

Small Group Bible Study Questions: Ecclesiastes Part 3: Meaningful Work (Ecc 4:4-16). Oct 26'25 Sermon by John Fortune

From Brendan: "These questions are a guide. You do not have to use every question. Knowing your group, go over these questions and ask God what questions you should focus on. May God bless and guide your discussions!"

- Welcome everyone and open with prayer.

Optional Icebreaker Question:

- **FOLLOW-UP from last week (Time. Ecclesiastes 3:1-15):** How did practicing moments of Sabbath and gratitude throughout the week go?
- What was the best/worst job you ever had?

Read Ecclesiastes 4:4-16 (any observations)?

1. The Restless Question

The sermon opened with: "How do you know if you've done good work?"
How would you honestly answer that right now?

- Where do you most look for your sense of worth – results, reputation, or relationship?

2. Under the Sun

Ecclesiastes shows us life "under the sun" – life measured only by what we can see and achieve.

- Where do you notice this "under the sun" mindset shaping your own work or ambition?
- What might it look like to bring that area "under heaven" – into the awareness of God's presence?

3. Competition, Isolation, Ambition

The Teacher exposes three distortions of work: competition, isolation, and ambition.

- Which of these three do you most identify with right now, and why?
- What would it take for that same part of your work to become cultivation, community, or communion instead? *How does your job join with God in cultivating this world?*

4. Better One Handful with Peace

Ecclesiastes 4:6 says, "Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil."

- What does having "one handful open" look like in your daily rhythm?
- What might you need to let go of in order to experience real rest and contentment?

5. Working from Rest

In the sermon we said, "Work from rest, not for rest."

- How does the practice of Sabbath challenge our culture's constant striving and hurry?
- What could a healthy rhythm of rest look like for you – one that reminds you your worth isn't in your work, but in God's grace?

Application/Challenge this week:

- Continue this theme of rest. What would it look like to have a real day of Sabbath (Play and Pray) rest? Take a couple hours, a half day, or full day this week.
- **Memorize Ecclesiastes 4:12**
 - "Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."