

# GROWTH GROUPS

January 1, 2012

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Philippians 3:7-11; & 12-14

## Conversation Starter –

New Year's Day causes people all around the world in most cultures and religious faiths to take another look at time: how we use it, misuse it, waste it or wring every last drop from it. Resolutions are made and broken and sometimes the amount of time in between the making and the breaking is a matter of mere minutes. Each of us is given the exact same amount of this commodity each day, week, month and year. What we do with it will reveal much about who we really are and what we really believe. Why is New Years such a popular time for resolutions and celebrating the birth of a new year?

## Understanding –

The Ecclesiastes and Philippians passages speak to us of time and opportunities that present themselves to us in the course of life. In Ecclesiastes we are presented with the wisdom that all things have their proper time and how good things in the wrong time or timing create problems and struggles. In Philippians we see Paul wrestling with life and committing himself to do whatever it takes to be found “in Christ”. He discovered that there was spiritual power to be had for those who invest themselves in “knowing Christ”.

1. How does knowing Christ impact what we consider success, gain or loss in our lives? (Ph 3:7) What brings the apostle Paul to that place? What brings us to that place?
2. What does it mean in Philippians Chapter 3 – to gain Christ and be found in him? Why is this the most important thing that Paul can think of has defining him and his efforts in life (3:12-14)?
3. Philippians 3:10 speaks of the power of Christ's resurrection but then moves speak to “the fellowship of his suffering”. Why are his sufferings and joining him in suffering so important?

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