

## Introduction

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Welcome to a new session of Life Groups! Maybe you are reconnecting with your group from last session or maybe this is your first time in a group. Either way, we hope this time of connecting with others and discussing the scriptures is enriching to your life and encourages you to reach out in love to others.

To get a good idea of the message of Ecclesiastes, you might want to read the first 3 chapters if you have time. Then focus on the passages and questions below. We suggest you work through these questions on your own before meeting with your group. We believe God will use this time to continue His work in your life.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. If you are in a group that is reconnecting from the previous session, we suggest you take some time to talk about the happenings in your lives since you last met.

**What were the holidays like for you/your family?**

**What are 3 things that have happened in your life since your group last met?**

**What is one thing you are hopeful for this year?**

2. If you are in a group that has just formed, here's a suggestion you can use to help your group get to know each other. These are called the "H" questions (as suggested by Cynthia Workman):

**Hello** - Tell us a little bit about yourself.

**History** - What brought you to LBC/Life Group?

**Hobby** - What do you enjoy doing?

**Happy** - What is a place, activity or person that is your happy place?

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For openness to what you're learning together
    - c. For friendships to deepen and grow
  - 2) Invite someone to read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 to the group.
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## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

Please complete these questions before your group meets.

- 1) **First, some background and thoughts on Ecclesiastes.** (Invite someone to read this to the group). We do not know for sure who the author of Ecclesiastes was, but the book was most likely written after the exile of Israel. Ecclesiastes stands within the wisdom tradition of ancient Israel and like Proverbs we find within its writings a concern that wisdom should be passed on so that it can be lived out! Also, like Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is anxious to remind its readers that “the fear of the Lord” is the foundation of true wisdom and knowledge.

It is best to be frank from the outset. Ecclesiastes is a difficult book. It can be rather unsettling, and the passages require some wrestling. Yet we can be assured that the truth contained within its verses will be a truth that sets us free. Above all, we are encouraged to encounter Ecclesiastes with openness—openness to God and openness to change. (Excerpted and adapted from *The NIV Application Commentary, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*)

### **How comfortable are you with change?**

- 1-Nothing should ever change
- 2-I’m okay with a few things changing
- 3-To change or not to change, it makes no difference to me
- 4-I don’t mind change
- 5-Let the changes begin!

**Explain why you chose your answer.**

**Is there anything you are sensing God might be wanting to change in your life this year? Would you be willing to share this with your group?**

- 2) **As you listened to the sermon this past weekend, what is something that the Holy Spirit was bringing to your mind?**
- 3) In Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 we read about the idea of two being better than one because they can help each other along the journey of life. The writer gives the pictures of having someone to lift you up

when you fall, keeping warm together and the idea of two being stronger than one and able to resist being overpowered together.

**When was a time in your life that you had companions help you through something difficult?**

**During the times in your life when you have felt alone, how might it have helped to have a Godly companion along the way?**

As you think about this Life Group and the idea of being better together:

**What are you hoping to offer to this group?**

**What are you hoping to receive from this group?**

- 4) Invite someone to read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. **How do these verses relate to Josh's message from last weekend and this group?**

Related to these verses, our world is information rich, yet relationally isolated. It can be very easy for us to know about people, but not actually really know them. It is possible to be around people much of the time and still feel alone. **Can you share a time when this concept played out in your life over the past year?**

Josh started his message with this question, "Who would you call at 3 AM?" **How would you respond to that question, who would you call at your lowest moment?**

If you don't have anyone like this in your life, what is a step you can take to find companions that are willing to share each other's burdens?

### Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus?

A significant part of "coming together" is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say "Amen" aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

If you would like to learn more about opportunities to witness or participate in God's kingdom in Lincoln and around the world, contact [outreach@lincolnberean.org](mailto:outreach@lincolnberean.org) or checkout this Facebook Group: [www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal](https://www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal)

