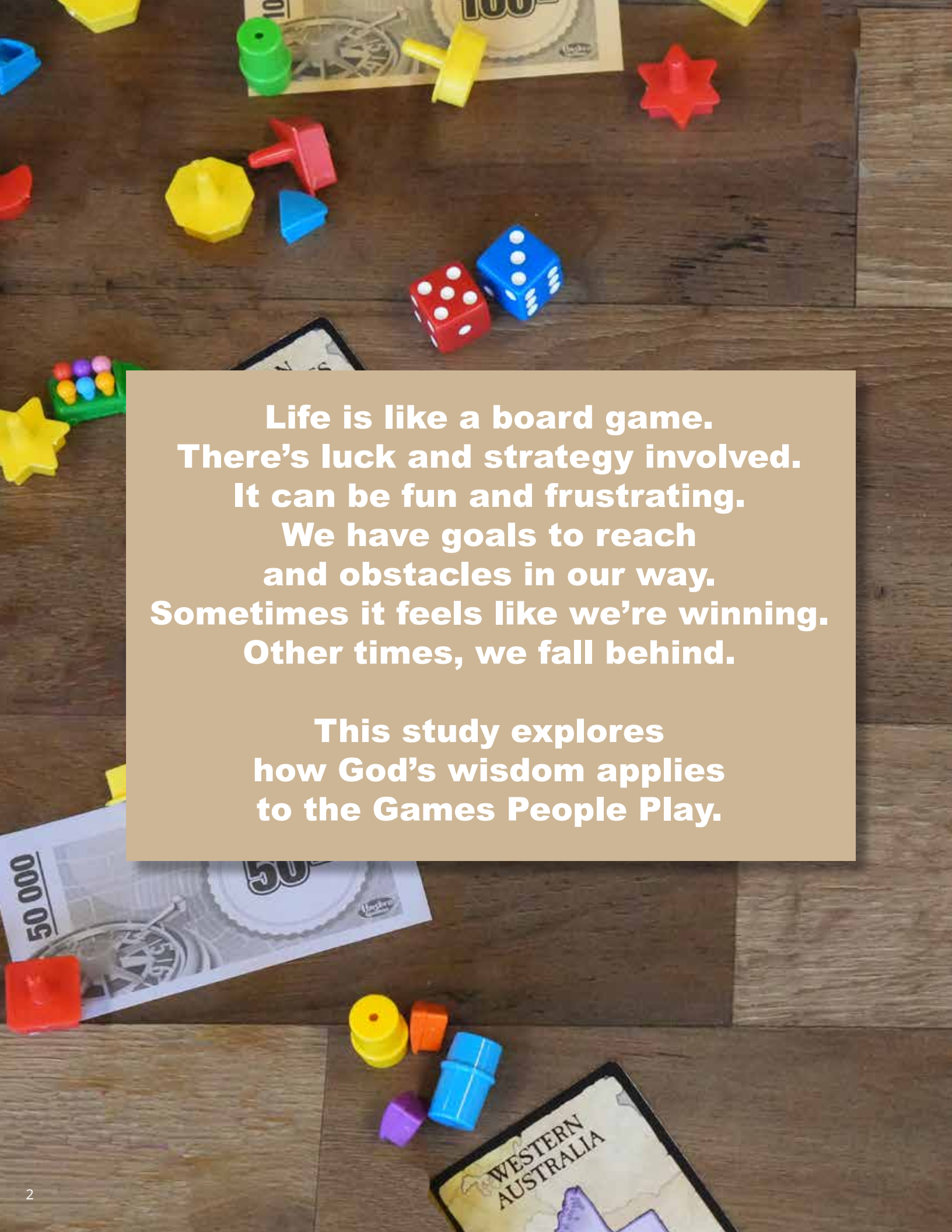




# GAMES PEOPLE PLAY



## Study Guide

A top-down view of a wooden table with various board game components scattered on it. There are several dice, including a red one and a blue one. There are also various colored tokens and pieces, such as a yellow star, a red star, and a green star. A 100 Euro banknote is visible at the top, and a 50,000 Euro banknote is visible at the bottom left. A card with the text 'WESTERN AUSTRALIA' is visible at the bottom right.

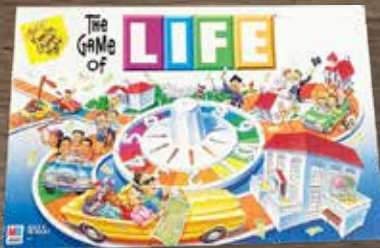
**Life is like a board game.  
There's luck and strategy involved.  
It can be fun and frustrating.  
We have goals to reach  
and obstacles in our way.  
Sometimes it feels like we're winning.  
Other times, we fall behind.**

**This study explores  
how God's wisdom applies  
to the Games People Play.**

# TheGAMES



**Trivial Pursuit**  
Page 4



**LIFE**  
Page 10



**PERFECTION**  
Page 16



**TROUBLE**  
Page 22



**Risk**  
Page 28



# Week 1

## Let's Play!

Test your Trivial Pursuit knowledge with a question from each category!



### Geography

How many states in the USA end in the letter O?

### Entertainment

Which late-night talk show host was voted "Most Likely to Replace David Letterman" in his school days?



### History

What was the last state admitted into the United States?

### Art & Literature

What is the name of the pirate ship in J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan?



### Science & Nature

Who was the first American woman in space?

### Sports & Leisure

What are the three events in the order they happen in an Olympic triathlon?



## Answers

Geography: Four – Idaho, New Mexico, Ohio, Colorado. Entertainment: Jimmy Fallon. History: Hawaii. Art & Literature: Jolly Roger. Science & Nature: Sally Ride. Sports & Leisure: Swimming, cycling, running.

## Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

*I tried to experience the only happiness most people find during their brief life in this world. Anything I wanted, I would take. I denied myself no pleasure. I even found great pleasure in hard work, a reward for all my labors. But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.*

*-Ecclesiastes 2:3, 10-11*



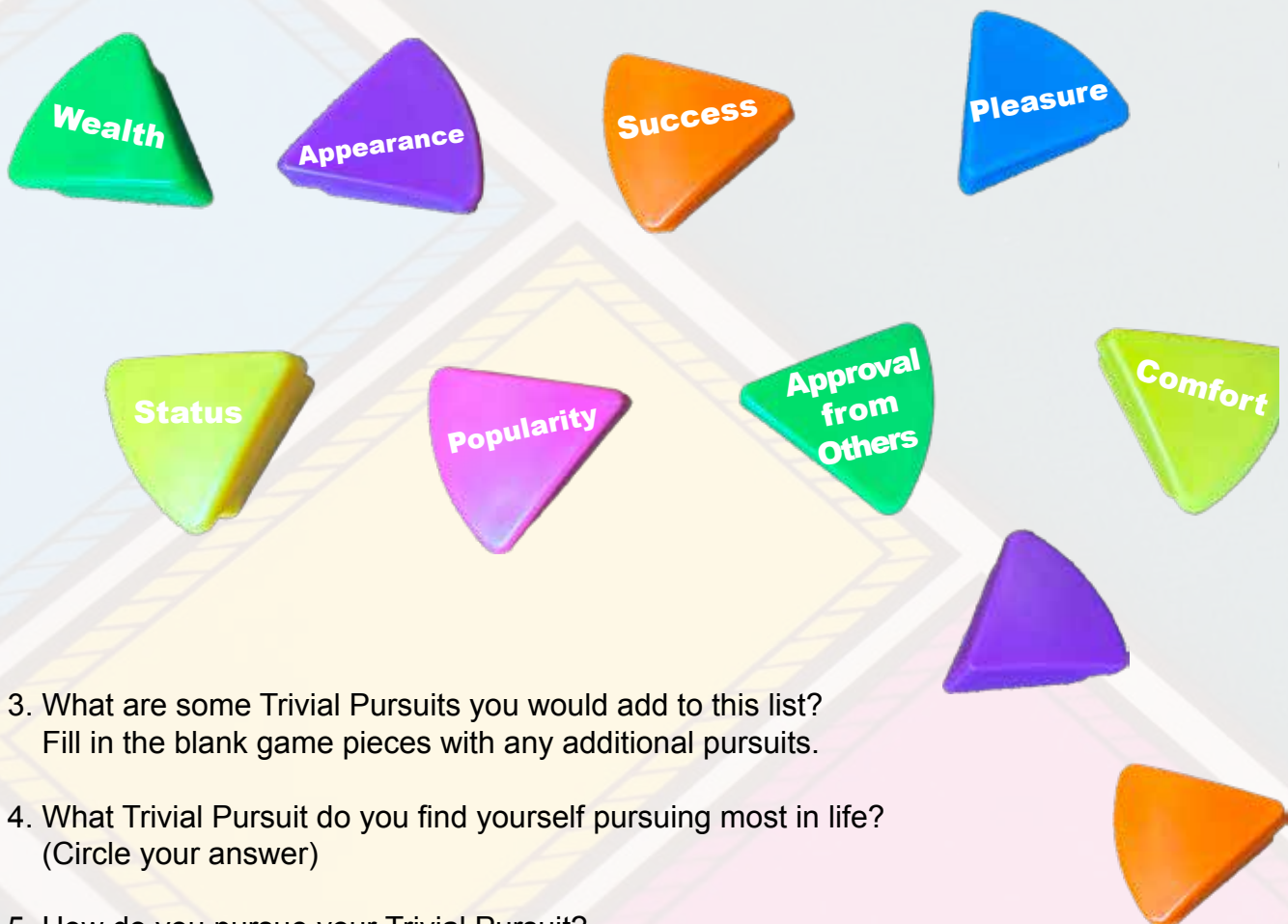
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Roll

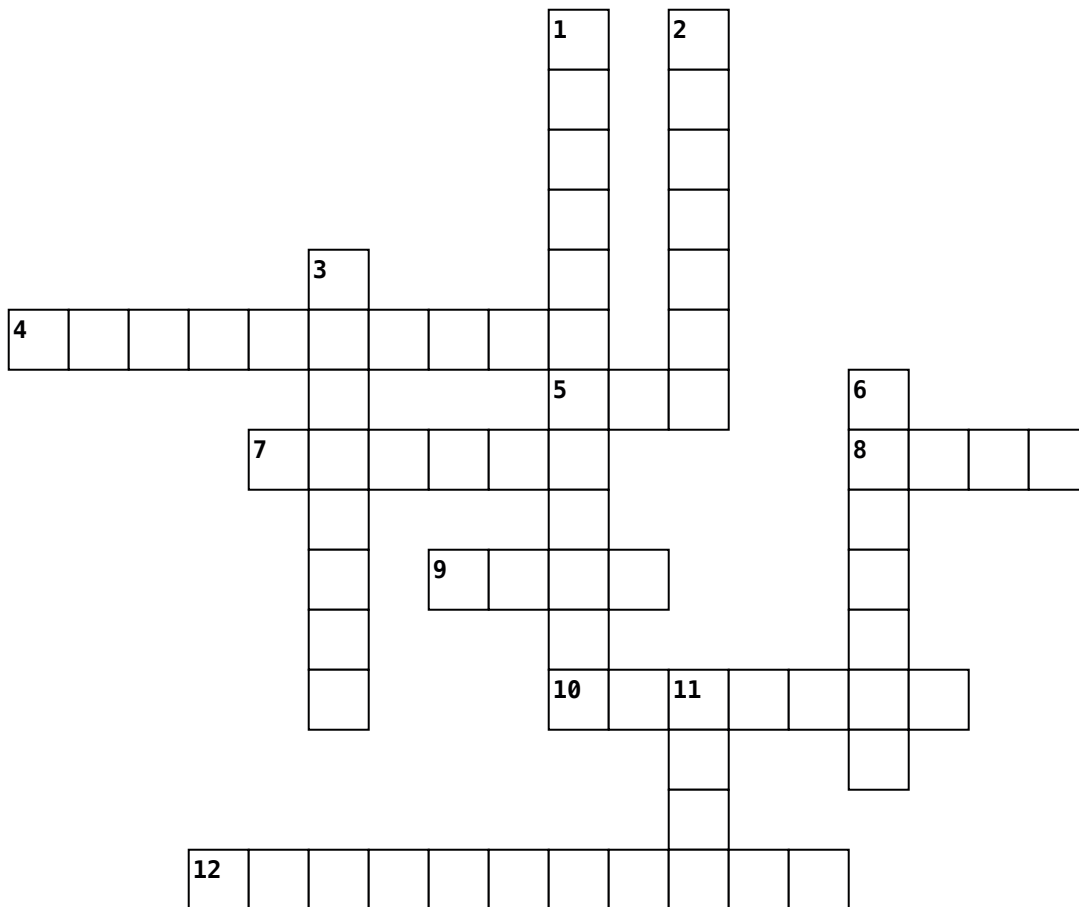
# Discussion Questions

1. What Trivial Pursuit category are you the most confident in? (Geography, Entertainment, History, Art & Literature, Science & Nature, Sports & Leisure)
2. In Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, what superficial activities does the author explore in his search for fulfillment?



3. What are some Trivial Pursuits you would add to this list?  
Fill in the blank game pieces with any additional pursuits.
4. What Trivial Pursuit do you find yourself pursuing most in life?  
(Circle your answer)
5. How do you pursue your Trivial Pursuit?
6. Why do you think you pursue this in life?
7. How would your life change if you stopped making this Trivial Pursuit a central priority in your life?
8. Write down a meaningful pursuit that could replace your Trivial Pursuit.  
How will you pursue this?

# Devotional Crossword



## Across

- 4.** A fast-paced game where players race to fit shapes before time runs out.
- 5.** A common phrase from Ecclesiastes: 'A time to be born, and a time to \_\_\_\_.'
- 7.** The book of Ecclesiastes is found in this section of the Old Testament.
- 8.** A strategy game where players try to conquer the world.
- 9.** Ecclesiastes frequently describes life's pursuits as this fleeting substance.
- 10.** The author of Ecclesiastes is traditionally believed to be this king.
- 12.** Ecclesiastes reminds us that life without God is ultimately this.

## Down

- 1.** The final conclusion of Ecclesiastes is to 'Fear God and keep his \_\_\_\_\_.'
- 2.** This game features the famous Pop-O-Matic die roller.
- 3.** Chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes talks about there being a season for every \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6.** \_\_\_\_\_ Pursuit. A quiz game that tests players' knowledge in different categories.
- 11.** This board game lets players experience careers, marriage, and retirement.

***I said to myself, “Come on, let’s try pleasure. Let’s look for the ‘good things’ in life.” But I found that this, too, was meaningless. So I said, “Laughter is silly. What good does it do to seek pleasure?” After much thought, I decided to cheer myself with wine. And while still seeking wisdom, I clutched at foolishness. In this way, I tried to experience the only happiness most people find during their brief life in this world.***

***I also tried to find meaning by building huge homes for myself and by planting beautiful vineyards. I made gardens and parks, filling them with all kinds of fruit trees. I built reservoirs to collect the water to irrigate my many flourishing groves. I bought slaves, both men and women, and others were born into my household. I also owned large herds and flocks, more than any of the kings who had lived in Jerusalem before me. I collected great sums of silver and gold, the treasure of many kings and provinces. I hired wonderful singers, both men and women, and had many beautiful concubines. I had everything a man could desire!***

***So I became greater than all who had lived in Jerusalem before me, and my wisdom never failed me. Anything I wanted, I would take. I denied myself no pleasure. I even found great pleasure in hard work, a reward for all my labors. But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.***

***-Ecclesiastes 2:1-11***



# Daily Application

**Day 1:** Read this passage through three times.  
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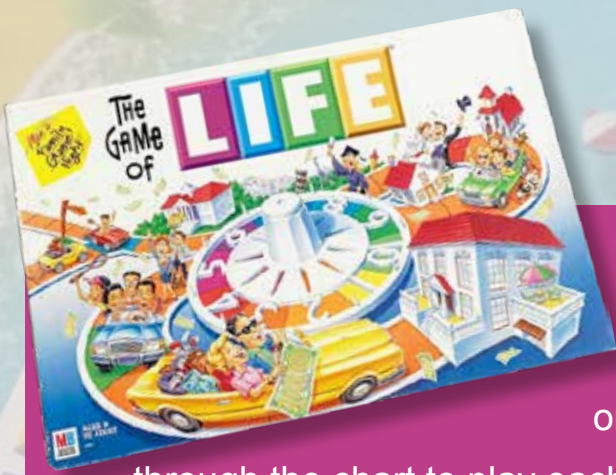
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**Day 4:** Journal a reflection you have on this passage.

**Day 5:** Write a prayer based on what you've learned from this passage.

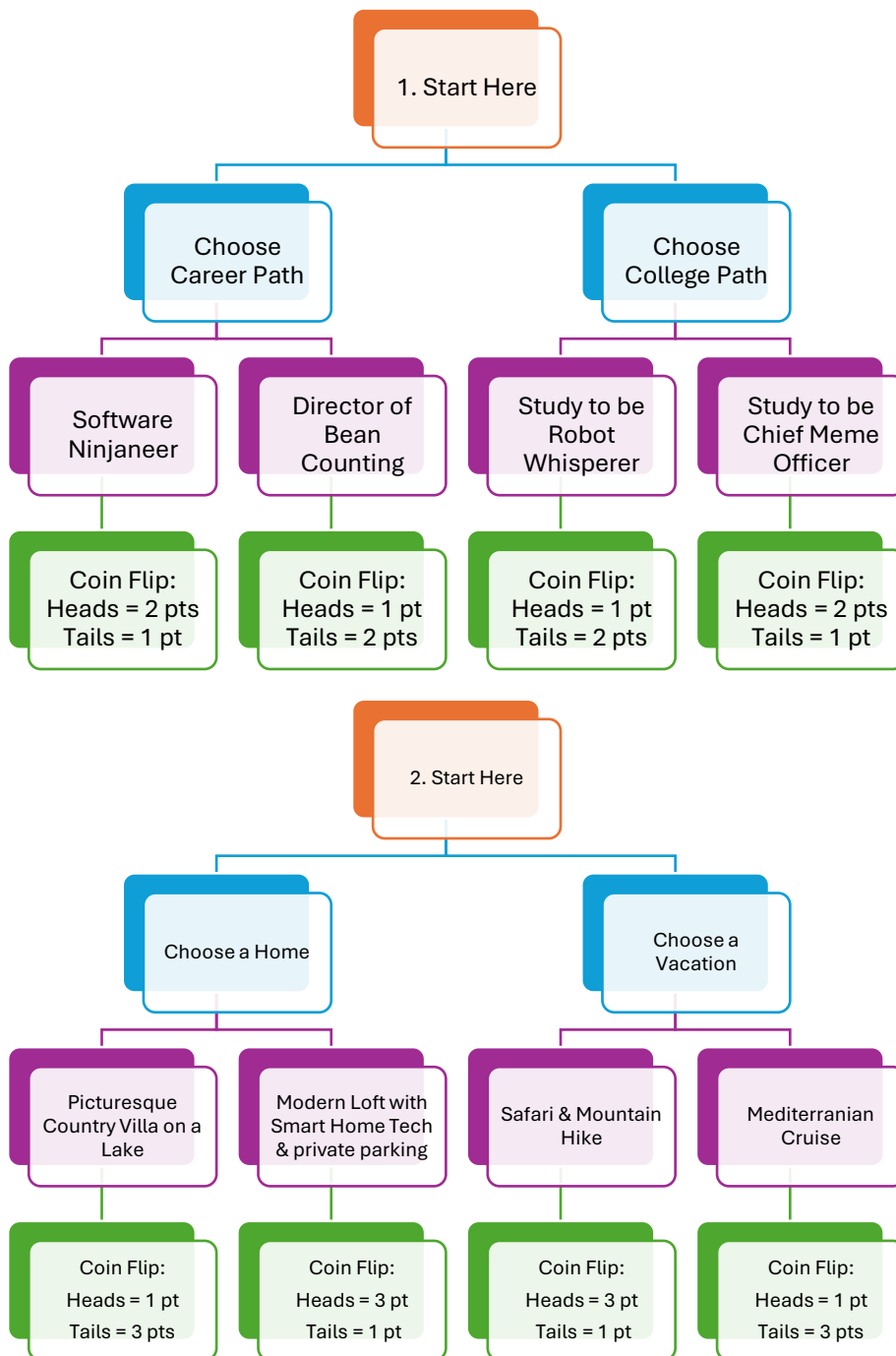




# Week 2

## Let's Play!

The Game of LIFE includes some decisions and some chance! This game can be played solo or in a group. There are 2 rounds. Each player goes through the chart to play each round. You will need a coin to flip (or you can ask Siri or Google to "flip a coin" for you to get a randomly generated result).



Tally up your points. The player with the most points wins!

## Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

*For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build up. -Ecclesiastes 3:1*



### Video Notes

After watching the video, discuss it with your group. Did anything inspire you? Use this space to take notes on interesting points made in the video. This is also a section for writing down prayer requests.

# Discussion Questions

1. Which one of these seasons from Ecclesiastes 3 best reflects the season(s) you are in now? Circle them. Share with your group/family what card you circled and why.

**A time to...**  
  
a) plant  
b) harvest

**A time to...**  
  
a) cry  
b) laugh

**A time to...**  
  
a) keep  
b) throw away

**A time to...**  
  
a) grieve  
b) dance

**A time to...**  
  
a) tear  
b) mend

**A time to...**  
  
a) tear down  
b) build up

2. On the blank game card, write one word you'd like to describe your next season of life. Why did you pick this word?
3. No matter how much we plan, unexpected events will happen. Have you ever experienced a season when life didn't unfold as you anticipated? How did God use it for good?
4. Why do you think the author of Ecclesiastes wants to remind us of the different seasons of life?
5. How does your relationship with God affect the way you play the Game of Life? (*actual life, not the board game*)
6. How would you define the end goal of the Game of Life? How does one "win"? (*actual life, not the board game*)
7. Draw an arrow pointing to the word on the wheel that best describes how your journey through life feels right now. Share about why you picked this word. (*joy, waiting, hardship, transition, growth*)
8. What is God teaching you through this time of life? Write your response here.



# Devotional Word Search

This puzzle is a word search puzzle that has a hidden message in it. First find all the words in the list. Words can go in any direction and share letters as well as cross over each other. Once you find all the words, copy the unused letters starting in the top left corner into the blanks to reveal the hidden message.

S A B U N V A C A T I O N S S  
D E A N T L I F E H H A Z A E  
E G C O Z F H R W Z F J J T T  
Z N K I E X Y M T T Q J E I S  
R V Y D O L E C H U H G S S A  
K R C U I H G M S H N P O F I  
H K E M Q W C E V E R Y P A S  
R S A T C N J O P S K B R C E  
P F C L I E M I T P O I U T L  
K A K I F R W F R I V A P I C  
E Y G V N M E O A Q N B D O C  
D M N M Z U D M C S A S F N E  
W G A M C P R M E C U Y I U L  
F A A G G T O I L N E A K C N  
V J E L T T Q G C E T W Y D U

car

every

game

satisfaction

vacation

choices

family

purpose

time

ways

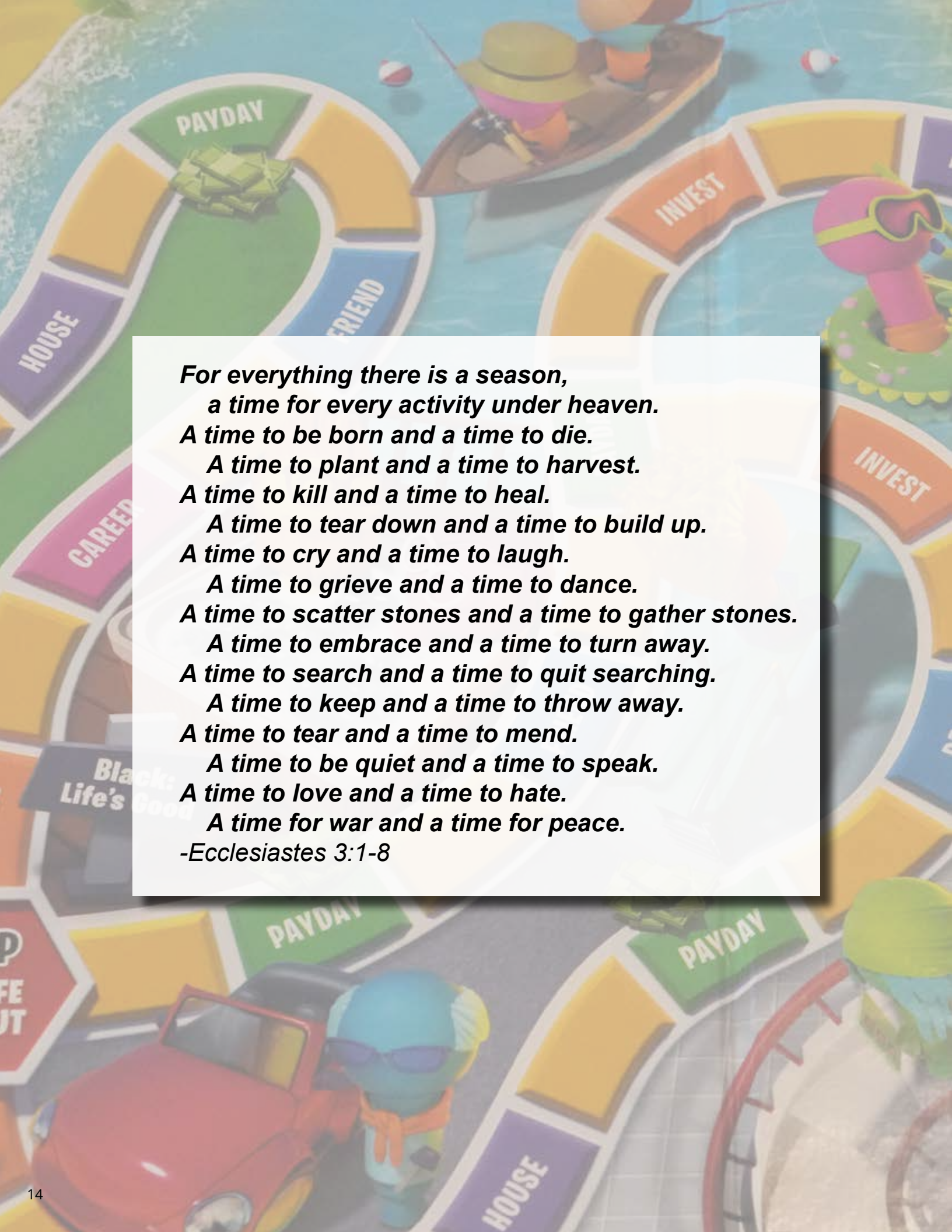
ecclesiastes

fun

retirement

toil

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —



***For everything there is a season,  
a time for every activity under heaven.  
A time to be born and a time to die.  
A time to plant and a time to harvest.  
A time to kill and a time to heal.  
A time to tear down and a time to build up.  
A time to cry and a time to laugh.  
A time to grieve and a time to dance.  
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.  
A time to embrace and a time to turn away.  
A time to search and a time to quit searching.  
A time to keep and a time to throw away.  
A time to tear and a time to mend.  
A time to be quiet and a time to speak.  
A time to love and a time to hate.  
A time for war and a time for peace.  
-Ecclesiastes 3:1-8***

# Daily Application

**Day 1:** Read this passage through three times.  
Write down one thing from this passage that you can apply to your life.

**Day 2:** Read the passage again. Underline a phrase that stands out to you today.  
Why does this stand out to you?

**Day 3:** Read the passage again. Circle a word that stands out to you today.  
Why does this stand out to you?

**Day 4:** Journal a reflection you have on this passage.

**Day 5:** Write a prayer based on what you've learned from this passage.





# Week 3

*Let's Play!*

## Perfect Pronunciation

**Who has perfect pronunciation? Test who can read these tongue twisters the fastest without messing up a word.**

1. One-One was a racehorse; Two-Two was one, too.  
When One-One won one race one day, Two-Two won one, too.
2. I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, but if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.
3. A synonym for cinnamon is a cinnamon synonym.
4. If you must cross a coarse, cross cow across a crowded cow crossing, cross the cross, coarse cow across the crowded cow crossing carefully.
5. Betty bought a bit of butter. But the butter Betty bought was bitter. So Betty bought a better butter, and it was better than the butter Betty bought before.
6. A skunk sat on a stump and thunk the stump stunk, but the stump thunk the skunk stunk.



## Read Ecclesiastes 3:9-15

*What do people really get for all their hard work? I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time.*

*-Ecclesiastes 3:9-10*



## Video Notes

After watching the video, discuss it with your group. Did anything inspire you? Use this space to take notes on interesting points made in the video. This is also a section for writing down prayer requests.

# Discussion Questions

1. How much of a perfectionist are you on a scale of one to ten?
2. What do you think is the root cause of our desire to be perfect or appear perfect?
3. How does perfectionism affect our relationships, work, or self-image?
4. How does perfectionism affect our relationship with God?
5. Ecclesiastes 7:20 says, "There is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins." Why is it important for us to admit we have flaws and sin?
6. What role does grace play in helping us let go of perfectionism?
7. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, "My grace is enough for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." What insights does this verse provide about perfectionism?

## Devotional Jumble Puzzle

Solve the anagrams in the puzzle below. Use the circled letters from the words in the top part to complete the final word or phrase at the bottom. Each circled letter is used just once.

MTCAH

			○	
--	--	--	---	--

Hint: pair

ESPAH

			○	○
--	--	--	---	---

Hint: form

MUINET

				○	○
--	--	--	--	---	---

Hint: 60 seconds

MRITE

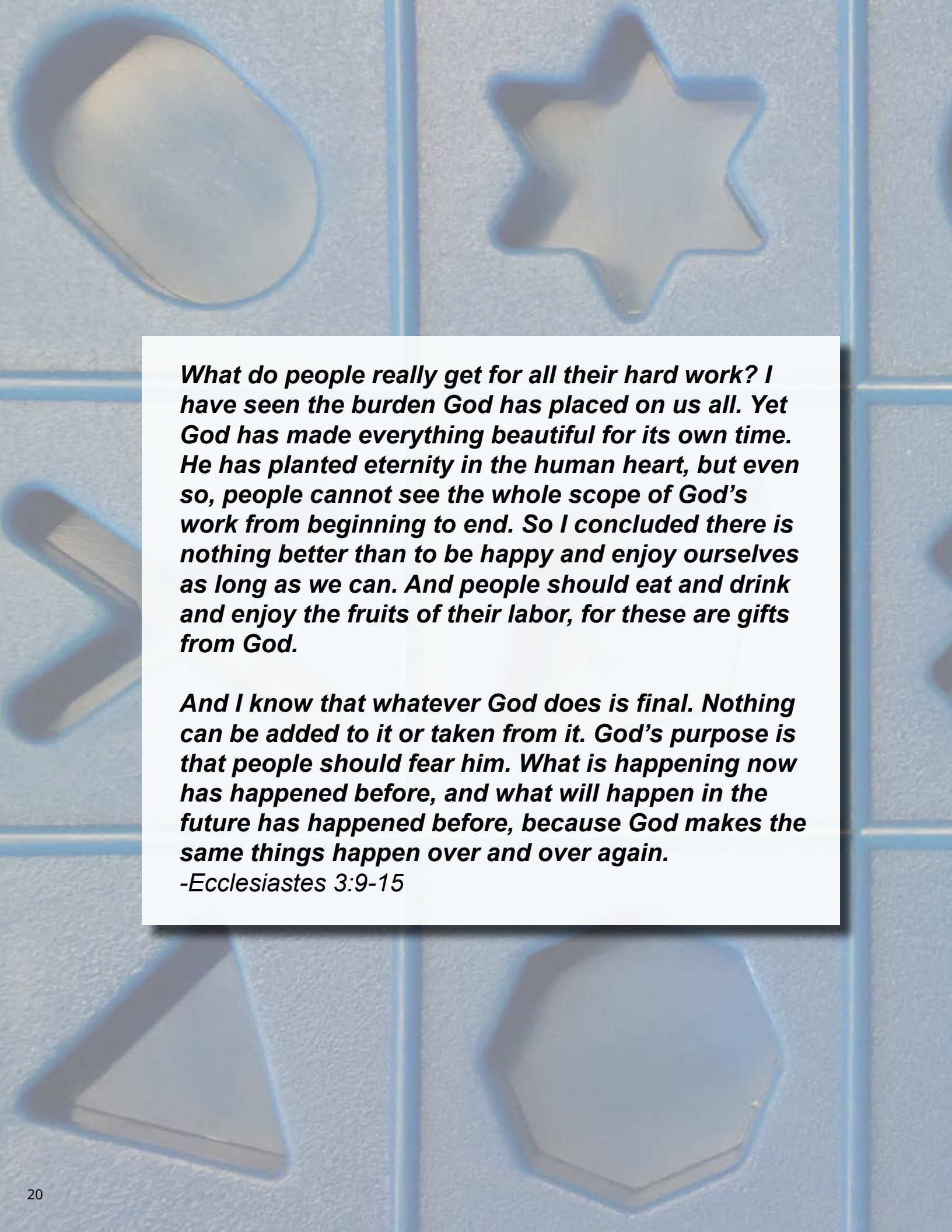
				○
--	--	--	--	---

Hint: counts down

			F		
--	--	--	---	--	--

Hint: God's plan is \_\_\_\_\_.

**“Perfectionism doesn’t believe in practice shots. It doesn’t believe in improvement. Perfectionism has never heard that anything worth doing is worth doing badly—and that if we allow ourselves to do something badly we might in time become quite good at it.”**



***What do people really get for all their hard work? I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.***

***And I know that whatever God does is final. Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. God's purpose is that people should fear him. What is happening now has happened before, and what will happen in the future has happened before, because God makes the same things happen over and over again.***

***-Ecclesiastes 3:9-15***

# Daily Application

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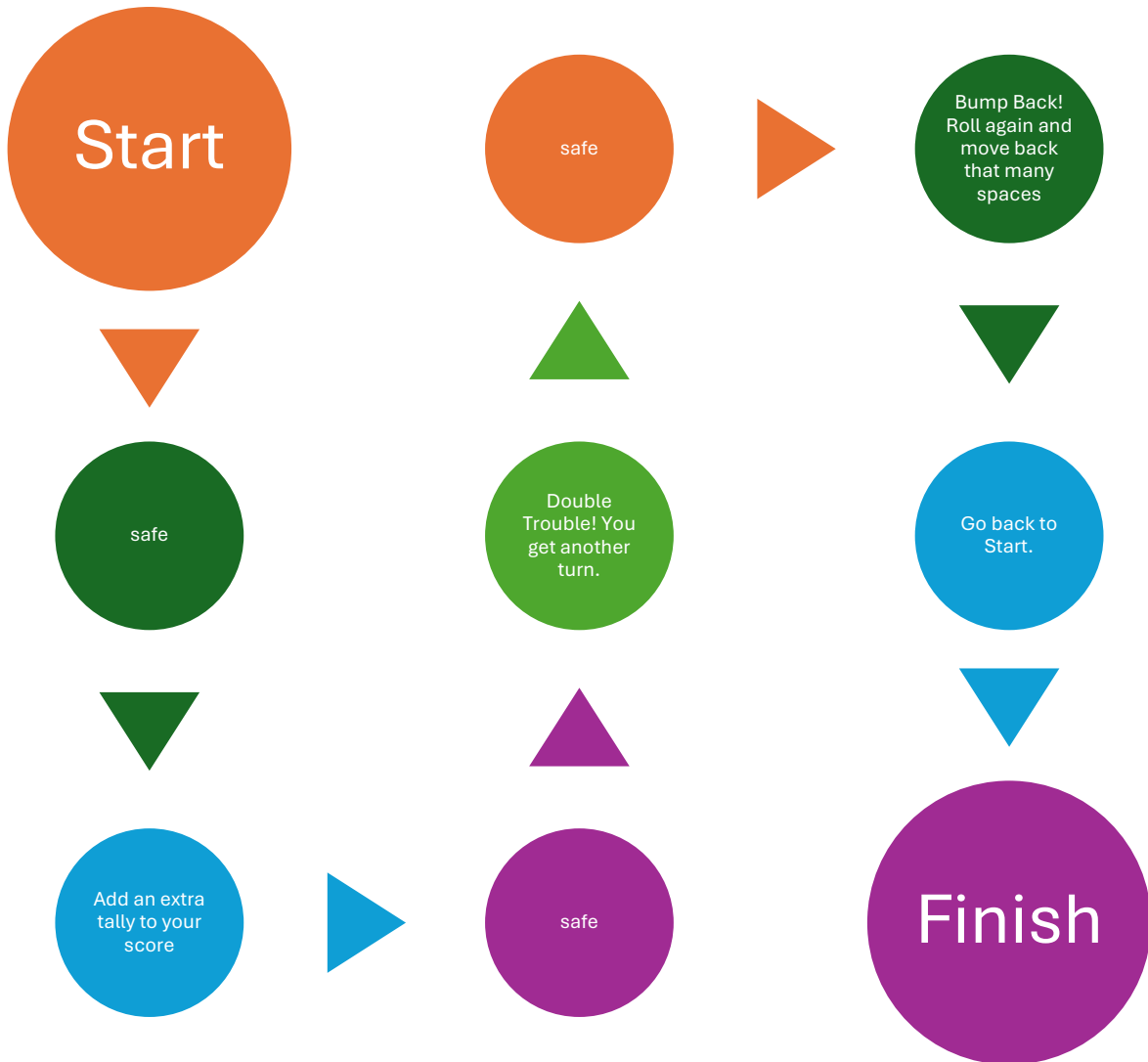




# Week 4

## Let's Play!

Play the Trouble game by moving through the game board. You may experience progress, setbacks, and delays on your journey to the goal. This game can be played solo or in a group. You will need a single six-sided die to roll (or you can ask Siri or Google to "roll a die" for you to get a randomly generated result). Each player will take turns rolling and moving through the board to the finish. Tally how many rolls it takes for each player to reach the finish.



**Tally number of turns:**

Player 1:

Player 2:

Player 3:

Player 4:

## Read Ecclesiastes 7

*Finishing is better than starting.  
Patience is better than pride  
-Ecclesiastes 7:8*

*Control your temper, for anger labels you a fool.  
-Ecclesiastes 7:9*



### Video Notes

After watching the video, discuss it with your group. Did anything inspire you? Use this space to take notes on interesting points made in the video. This is also a section for writing down prayer requests.

*Don't eavesdrop on others—you may hear your servant curse you.  
For you know how often you yourself have cursed others.  
-Ecclesiastes 7:21-22*

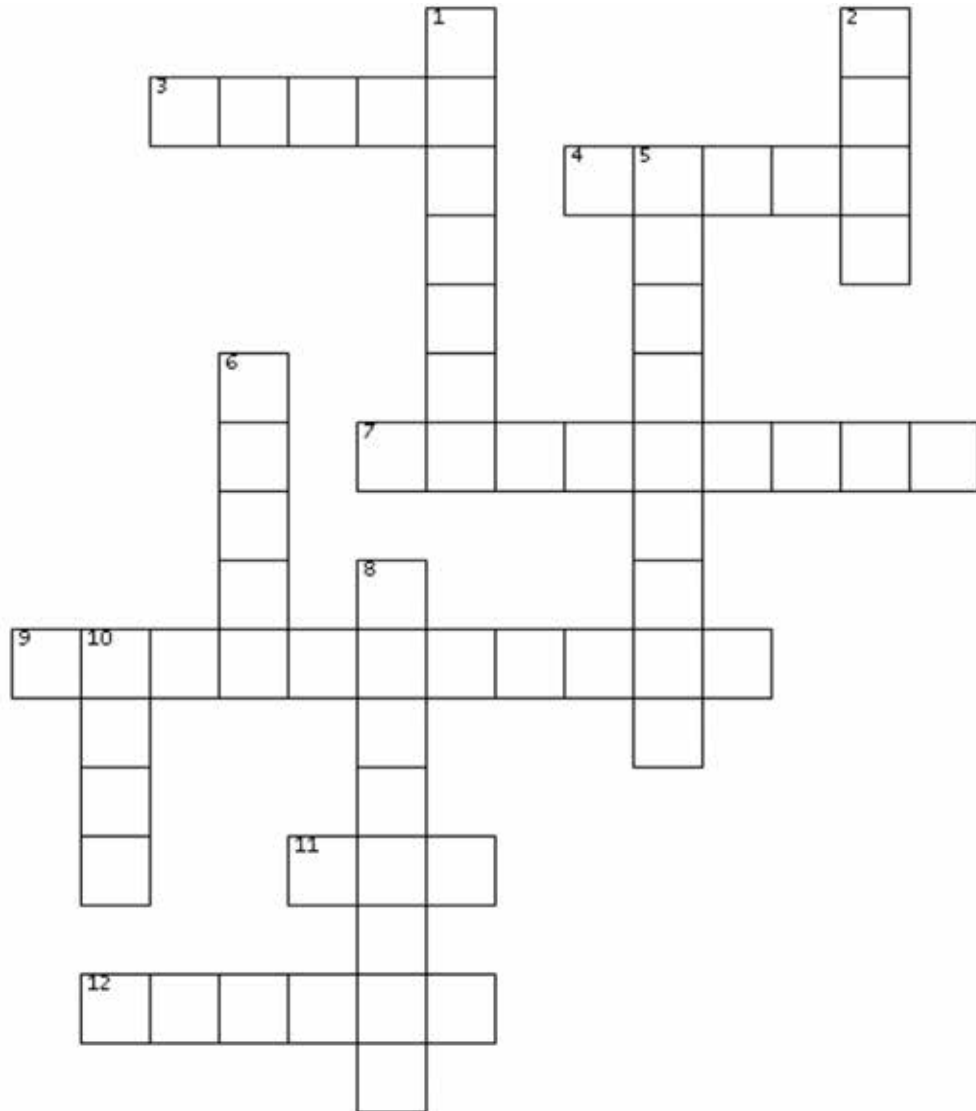
# Discussion Questions

1. When was the last time someone “bumped into you”, upset, or frustrated you?  
How did you react?
2. How do you usually react when someone wrongs you or bumps into you?
3. Which verse from Ecclesiastes 7 stands out to you? Why?  
How can you apply this verse in your life?
4. How can we “control our temper” and prevent anger from making conflict worse?
5. Verse 21 tells us not to pay attention to every word people say about us.  
What are some healthy ways to deal with people talking negatively about us?
6. Verse 22 reminds us that we have probably talked badly about others, too. How can remembering our own shortcomings help us deal with conflict?
7. Jesus didn’t avoid conflict, He dealt with it.  
What are some of the consequences of avoiding conflict?
8. We can’t avoid conflict, but we can handle conflict in healthy ways. How can we respond to conflict like Jesus?

**THERE’S  
MORE  
TROUBLE  
IN THE  
BUBBLE**



# Devotional Crossword



## Across

- 3. Resides in the lap of fools, according to Ecclesiastes 7:9
- 4. Pop-O-\_\_\_\_\_
- 7. In the \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Consternation
- 11. \_\_\_\_\_ goes the weasel
- 12. What happens to your game piece if another player lands on your space

## Down

- 1. What a deviant gets into
- 2. Cube of chance
- 5. What you pay by listening
- 6. What fools multiply in Ecclesiastes 10:14
- 8. Ecclesiastes 7:9 says, "Do not be quickly \_\_\_\_\_ in your spirit..."
- 10. A timed challenge between competitors

***Wisdom from Ecclesiastes 7  
A good reputation is more valuable than  
costly perfume.***

***-Ecclesiastes 7:1***

***Better to be criticized by a wise person than  
to be praised by a fool.***

***-Ecclesiastes 7:5***

***Extortion turns wise people into fools,  
and bribes corrupt the heart.***

***-Ecclesiastes 7:7***

***Finishing is better than starting.***

***Patience is better than pride.***

***-Ecclesiastes 7:8***

***Control your temper, for anger labels you a fool.***

***--Ecclesiastes 7:9***

***Don't eavesdrop on others—you may hear your  
servant curse you. For you know how often you  
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***-Ecclesiastes 7:21-22***

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# Week 5

## Let's Play!

Have each player write down something they've always wanted to do, but have been too afraid to try (e.g., starting a blog, going on a mission trip, sky diving, learn an instrument). Fold papers and mix them up.

Read the papers and try to guess who wrote each Risky Dream.

## Read Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

*Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest. Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother's womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things.*

*-Ecclesiastes 11:4-5*

## Prayer Requests

This is a section for writing down prayer requests.

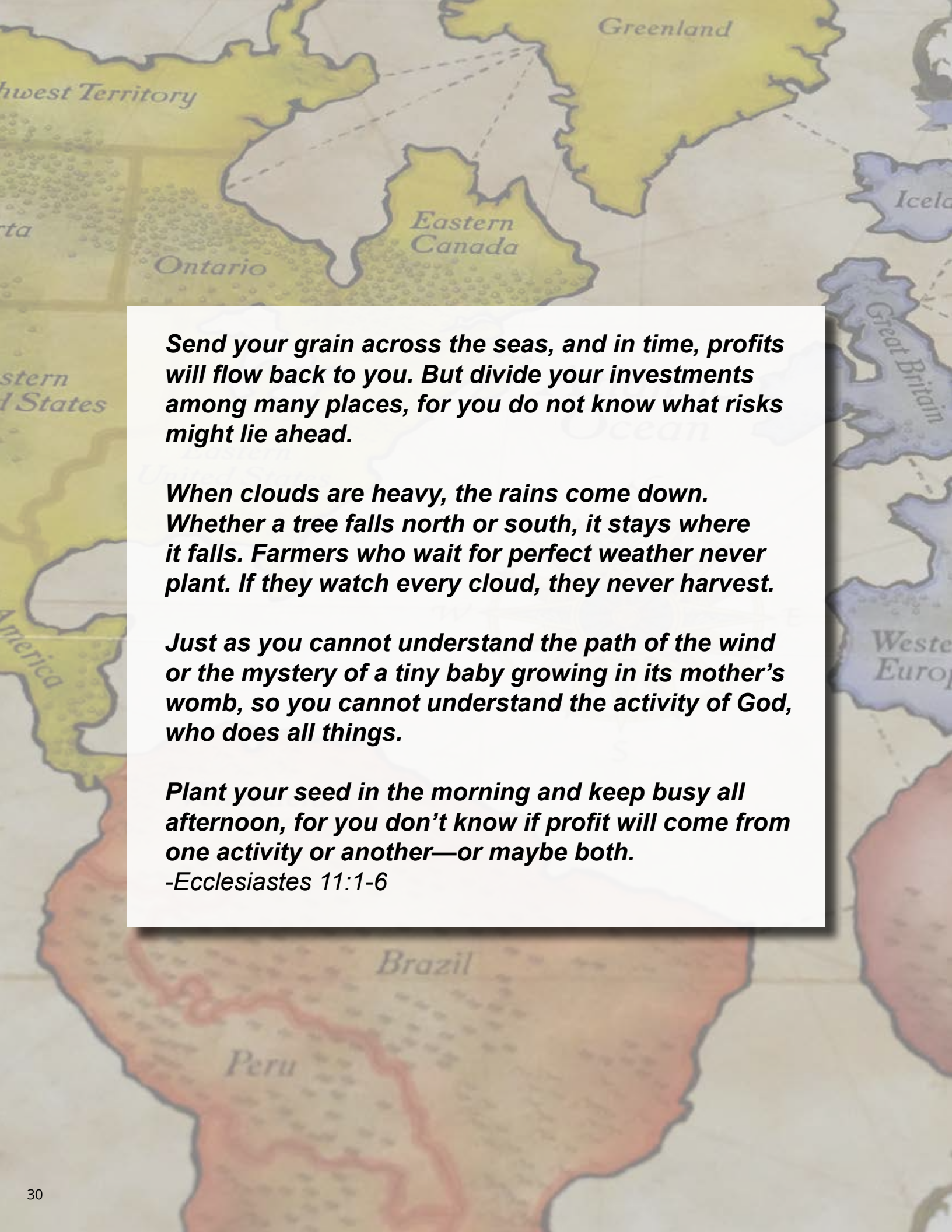
# Discussion Questions

1. Are you a risk-taker or risk-avoider?
2. Share a story of someone you know who took a big risk for God. What inspires you about their story?
3. What would life look like if we were never willing to take risks?
4. Faith in God requires risk. Do you believe this is true? Why or why not?
5. What are some risky actions that God asks of us? What are the potential returns of these risks?
6. Ecclesiastes 11:4 says, "Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest." Are you putting something off until the perfect conditions arise? What would it take for you to go ahead and plant that seed?
7. Ecclesiastes 11:6 says, "Plant your seed in the morning and keep busy all afternoon, for you don't know if profit will come from one activity or another—or maybe both." Taking risks means we will experience some failure. How can failure be part of spiritual growth and discipleship?
8. What is one risk God may be encouraging you to take right now?

## Devotional Word Search

V H W U S B A T T L E A  
E T A L E N T S J O Y S  
J C K L F I I R N A S T  
R D I P L O M A C Y D R  
I E Y N J I F M H M N A  
S T W P A R A B L E A T  
K I G A A X T N P X H E  
S U R P R I S E C C E G  
G G B O H D N F Z E L Y  
C O N Q U E R O O H D E  
R M O R N I N G P R I G

1. strategy
2. alliance
3. conquer
4. idlehands
5. parable
6. diplomacy
7. reward
8. morning
9. risk
10. battle
11. talents
12. surprise



***Send your grain across the seas, and in time, profits will flow back to you. But divide your investments among many places, for you do not know what risks might lie ahead.***

***When clouds are heavy, the rains come down. Whether a tree falls north or south, it stays where it falls. Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest.***

***Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother's womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things.***

***Plant your seed in the morning and keep busy all afternoon, for you don't know if profit will come from one activity or another—or maybe both.***

***-Ecclesiastes 11:1-6***

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