



Devotionals: You may want to start each day's reading with a simple prayer such as, "God, what do you want me to see today about You? What do you want me to see about myself as I read Your word today? Is there something You want me to do based on what I read today? Please guide me by Your Spirit and lead me into Your truth."

As you reflect on what you've read, consider answering 3 simple questions:

- What did I learn about God from what I read?
- What did I learn about myself in this reading?
- What is God asking me to do as a result?

Day 1: Ecclesiastes 1-3

Day 2: Ecclesiastes 4-6

Day 3: Ecclesiastes 7-9

Day 4: Ecclesiastes 10-12

Additional series information available at:
www.myriversidechurch.com/alloutwar



TALK IT OVER
(Small Group Discussion Guide)



THE PURSUIT OF EVERYTHING
Week of April 13th, 2014



Ice Breaker: When you were a kid, what was the one toy you couldn't live without? Was it a Red Ryder B.B. gun like Ralphie in [A Christmas Story](#)?

TALK IT OVER as a Group:

(If your group is only meeting bi-weekly, cover the first 2 questions of each TALK IT OVER guide you are covering. If time allows, go back to the remaining questions.)

1. One of the godless choices many people make is to choose to pursue power, status, and popularity. Matthew 4:8-10 shows Jesus being tempted to make this choice. How did he respond to this temptation? How does this help us respond to similar temptation?
2. Pastor Tom explained that if we pursue happiness as a goal, "we'll spend only part of our lives satisfied and the other part in the endless pursuit of happiness...escapism becomes our god with happiness as our goal. The goal for a Christ-follower is not happiness, but contentment." Have you seen escapism become someone's god? Have you struggled with this tendency? Read and discuss Philippians 4:11-13. How might we begin to live with this kind of contentment?

3. The results of chasing godless choices are, "shallow and temporary happiness, followed by big-time emptiness, frustration, futility, disappointment, despair, chronic dissatisfaction, and opening a window of opportunity for the evil one to establish footholds of influence and control in our lives." Read and discuss Ecclesiastes 1:16-2:17. The results of chasing godlessness are pretty obvious. Do you think people would pursue these things if they saw the end result? Explain.
4. Pastor Tom explained that we can move from godlessness to godliness by reordering our priorities, repenting, and resisting. Read 1 Chronicles 28:9 and Matthew 6:25-34. In the context of these passages, what does reordering our priorities look like in everyday life? What does repenting look like in everyday life? What does resisting look like in everyday life?

Prayer Time:

Pastor Tom shared a prayer in the sermon notes this week. Use this prayer during your devotional time this week or pray it together during your group time.

Prayer of Confession (adapted from Jay Carty)

"So search my heart now, Lord. Do I live for pleasure? Do I have a party spirit and substitute shallowness for a more engaging relationship with You? Do alcohol and drugs play too great a role in my life? Have I put more trust in things than I have in You? Have I allowed money to come between us? Does my value and self-worth come more from my position in life and how others esteem me than it does from understanding how much You value me?

Almighty King, I'm tired of trying to find meaning in life apart from You. My life is not to be spent with You on the sidelines. I want the happiness and contentment that comes from being connected closely to You."

Taking Back The Ground

"Father, thanks for taking back the ground I gave to the devil. I come to You as my Deliverer from the adversary's dark kingdom filled with shackles of misery. I claim the promise of Your Word that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered and set free. I call upon You now. For the victory I give You praise, honor, and my most sincere thanks. You are a faithful and awesome God. I am grateful for what You have done for me today. I am free in Jesus Christ and I bless Your wonderful Name. With thanksgiving I pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen."