Discussion Questions | Ecclesiastes 8–9 | When Life Is Out of Control

1. **Name one or two things that you wish you could control, but have no power to do so.**

2. **Read Ecclesiastes 8:2–6 and 1 Peter 2:13–17.** Is there any example of authority that is difficult for you to comply with? How might doing so “for the Lord’s sake” change your attitude toward a leader you disagree with?

3. **Read Acts 5:29.** How do we distinguish between a command we dislike and one that requires disobedience to God? What is an example of when you need to obey God rather than man? Remember that honoring authority does not require remaining in danger or concealing abuse.

4. **Read Ecclesiastes 8:10–13.** When have you seen good things happen to bad people, or bad things happen to good people? How does fearing God help us cope when we observe things that are unfair or unjust?

5. **Read Ecclesiastes 9:7–10.** What choices are you most compelled to make in your life right now: enjoying your blessings, investing in loved ones, or working wholeheartedly? What tends to keep you from doing that?

6. **How did the sermon connect enjoying God’s gifts with trusting God’s hands?** What gift from God have you received that you enjoy? Do you ever feel guilty about enjoying it, or do you take pleasure in it freely?

7. **Read John 20:27–28.** What do Jesus' scarred hands reveal about who he is? How does his death and resurrection help you trust him when things are out of your control or when your circumstances don't make sense?

8. **What is one thing you need to release and acknowledge that it's in God's hands, and not yours?** What is one concrete step you will take this week to release control, enjoy God's provision, or give someone you love your undivided attention?