BIBLE STUDY

What is the point? This doesn’t make any sense! Why am I here? What is the meaning of life? Do I have purpose? Most people wrestle with these thoughts at some point; even wise King Solomon did. Thoughts like these are recorded in the Bible—in the Book of Ecclesiastes.

God made Solomon a wise king. He ruled over Israel for over 40 years. He wrote wise sayings in the Book of Proverbs and was respected by other kings and queens. Though Solomon was considered to be “wiser than anyone else in the world” (1 Kings 4:30-31), he pondered a key question: What is the meaning of life?

The first chapter of Ecclesiastes describes the futility or vanity of life. The author declares that “everything is futile” (Eccl. 1:2) and makes observations about life: generations come and go, the sun sets and rises and sets again, the wind blows around and around, and streams flow without ceasing. (See Eccl. 1:4-7.)

But why? Apart from God, what purpose do people have? While kids may not spend much time considering deep, philosophical thoughts, use Ecclesiastes to build a foundation that will last into adulthood. Point them to God as Creator. God created everything for His glory, and He gives everything a purpose through His Son.

Jesus said, “A thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance” (John 10:10). Ultimately, purpose and hope is found in Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again. The reality of the gospel makes life worthwhile. It answers the foundational questions about life. In Jesus, we find purpose in this life and look forward to eternal life with Him.

SUGGESTED THEME DECORATING IDEAS:

Simulate a study or library. Set up a desk or table at the front of the room. Arrange several stacks of books and a lamp on the table. Consider hanging maps or Bible book posters on the wall. Position a large desk chair behind the table.
Session Title: Solomon Thought About Life

Bible Passage: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Main Point: Life has purpose only with God.

Key Passage: Yahweh is good, and His love is eternal; His faithfulness endures through all generations. Psalm 100:5

Big Picture Question: Why can we trust God? Everything God does is for His glory and our good.

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**KEY PASSAGE SONG**

Play the Key Passage song as your kids arrive.

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**WORSHIP**

Worship leaders sing two songs with the children and collect offering.

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**INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 MINUTES)**

Leader • I knew it. I knew it! Another day, another question answered. Another theory confirmed. Another mystery solved. Boy, is it satisfying to uncover the truth! Hi, everyone! Great to see you.

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Professor [your name]. I have been doing a lot of thinking lately, and that led to a lot of questions.

So let me ask you this: What is the meaning of life? [Allow kids to respond.] Those are some good thoughts. Today we are going to see what the Bible has to say about the meaning of life. Let’s get started.

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**GIANT TIMELINE (1 MINUTE)**

Leader • Our timeline shows us how all the stories of the Bible fit together to tell one big story; it’s all about Jesus! [Point to previous stories.]

Remember, we are learning about stories from the Old Testament. We heard how God’s people, the Israelites, were in the promised land. God gave them people to lead them. He gave them kings. David was the king of Israel, and when he died, his son Solomon became king. Solomon was a wise king, but that doesn’t mean he knew everything.

[Point to today’s Bible story.] Our Bible story today is called “Solomon Thought About Life.” You know, I bet when Solomon thought about life, he had a lot of questions. Let’s find out more.

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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION (2 MINUTES)**

Leader • Even when we don’t understand why something is happening, we can trust that God has a purpose for it. Why can we trust God? Everything God does is for His glory and our good. That is our big picture question and answer. Will you say it with me? Why can we trust God? Everything God does is for His glory and our good.
TELL THE WATCH THE BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)
Open your Bible to Ecclesiastes 1:1-11. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video “Solomon Thought About Life.”

OPTIONAL BIBLE STORY SCRIPT

Solomon Thought About Life
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Solomon was the king of Israel, and he was very wise. God gave Solomon wisdom, and Solomon shared his wisdom with others. He made wise choices and spent a lot of time thinking about life. Sometimes Solomon thought that life did not make sense.

Solomon wrote down his thoughts about life, and we can read them in the Book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon thought about what life would be like if God did not exist. These are some of the words King Solomon wrote.

“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Apart from God, everything is meaningless. Nothing has meaning.

“People work so hard on earth, but what do they get? Apart from God, does anyone have anything to show for their hard work? People are born, and then they die. The world is still the same.” Everything is temporary; nothing lasts forever.

“The sun comes up and goes down. It comes up again, and then goes down again—right back to where it started. The wind blows to the south, and then to the north. The wind blows around and around. All of the rivers flow into the ocean, but the ocean never gets full. So the rivers keep flowing.” There is always more work to do.

“Apart from God, everything is so tiring. We have nothing to say, and our eyes and ears can never see or hear enough. We keep looking and we keep listening, but we are not satisfied.” Only God truly satisfies.

“If something happens, it has happened before. If something has been done, it will be done again. Apart from God, nothing on earth is new. There is nothing new under the sun. No one can say, ‘Look! This is new!’ because it was already there, before we were even born.

“Apart from God, no one remembers the people who were born long ago. And even the people who haven’t been born yet will not be remembered by the people who are born after them. They will be forgotten too.”

Solomon thought about all of these things and he said, “God knows everything and will judge the good and the bad. Respect and obey God.” This is what life is all about.

Christ Connection: Apart from God, life does not make sense. God created everything, and He gives everything a purpose. Jesus gives us purpose for living. Jesus came so that we might live for Him and have full, meaningful life. (John 10:10)

TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY (1 MINUTE)
Leader • Solomon thought a lot about life! Let’s see what you remember from the story. I need one volunteer.
Choose a volunteer to come to the front of the room. Give the volunteer a Bible and instruct her to turn to the Book of Ecclesiastes.
Leader • Solomon was a wise king, and he noticed how people lived. [Instruct the volunteer to read aloud Ecclesiastes 1:2.] How did Solomon describe life? (futile, meaningless; Eccl. 1:2)
Solomon saw that people were born, they worked hard, and then they died. In nature, the sun came up and then it went down. The wind blows around and around. What for? [Instruct the volunteer to read Ecclesiastes 1:8.]
Solomon saw that people were not really happy in life. Something seemed to be missing. Apart from God, life seemed meaningless.
God is the Creator. He made the world and everything in it. He made us. God created everything for His glory, and He gives everything a purpose through His Son. God created us to know Him, glorify Him, and enjoy Him forever.

Thank the volunteer and guide her to have a seat.

Leader • Because God exists, life has meaning and purpose. **Life has purpose only with God.** Apart from God, life does not make sense. God created everything, and He gives everything a purpose. Jesus gives us purpose for living. The Bible says that Jesus came so that we might live for Him and have full, meaningful life. [See John 10:10.]

**KEY PASSAGE (4 MINUTES)**

Show the slide or poster of the key passage, Psalm 100:5. Lead the boys and girls to read the verse. Explain some of the key words:

- Yahweh—the Hebrew name for the LORD
- eternal—does not change, without beginning or end
- faithfulness—loyalty, trustworthiness
- endures—lasts
- generations—the time between when a man is born and his child is born and his grandchildren are born

Leader • Psalm 100 is a psalm of thanksgiving. We can thank God because He is good. His love lasts forever, and we can trust Him forever and ever. Guide kids to read the key passage again.

**SALVATION MESSAGE**

**PRAYER**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

Leader • Lord God, we come to You aware of the consequences of our own sin. We can hear Solomon’s story and think he was foolish to turn from You, but we know that we are just like him. We are all sinners who had turned from You. Thank You for not leaving us in our sin. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to rescue us and give us eternal life. We love You, God. Amen.

**DISMISS TO SMALL GROUP**
Welcome time
Greet each kid as he or she arrives and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, invite them to find a spot on the floor and work a puzzle. (Before kids arrive, take one piece out of each puzzle and hide it off to the side.)
Say • How did it feel trying to put the puzzle together without all of the pieces? Just like each piece of a puzzle serves a purpose, life has purpose only with God.

SESSION STARTER (10 MINUTES)
Option 1: Forever bubbles
Ask children to stand and spread out in front of you. Explain to them that you are going to blow some bubbles. Their job is to catch a bubble and try to make it last until you are done blowing bubbles. After several minutes of children trying to catch and keep bubbles, discuss this experience with the kids.
Say • Was it easy or hard to catch and keep a bubble for a long time? Just like bubbles don’t last forever, the things of this earth do not last forever. They might be fun and special, but they cannot give our lives purpose. King Solomon thought about things like this. After much thinking he knew that, without God, life just didn’t make sense.

Transition to large group
10 minutes after the start of service

Transition to small group
Break into groups of 10 or less children for Small group

Small group time
THE GOSPEL: GOD’S PLAN FOR ME (SALVATION MESSAGE)
Use Scripture and the guide provided in the classroom to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions. If this is not possible, encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, leader, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.
Allow time for kids to fill out the salvation cards.
ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 MINUTES)
Option 2: Many varied or unusual uses
Form three teams of kids. Give each team a different tool or kitchen gadget, a piece of paper, and a
writing utensil. Invite them to list as many varied and unusual ways to use their object as they can in
five minutes.

When time is up, invite the teams to share the uses they came up with. The team with the most
different uses for their single item wins.

Say • Was it easy for you to think of new ways to use the gadget I gave your team? Do you think that
any of the uses you gave the tool were better than the tool’s original purpose?

God created each of you with a purpose. In some ways, our purposes might be very different
from one another’s, but in one way they are all the same. God created each of us to glorify
Him. That might look a little different for each of us, but the outcome is the same. God gets
glory.

Sometimes we might think that we know a better purpose for our lives, but we can trust that
God’s purpose is best for us. God has given each of you special talents, personality traits, and
desires that He plans to use for His glory and your good. How can God use your talents for
His glory? What is something you can do for God that will give Him glory?

Jesus is the perfect example of God’s perfect plans and purpose! Jesus came to earth to
provide the perfect sacrifice to pay for our sin. God raised Jesus from the grave on the third
day so that we could be reunited to Him. God’s plan glorified Him by showing His love and
power, and it blessed us by removing our sin. Why can we trust God? Everything God does is
for His glory and our good.

JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 MINUTES)
Distribute pencils and journal pages. Encourage kids to list any questions they have about life,
people, or God.

Say • Life has purpose only with God. God has a plan for your life, and it may not look like the
plan He has for your friend’s life or your brother’s life. No matter what the Lord calls you to
specifically, He wants everyone to know Jesus and make Him known.

Close in prayer.
Solomon Thought About Life

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

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