

SERIES OVERVIEW

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon sets out to discover if “life under the sun” is truly worth living. He goes on a journey throughout the book and finds himself originally declaring that everything under the sun is meaningless (Hebrew. Hebel—literally translated, vapor or breath. Used 38 times in this book). Solomon is overwhelmed with the truth that death is coming for every person, and that nothing worked for, earned, or pursued seems to have any lasting value. It’s not until Solomon starts focusing his attention on things “beyond the sun” that he recognizes life’s true meaning and purpose. He ultimately discovers that the whole purpose of man is to enjoy life and all its blessings, to live by faith, and to prepare for eternity by fearing God and keeping his commandments.

- [Watch Overview](#) (Watch as a group)

CONTEXT

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 speaks about the futility and repetitive nature of life, expressing that there is nothing new under the sun and all human endeavors are ultimately meaningless without God. It emphasizes the cyclical patterns of the natural world and human experiences, highlighting the transient nature of earthly pursuits.

THE BIG IDEA

Apart from God, life is meaningless. There’s nothing new under the sun, and temporary things cannot satisfy.

SCRIPTURE: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. 2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. 3 What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? 4 A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. 5 The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises. 6 The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. 7 All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again. 8 All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. 9 What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. 10 Is there a thing of which it is said, “See, this is new”? It has been already in the ages before us. 11 There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.

ICEBREAKER

Using the acronym **L.I.F.E.** chose one or two words that begins with each letter that will lead to a life of meaning and purpose instead of a life that is void of these things. (Example, **L=Love** unconditionally)

STARTER QUESTION

What is one thing that stood out to you from the sermon and why do you think God wants you to remember this truth?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Watch the 8 minute Ecclesiastes Overview Video as a group. [Watch Overview.](#)

Read **The Big Idea** above. Underline the most important phrase and explain why.

The ultimate goal of the book of Ecclesiastes is to help discover the true meaning of life. Share what you think is the true meaning of life. What do verses 1-11 teach us about the true meaning of life?

Read verses 4-7. How can understanding the transient cyclical nature of earthly pursuits influence our spiritual journey?

In verses 8-10 we learn that life under the sun is exhausting and we are never satisfied. What are some of the things that cause personal exhaustion and cultural exhaustion?

Verse 11 leads us to the reality that we will die and one day be forgotten. How has your life changed knowing that God put a deep spiritual desire in you to leave behind something that will outlive you and created you for so much more than life under the sun?

Discuss the meaning of this C.S. Lewis quote, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." How should this impact us when we are dissatisfied in life?

Group discussion continued: Who do most scholars agree is the author of Ecclesiastes, who calls himself the Preacher in the text? What evidence leads them to this author?

PRAYER (In gender based groups)

*Share praises, answered prayers, and prayer requests.

Closing Prayer (together as a group)

God, we are grateful that you give meaning to our lives. Help us pursue the things of your Kingdom and not the meaningless things of the world. We pray the spiritual legacy we leave on this earth will have eternal significance on our family and people we shared the Gospel with in words and actions. Jesus we give our all to You, amen.
