



Session 1: A meaningless life?

1-8 JUL

Icebreaker

Watch: *My Way*, Frank Sinatra [youtube.com/watch?v=eOcjfclhDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOcjfclhDw)

Why do you think people generally prefer the song 'My Way' to 'Amazing Grace'?

- Do you agree with the quote of Kierkegaard on 6 July?
- How can your view of tomorrow change your perspective on today?
- What are the two key lessons of the Bible?

Key thought

Although people devote their energy to pursuing knowledge, pleasure and power, none of these things give life ultimate meaning and fulfilment.

Key verse

"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless." Ecclesiastes 1:2

Discussion starters

- Is everything meaningless?
- What makes life boring?
- Do you tend to be a pessimistic or optimistic person?
- Why may superior knowledge prove meaningless?
- Is modern society too focused on pleasure?

The example of Jesus

'I have come to do your will, O God' Hebrews 10:7

Prayer pointers

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to illumine people's understanding as we study this issue together.
- Thank God that He gives life true meaning and purpose.

Session 2: Eternity in our hearts

9-17 JUL

Icebreaker

Watch: *Turn! Turn! Turn!*, The Byrds [youtube.com/watch?v=pKP4cfU28vM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKP4cfU28vM)

How can we spend our time wisely?

- How are you affected by injustice in our world?
- What makes us similar to and different from animals?
- How shall we be like Christ?

Key thought

Meaning in life is found in the fact that we came from God and are destined to return to God through faith in Jesus Christ. This saves us from a life of meaningless separation from God.

Key verse

'He has also set eternity in the hearts of men' Ecclesiastes 3:11

Discussion starters

- Why may unbelievers experience a form of happiness?
- How can we avoid repetitive activity producing cynicism?
- How has God brought colour to your monochrome life?
- In what ways do people suppress or reveal homesickness for God?
- Why is it unspiritual to avoid pleasurable activities?
- How can we be more full of awe?

The example of Jesus

'Don't yield to fear. I am... the Living One... I hold the keys that unlock death and the unseen world' Revelation 1:17-18 (TPT)

Prayer pointers

- Pray that we will be less cynical and pessimistic and more faith-filled and awestruck.
- Thank God that He directs our life and gives us hope for the future.



Session 3: Money, money, money

18-26 JUL

Icebreaker

Watch: *Money, Money, Money*, Abba
[youtube.com/watch?v=D4E7SYID3aI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4E7SYID3aI)
 Is it a rich man's world?

Key thought

Wealth and power are not guarantors of personal fulfilment or a satisfied life.

Key verse

'Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.'
 Ecclesiastes 5:10

Discussion starters

1. What is the difference between being ambitious and being ruthless?
2. How have friendships strengthened you?
3. Why can the young be wise and the old foolish?
4. Why may good teaching fail to make an impression in your church?
5. Do you, or the people you meet, make promises too easily?

6. Is the quote of Derek Tidball on 23 July true in your experience?
7. Is all ambition wrong?
8. Measure your attitudes against Selwyn's three points (25 July).
9. Do you have a sense of contentment?

The example of Jesus

'the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Luke 9:58

Prayer pointers

- Thank God for what you have in terms of possessions, career, friends, health etc.
- Pray for God's wisdom to direct your ambitions and money.

Session 4: Better priorities

27 JUL - 1 AUG

Icebreaker

Watch: Setting Priorities in Life [youtube.com/watch?v=wmUo3diJkFE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmUo3diJkFE)
 Do you fill your life with sand, golf balls or beer?

Key thought

Although family, friends, work and possessions are important, we need to establish correct priorities – with our relationship with God as number one.

Key verse

'who knows what is good for a man in life?'
 Ecclesiastes 6:12

Discussion starters

1. How important is your family?
2. How important is your work or role in life?
3. How does modern society argue against God with its own priorities?
4. Why may our temporal existence on earth give us an eternal perspective?
5. In what ways did Solomon view life differently?
6. Which is your favourite of Solomon's seven comparative proverbs?

The example of Jesus

"The most important one" answered Jesus, "is... Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."
 Mark 12:29-30

Prayer pointers

- Confess any wrong priorities in your life.
- Ask for God's help to establish and fill your life with the correct priorities.



Session 5: True wisdom

2-10 AUG

Icebreaker

Watch: *Hindsight*, Hillsong Young and Free
[youtube.com/watch?v=Uy34gCRgUA0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy34gCRgUA0)

How does reflection and hindsight revive your faith and trust in God for your future?

Key thought

This world can be perplexing but the wisdom of trusting God helps us handle life's mysteries so that we can maintain balance and confidence in all situations.

Key verse

'wisdom preserves the life of its possessor'
 Ecclesiastes 7:12

Discussion starters

1. How have you been both wise and foolish during your life?
2. How has God's extreme grace saved you from destructive excesses?
3. What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?
4. How can we trust people if so few are righteous?
5. Why is wisdom not about academic knowledge?

6. Try to rank the different qualities of wise leadership.
7. What perplexes you in life?
8. How can faith in God overcome perplexity?
9. How can hope in our eternal salvation overcome pessimism and cynicism?

The example of Jesus

'Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."
 Luke 23:46

Prayer pointers

- Like Solomon did, ask God for the supernatural wisdom only He possesses.
- Pray for God's wisdom to fill your spiritual leaders and those leading your country.

Session 6: Coping with life

11-18 AUG

Icebreaker

How has God helped you cope when you have found things difficult?

Key thought

Life in a fallen world involves pain and frustration, but God's wisdom and grace helps us cope with unfairness and instability.

Key verse

'The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools'
 Ecclesiastes 9:17

Discussion starters

1. Are you fun to be with?
2. How do you cope with the pressures of life?
3. How do you cope when your vital role is ignored or forgotten?
4. Why are you not worthless?
5. How do you cope when your talents are given a back seat?
6. Do you spend your energies on foolish, unproductive activities?

7. Can you control your tongue or does it have a mind of its own?
8. Do procrastination and idleness cause you problems?

The example of Jesus

'Come to me... I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace'
 Matthew 11:28-29
(The Message)

Prayer pointers

- Thank God for His presence at all times in our lives.
- Pray for God's wisdom and grace to control your emotions and speech.



Session 7: Cradle to grave

19–26 AUG

Icebreaker

Watch: *Cradle to grave preview*, BBC Two [youtube.com/watch?v=pyY0440sSi4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyY0440sSi4)
Do you manage your boxes well by discarding some and opening new ones, or do you just hoard everything and reject change?

6. How and when did you become a Christian?
7. How can older people still be fruitful in God?
8. What is your best advice for older people?

Key thought

As we adjust to every stage of life, God is with us to help us and make us fruitful.

Key verse

'However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all' Ecclesiastes 11:8

Discussion starters

1. Do you tend to be generous or stingy with your time, talents and treasures?
2. What could you pursue that is new and beautiful, for God?
3. Do you sometimes waste effort trying to understand and explain the unexplainable?
4. Do you consider yourself too busy to really enjoy life now?
5. What is your best advice for young people?

The example of Jesus

'new wine must be poured into new wineskins' Luke 5:38

Prayer pointers

- Prayerfully evaluate your life to see if you need to make any changes.
- Pray for people of all ages in your church to experience the presence and power of God.

Session 8: Conclusion

27–31 AUG

Icebreaker

What has made the deepest impression on you in our studies, and how will you change as a result?

Key thought

We will never fully understand why God allows or does some of the things He does, but we know Him to be kind, just and loving. So we can trust Him even when we are confused.

Key verse

'No-one can comprehend what goes on under the sun' Ecclesiastes 8:17

Discussion starters

1. What marks out the best message you have heard preached?
2. How could you improve your adjectives (28 August)?
3. How has your understanding of the Bible been helped by *Every Day with Jesus*?
4. Define the phrase, 'Fear God'.
5. How can you use whatever happens in your life to help others?

The example of Jesus

'All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips' Luke 4:22

Prayer pointers

- Pray that those who speak in church will have clear, memorable and engaging messages.
- Pray for one another to embrace the truths we have studied together.