



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

God Created

Surveying the Source

Gen. 8:22; 15:15; Judg. 8:32; 13:24–14:2; Ps. 71:5; 90:10–12; Prov. 5:18; Eccles. 3:1–8; Jer. 9:23, 24; James 1:5

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Examine how they are living each day; whether they are deliberate about living in each moment and day in ways that will give a sense of fulfillment as they look back.

► Commit to living each day in relationship with God, privately and in their interactions with others.

► Determine to keep focused on God's will as they go through life, especially in unexpected and uncertain times.

Preparing to Lead

Solomon was the wisest man in the world during his reign. He asked God for wisdom and God answered his prayer. People of power, money, and influence from kingdoms near and far came to Solomon for sage advice. His wisdom brought him great wealth, international

friendships, peace, and great respect. Through his writings, his insights shine wisdom through the centuries to us today. So when the wisest man in the world has insights about time and our relationship to it, we should sit up and take note.

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, pens, paper, markers/chalk, chalkboard/white board

Getting Started

A. Invite an experienced adult to class to be interviewed about his/her life. As the students enter, *say*: “Our key text today is from King Solomon’s writings about time in Ecclesiastes. From it we learn that no matter who we are, we all are subject to time. I invited _____ to join us so that you can interview him/her about his/her life—his/her choices, decisions, and goals; whether unexpected circumstances impacted his/her goals and relationships or changed his/her course. Also, what place did God and family have in decision-making, goal-setting?” Begin an open question and answer time.

B. Make a graph on the board and write “Carpe Diem” on one axis and “Redeeming the time” on the other. Ask the students what “Carpe Diem” means. Ask a volunteer to use their mobile device to find “Carpe Diem” in their browser and share the description (or use an overhead with the browser open to that description). Write the definition on the board. Then, ask a volunteer to read Eph. 5:15–17. *Say*: “Time marks our days; we all live within its confines. We don’t always have control over circumstances. Today we will consider how to best redeem our days to honor God.”

Delving Into the Word

A. Have the students stand in a circle and open their Bibles to Eccles. 3:1–8. Instruct them to read the passage in this way: the first student reads verse 1. Then have students divide the phrases in each of the following verses (four students read verse 2, the next four students read verse 3, and so on—adjust according to class size, but keeping the format). Tell the students to treat the passage like a living poem—bringing cadence, inflection, and crescendo to their reading. Have three students step out of the exercise and echo key words, i.e. one echoes “time” after each verse; the other two echo the action words, “born, die, love, hate,” etc. Repeat the exercise before answering the first question in *Discussing the Ideas*. Record their insights on the board.

Have a volunteer read Eccles. 3:9–15 then discuss the second question in *Discussing the Ideas*. Discuss the rest of the questions in two smaller groups then regroup to share responses.

B. Have the students share a time when they faced a life transition: perhaps when they were accepted to college, began a trade, left home, or got married. Ask them to discuss how they felt in these situations. Were they anxious, confident, or both? Did they have a confirmation from God, or did they just step out?

Bring into the discussion Paul’s words from Gal. 1:15–17. *Ask*: “Would you have done what Paul did? Is part of embracing life’s transitions being willing to go where God directs, without getting your spiritual ‘passport’ stamped in 15 places first? Or was the apostle’s situation different from our life decisions, and if so, how?”

Discussing the Ideas

1. What conclusions can we draw from Solomon’s insights about time from Eccles. 3:1–8?

2. What was Solomon’s view of our relationship to time and God’s part in it (Eccles. 3:9–15)?

3. Unlike the positive preaching coming out of many churches, being a Christian does not insulate or isolate us from the ups and downs of life—bad things happen to us all. So, what is our take-away? (Eccles. 3:1, 12–15; Job 1:13–19; 2:7–9).

4. What does Eccles. 3:11 teach about the way we should live? How does this relate to Eccles. 3:14, 15?

5. As we live out our lives for God, how can we demonstrate our faith, bringing hope to others we journey through time with? (James 1:22; 5:16)

6. Our actions impact not only ourselves but have serious ripple effects in the lives of others. How can we best use the gift of time God gives us? (Ps. 71:5–7; Prov. 5:18; Isa. 61:3; James 5:16).

Closing the Activity

Distribute the Reproducible Activity. Allow the students time to fill-in the chart. Explain that they can also take it home with them and pray about it through the week. Ask the students to pair up with a friend to have a partner to

share their goals and spiritual commitments with so that they can then lift each other up in prayer and encourage each other to stay on track in their journey of faith. They can share a prayer together before regrouping for the closing prayer.

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Making the Most of Time

Consider where you are now in your life. Have you accomplished what you thought you would by now? Surpassed it? Made a course correction?

Imagine you are 60 years old and looking back on your life. What do you hope to see as your story?

Have you made your choices so far based upon your relationship with Jesus Christ? Are you waiting on Him to direct you to a specific calling? Are you listening to His voice? What habits and actions can you take to ensure that you are living out your purpose according to God's will?

Make a chart below of goals you made at different stages in your life. Include goals you have yet to achieve, reaching to the distant future. Also include a place to checkmark the goals you have realized. Make a column for Scripture references from this week's lesson which spoke to you specifically. Make sure your chart includes professional, personal, transitional, and relationship goals, including your relationship with Christ.