

Servants for His Glory

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Lesson Title: “Be a Servant of Purpose” (pp. 92-105)

Session 7

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The main point of this lesson is: God’s servants find their purpose and meaning in seeking His glory.

Focus on this goal: To help adults determine where they seek purpose and meaning for life

Key Bible Passage: Ecclesiastes 1–2

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Ask: If someone asked you at this very moment, “What do you want?” how might you answer? (Have fun with this. Give permission to be lighthearted by declaring what you want right now is a brownie or vacation, etc.) Ask: If we were to ask any person, “What do you really want?” what kind of answers might we get? Note: Every person wants to love and be loved, to have basic needs met, and to feel like they matter. Every person seeks purpose and meaning in life. Read the main point of this lesson statement (p. 103).

Step 2. The Problem, Part 1

Ask: Is every person’s pursuit of purpose healthy? Why? Determine unhealthy motivators for pursuing success. Explain the Bible book of Ecclesiastes describes humanity’s pursuit of purpose and meaning.

Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 93). Consider whether people’s pursuit of meaning and success today is the same or different from Solomon’s. Evaluate whether the results of those pursuits are similar to or different from what Solomon discovered and why.

Declare every person has purpose. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:27-28. Identify Adam and Eve’s extraordinary purpose. Invite a volunteer to read the last paragraph of Day One (p. 93).

Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 93). Explain the land of Canaan had three sources of water: fresh running water from streams (living water), ground water in wells, and runoff or rainwater collected in cisterns, which were pits dug into limestone and coated with plaster. Not only had God’s people traded the best water supply for the worst, but their cistern was cracked so water seeped out leaving only sludge.

Analyze how all of Solomon’s pursuits were a rejection of the fountain of living water and a digging of cracked cisterns.

Step 3. The Problem, Part 2

**Invite** volunteers to use their mobile devices to look up and read aloud the meaning of *transcendent* (first line, p. 94). **Consider** why Adam lost the sense of the transcendent when he sinned. **Determine** results of losing one’s sense of God’s transcendence and of belonging to a great God. **Ask** how these two losses will result in a loss of satisfaction in work.

**Ask** if adults agree with the Day Two Note (p. 4) and why. **Invite** a volunteer to read the Day Two paragraph (p. 94) beginning with “ ‘Under the sun . . . .” **Discuss** Day Two, activity 2 (p. 95).

**Read** Ecclesiastes 1:16-18. **Analyze** whether Solomon’s conclusion about seeking wisdom means believers shouldn’t seek to learn and grow in knowledge and wisdom. **Note** the problem isn’t learning and pursuing; the problem is self-centered, self-focused, self-interpreted learning and pursuing.

Step 4. The Problem, Part 3

**Invite** volunteers to read aloud Solomon’s statements listed in Day Three (p. 96), emphasizing the personal pronouns. **Request** adults consider Day Three, activity 1 (pp. 96-97), **inviting** volunteers to share their response to the question.

**Consider** why it’s not possible to be satisfied when we’re centered on self. **Ask:** *Do you think seeking satisfaction in self will always result in emotional pain? Explain. How do people seek to numb that pain?*

**Read** Psalm 16:11. **Declare:** *Humanity’s problem is continually seeking joy, pleasure, and delight apart from God and never finding it. The good news is there is a solution to the problem.*

Step 5. The Solution, Part 1

**Discuss** Day Four, activity 1 (p. 98). **Analyze** ways followers of Jesus today abandon the Living Water and dig cisterns for themselves that can’t hold water.

**Examine** what results when believers seek meaning and purpose in what we do, rather than in Christ. **Use** Day Four remarks (p. 99) to **add to** that discussion.

**Ask** adults if they agree that “a comfortable life will not provide the satisfaction we need” (p. 100) and why. **Invite** a volunteer to read Philippians 1:20-21. **Ask:** *What is many people’s “eager expectation and hope”? Why might that lead them to conclude, like Solomon, “I began to give myself over to despair”? What does it mean to you to declare: “For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain”?*

Step 6. The Solution, Part 2

**Ask** adults if they agree with the Day Five Note (p. 100) and why. **Ask:** *Would you agree we were all born with a sense of disapproval? What do we do in response?* **Discuss** Day Five, activity 1 (p. 101).

**Read** and **discuss** the Day Five paragraph (p. 102) beginning with “If God does not give us back . . . .” **Ask:** *What would it take for us to live with Paul’s attitude voiced in Galatians 1:10?*

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Ask:** After studying this lesson if someone were to ask, “What do you want?” how might you answer? What have you gained from this session that helps you know how to find purpose and meaning in life?

**Read** the last two sentences of Day Five (p. 102).

**Close in prayer.**

