

Time and Season Fourth Session Guide

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Open with Stillness

What are you grateful for?

Discussion Questions

Make it personal

Closing Prayer

Discussion Questions:

Pour Out Your Heart, page 86

Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what he has made crooked? When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Ecclesiastes 7:13- 14 (NIV)

How does this strike you?

*When we are crushed like grapes, we cannot think of the wine we will become. The sorrow overwhelms us, makes us throw ourselves on the ground, faced down, and sweat drops of blood. Then we need to be reminded that our cup of sorrow is also our cup of joy and that one day we will be able to taste the joy as fully as we now taste the sorrow - Henri Nouwen, *You are the Beloved**

From Schemers to Seekers, page 91

God made men and women true and upright; we're the ones who've made a mess of things. Ecclesiastes 7:29 (MSG)

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23 (NIV)

How have the schemes of this world, your family, or maybe inside you affected you?

God's plan is simple: follow Him and His ways. Idolatry and sin complicate our lives. The world craves things and authority. Our desires shape our identities, and our experiences can become idols, making us susceptible to fleshly temptation. Instead of accepting God's plan as sufficient, we often complicate our lives. However, God has a perfect design for us, even though our sinful schemes run counter to His simplicity.

What do you think about that statement?

Unknown, page 95

Since no one knows the future, who can tell someone else what is to come? Ecclesiastes 8:7 (NIV)

How do you feel emotionally about the unknown aspects of your life?

Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. Matthew 6:34 (MSG)

If you had complete knowledge of what was to come, could you cope with the realization that you have no control over the outcome, while God does?

Eyes set like a flint.

Setting my face like a flint signifies following Christ's footsteps, distancing myself from worldly influences. It also entails discipline and unwavering loyalty to God and His truth above all else. While we remain aware of the world around us, we make a conscious choice.

Distant Gaze, page 99

You're all I want in heaven! You're all I want on earth! When my skin sags and my bones get brittle, God is rock-firm and faithful. Look! Those who left you are falling apart! Deserters, they'll never be heard from again. But I'm in the very presence of God— oh, how refreshing it is! I've made Lord God my home. God, I'm telling the world what you do!

Psalm 73:18-25 (MSG)

Do you experience spiritual motion sickness?

The closer we get to God, the less "earth-shaking" we feel.

God-Given Opportunities, page 104

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NIV)

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)

1 Corinthians 10:22-23 talks about Do all to the glory of God.

How do you feel about this?

How do you prioritize work and play in a way that uses your gifting to serve the Father?

No matter what you are doing, take enjoyment in the ability to do what God has put in your plate to do. Work or play – they are gifts because they are all God-given.

How do you feel about the two recommendations listed in the text on page 104?

It's Not Over till It's Over, page 109

*The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools.
Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.* Ecclesiastes 9:17-18 (NIV)

What do you think Solomon is saying about wisdom in verses 13-18?

Don't despise the words of the wise. Don't shoot the messenger for telling you the facts. Instead, ask questions, Learn. Be Patient. Be still. And be thankful for the mouthpieces God sends to you in your life.

Identity is found in rest.