day we die. (Dark, I know.) What does this "life under the sun" offer that will really, truly satisfy us? Is there anything at all?

8. Last time I checked, when you die, none of your stuff is going with you. Does this change the way you think about your stuff now?

9. How do the appetites of our hearts always leave us wanting more?

10. Do you *really* believe that Jesus can satisfy those appetites? How can He satisfy them?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Outmatched

Read Ecclesiastes 6:10–12.

No one likes getting put in their place. You know, when you go up against someone who is bigger, stronger, smarter, all around “better” than you, and you just get shown up. It’s pretty humbling all around.

Solomon tells us in these verses that humanity is outmatched. He doesn’t go into much detail as to who it is who outmatches us, but mainly that there is something within us that just knows—knows that we aren’t the biggest, baddest thing in town.

You’ve probably seen pictures of the kid trying to push a sumo wrestler? Or someone trying to fight a person so much bigger than they that they can just put their hand on their forehead and they can’t reach to fight back.

That’s kind of how it is with us. We are no match for the One who is stronger than we are because there’s no amount of reasoning or arguing that will make our case. Our days are short in view of eternity, and we can’t know or control what tomorrow will bring. What power do we really have? We’re like that kid trying to fight the sumo wrestler—we’re just not even in the same class!



11. Have you ever felt like life was out of your control? What made you feel that way?

12. What good is there for us to “know our place” in the hierarchy of life?