

**ICEBREAKER:** In your past, what things have you pursued apart from God hoping that they made life meaningful and enjoyable?

### **Interpret:**

1. Go through Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 and write down all the "I"s. Write down the verb to the right of it. (e.g. "I said.")
2. Next, circle all the 'myself.' What observations can you make of Solomon from his words during this time of his life?
3. What is similar with the beginning (verse 1) and the ending (verse 11) of this section?
4. Why do you think he spoke up so clearly on this matter?
5. Go through, verse by verse, and write down what things it was that he involved himself in. On the right of each, write down whether it was right or wrong. On the right of that, write why it was right or wrong.

### **Summary:**

6. When is amusement right? When does it get wrong?
7. When is storing up wealth right? When does it get wrong?
8. When is having sex right? When does it get wrong?
9. When is possessions right? When does it get wrong?
10. When are work or public projects right? When do they get wrong?
11. Is success bad? When does it get bad?
12. Would you want your child to embark on this life of exploration? Why or why not?
13. Why do you think Solomon said all this was futile?
14. What do you think of his wisdom (2:9)?
15. Do you think all he did was a waste?

**Apply:** How can we live and teach so that our children are not caught up in this pursuit of pleasure?

Is there anything in your present that you are pursuing apart from God hoping that it makes your life meaningful and enjoyable?

In being so honest about his life, Solomon helps us to learn from his experience. What things in your life experience could similarly be useful to share with others?

What insight(s) from Solomon's showing us the math for the rest of the Bible were most helpful to you? Why?

Do you believe that Solomon's conclusion (that apart from God even the best things in externally life fail to satisfy us internally) is earnestly true for you?