

“Life & Death Under the Son”

Sermon Notes

➤ **As you engage with those who are far from Christ, never forget: the gospel is only good news if it gets there in time**

Our approach to the folks on our ‘List of 5’ should always be loving, but it must be urgent, because **in the gospel...*

1. We hold the key to the meaning of life (8:14-17; Colossians 2:2-3, 8-10; 3:3-4; John 1:4; 14:6)

2. We hold the cure to the sting of death (9:1-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-16)

Next Week: Ecclesiastes 9:7-10

MEFC Community Group Study Guide
For the Week of February 28th - March 6th

Getting Started

1. If you are a Christian (and you recall the days before you came to know the Lord) think back for a moment. What sorts of questions about the faith were important for you to settle before you felt that you could put your faith in Christ?

Digging Deeper

2. Though there are many questions unbelievers have about the Christian worldview these days, some of the most common revolve around the reliability of the Bible, the exclusivity of Christ, and the problem of evil. For example, if someone from your 'List of 5' asked you: "Why should I trust the Bible?", "How can Christians be so arrogant as to imagine that Jesus is the only way to God?", or "If God is all-powerful and all-good, why is there so much suffering in the world?" would you be prepared to give an answer (1 Peter 3:15)? If so, how would you respond? If not, how might you become equipped to respond?

It's often the case that before a person comes to trust *Christ*, they come to trust a *Christian*. Would you say that those on your 'List of 5' trust you? Why or why not?

Open Your Bible to Ecclesiastes 8:14...

3. In verse Ecclesiastes 8:14, the Preacher raises a concern that stands as a frequent objection to the faith among unbelievers today. What is it? How ought a believer to respond to it?
4. Verse 15 contains the Preacher's response to the concern he raises in the previous verse. Why is this a helpful angle on such a hard providence of the Lord?
5. The next two verses (vv.16-17), are a devastating (though critical) conclusion at which all people must arrive if they're going to come to put their trust in Christ. What does the Preacher confess here? Compare this with Job's confession in Job 23:13 (in the broader context of the whole of chapter 23:1-17). Is there anyone on your 'List of 5' who has yet to come to this place in their spiritual journey? How might Colossians 2:2-3, 8-10 be a tremendous encouragement in this regard for them?
6. In Ecclesiastes 9:1-6, the Preacher turns his attention toward the end of life. In all but one of these verses, death is explicitly mentioned (sometimes more than once). How many observations can you make about death in these verses? List as many as you find.
7. Using your list of observations above, what are a few practical evangelistic implications as you think about those on your 'List of 5'? Have you ever intended to share the gospel with an unbelieving friend or family member only to lose that privilege because they passed away before you did so? If you've had this experience, please share your story with the group and any practical advice you have as a result. In such cases, what sort of responsibility do we bear before the Lord? How does Ezekiel 33:6 speak to this situation?

8. Close your time by praying for the folks on your 'List of 5' by name, working through the B.L.E.S.S. acronym together (**B**egin with prayer, **L**isten to them, **E**at with them, **S**erve them, **S**hare your **S**tory and God's story in the gospel with them). Pray especially that the Lord will assist you in taking concrete steps through open doors (Colossians 4:2-6) toward others as you increasingly cultivate the B.L.E.S.S. Practices in your interactions with them.