



All Christians' Fellowship International

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Study to show "The Way of True Life." Bible Study Outline

TOPIC: **Moderation**
TEXT: **Ecclesiastes 2:1-11**

Instructions: *Read the above passages each time you come together to study this topic so everyone can participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information and develop follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone equal opportunity to participate.*

Introduction: Excess is celebrated around the world. A popular U.S. fashion magazine recently had an article about the most fashion-conscious Russian women. One woman explained that the \$300 she spends on one pair of shoes is what a friend earns monthly. Monthly high-fashion expenses total from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for this woman and others. Where the money comes from is never mentioned, but people who do business in Russia tell me that it is most certainly mafia money. It appears that the journalists were more interested in a flashy story than in the business practices of the interviewees.

Magazine articles such as this and TV shows like MTV Cribs or Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous feed the cultural myth that such irresponsible lifestyles are desirable and perhaps even attainable. By comparison, our own lifestyles most likely seem very modest, yet we feed into this myth when we follow the media hype. In the end, as the writer of Ecclesiastes shows, these pursuits are meaningless.

Discussion Questions:

1. Give examples of current TV shows, commercials, ad campaigns, and so on that promote an excess lifestyle. What excess in your own life do you need to confess to God?
2. List the ways in which the speaker has attempted to discover what is good. Which of these efforts might be considered reckless by popular culture, and which might be seen as valuable pursuits?
3. What clues does the passage give as to why the speaker might have taken on this task?
4. What are some modern similarities to the kinds of projects listed in verses 4-6?
5. What ways do people try to do the types of things mentioned in verses 7-9?
6. In verses 3 and 9, the writer mentions that "wisdom stayed" with him. What do you think this means?

7. In verse 10, he expresses delight in his work as his reward, yet in verse 11, he also remarks that his work is seemingly meaningless. What important principles about work do these two observations suggest?
8. What does verse 10 suggest about finding meaning in life?
9. How does the descriptive language in verse 11 illustrate the author's point?
10. What does this passage say about excess? How are you tempted to find meaning in excess?
11. In what ways might you find a lifestyle of moderation more satisfying than a lifestyle that indulges in excess?