Harbor Trinity Groups

Discussion Questions

Sermon Title: A Weary World: Life in a Weary World
Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:1-18
Date: November 8, 2026
Speaker Name: Justin Chandler

1. King Solomon begins Ecclesiastes 9 with the statement, “But all this I laid to heart, examining it all…” (Ecclesiastes 9:1a). As you reflect upon our series through Ecclesiastes thus far, is there a particular passage or weekend message that has stuck with you? If so, why?

2. It is easy for us to sing the song, “He’s got the whole world in His hands.” Do you believe, truly believe, “the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God” (Ecclesiastes 9:1b)? How does your life (thoughts, feelings, actions, emotions) demonstrate this belief?

3. King Solomon believes “this is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the same event happens to all” (Ecclesiastes 9:2-3). Do you share his sentiment that humans universally share the same experience? Would you consider it an evil as he does? Why or why not?

4. Ecclesiastes 9:3 states, “The hearts of the children of man are full of evil.” This is a similar sentiment to Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” and Matthew 15:18-20, But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person.” Some of us have been taught, “we are all born good.” Others of us may have been taught the opposite. What belief do you hold and why?

5. Ecclesiastes 9:4 can be a confusing verse. “A living dog is better than a dead lion.” Because dogs are beloved within our culture, we can miss how they were considered dirty, horrible animals, while the lion was noble. Why would King Solomon make this statement, in light of this perspective? What does this mean for us, as we consider the living and the dead?

6. King Solomon returns to a familiar refrain in Ecclesiastes 9:7. “Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.” Have you been able to enjoy life more in light of this passage over the last couple of months? Why or why not?

7. Ecclesiastes 9:10, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might” has a lot in common with Colossians 3:23. “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” Is this how you view work (not just your job or vocation, but how you spend your life)?

8. In Ecclesiastes 9:11, King Solomon provides five examples that point to the introductory theme of Ecclesiastes 9:2-3. What are the five examples he provides and how do they show that things do not always turn out how we think they should?

9. In a further example, King Solomon shows the contrast between rich and poor, wisdom and foolishness. How does he illustrate this through the story he tells? What does that mean for us?

10. King Solomon ends chapter 9 with a series of Proverbs. How are you able to apply Ecclesiastes 9:17-18 to your life?