

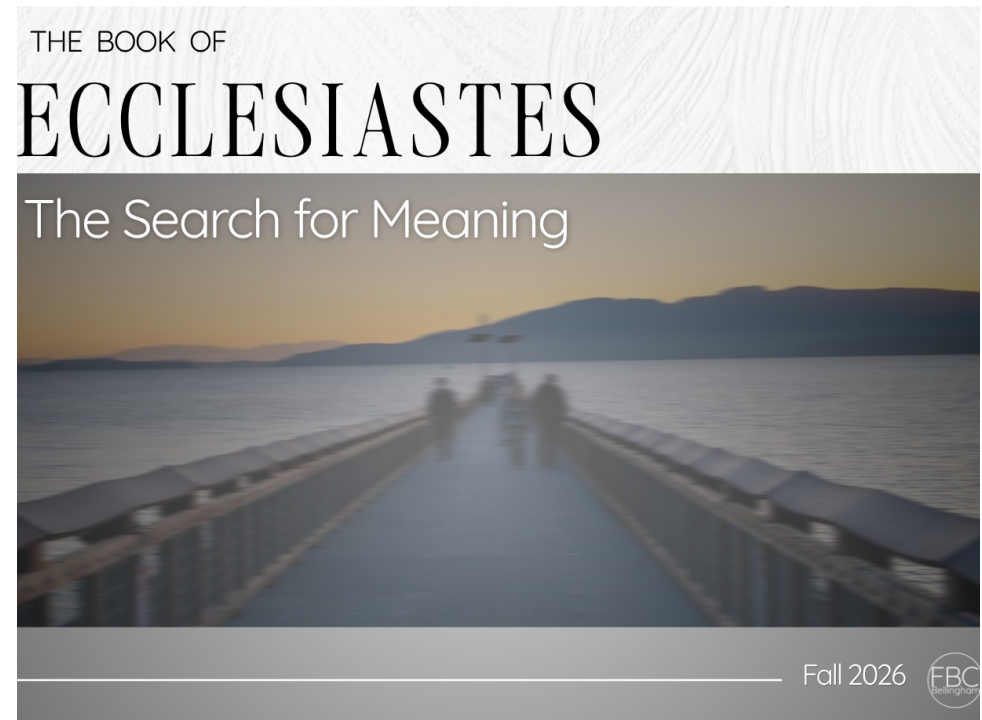
Saturday, September 26, 2026

"The Christian says, "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.'" (CS Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)

¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

What hope does Paul's words "light and momentary" give you?

Ask God to help you fix your eyes on the eternal, so that the absurd and baffling things of this world will be put into proper perspective.



"The Search for Meaning" • Week 1
The Book of Ecclesiastes

In a world that just seems so baffling and frustrating at times, the Church has a resource to help makes sense of it all. The book of Ecclesiastes, written almost 3,000 years ago, is still surprisingly relevant to our 21st century world.

Here we've come so far since Ecclesiastes was first written down, but it seems that humans are still dealing with the reality that life is difficult and frustrating and absurd at times. We are still searching for meaning in all the messiness of this world.

The book of Ecclesiastes helps us on this journey. The Teacher, whose words are shared in this book, reveals his own search to makes sense of this life. On the one hand, we can look around and sing with Louis Armstrong, "What a Wonderful World." On the other hand, we can look around and see just how "un-wonderful it is."

The invitation is to go on this journey with the Teacher and discover little by little, through one thought-experiment after another, what God has to show us in this very realistic book of the Bible.

Friday, September 25, 2026

Ecclesiastes 1:8-11 (NIV) -

- ⁸ *All things are wearisome,
more than one can say.
The eye never has enough of seeing,
nor the ear its fill of hearing.*
- ⁹ *What has been will be again,
what has been done will be done again;
there is nothing new under the sun.*
- ¹⁰ *Is there anything of which one can say,
"Look! This is something new"?
It was here already, long ago;
it was here before our time.*
- ¹¹ *No one remembers the former generations,
and even those yet to come
will not be remembered
by those who follow them.*

The Teacher here seems to be wrestling with the problem of satisfaction. Do you ever find yourself thinking, "If I just had _____, then things would be okay?"

Where do people looking for satisfaction in this life? What kinds of things?

Where do you sometimes look for satisfaction in things other than God?

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Ecclesiastes 1:4-7 (NIV) -

⁴ *Generations come and generations go,
but the earth remains forever.*

⁵ *The sun rises and the sun sets,
and hurries back to where it rises.*

⁶ *The wind blows to the south
and turns to the north;
round and round it goes,
ever returning on its course.*

⁷ *All streams flow into the sea,
yet the sea is never full.
To the place the streams come from,
there they return again.*

The Teacher here is wrestling with the problem of time, and how time just seems to come and go, with nothing to show for it. ("The sea is never full.")

Have you ever felt this way? That you've done all this stuff but with nothing to show for it?

It seems that the Teacher here has forgotten his place in God's Story. History is not simply circular, but is going somewhere; there is an end coming to this timeline. How can that truth fill us with hope before the end comes?

Monday, September 21, 2026

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-3 (NIV)

¹ *The words of the Teacher, a son of David, king in Jerusalem:*

² *"Meaningless! Meaningless!"
says the Teacher.
"Utterly meaningless!
Everything is meaningless."*

1. Recall the imagery of the smoke or vapor from the sermon. How have you experienced life as like smoke or vapor?

2. As we begin this time in the book of Ecclesiastes, what are your initial feelings about it?

3. Take a moment to ask Jesus what his feelings are on this book.

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Read out loud: Ecclesiastes 1:4-11 (NIV) -

⁴ Generations come and generations go,
but the earth remains forever.

⁵ The sun rises and the sun sets,
and hurries back to where it rises.

⁶ The wind blows to the south
and turns to the north;
round and round it goes,
ever returning on its course.

⁷ All streams flow into the sea,
yet the sea is never full.
To the place the streams come from,
there they return again.

⁸ All things are wearisome,
more than one can say.
The eye never has enough of seeing,
nor the ear its fill of hearing.

⁹ What has been will be again,
what has been done will be done again;
there is nothing new under the sun.

¹⁰ Is there anything of which one can say,
"Look! This is something new"?
It was here already, long ago;
it was here before our time.

¹¹ No one remembers the former generations,
and even those yet to come
will not be remembered
by those who follow them.

1. Did you notice anything about how these words flowed out of your mouth?

2. What do you think the author might be trying to convey by that?

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Ecclesiastes 1:3 (NIV):

³ *What do people gain from all their labors
at which they toil under the sun?*

This is the key question throughout the book of Ecclesiastes. Do you read it more as a rhetorical question, implying the answer "nothing?"

Or do you read it more as an invitation that says "I don't know, but let's find out?"

Why do you think you read it that particular way?

Name the positives - what kinds of things have you "gained" in your life? (What has brought joy or peace or satisfaction, perhaps contentment?)

James 1:17 (NIV) - ¹⁷ *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

Take a moment to praise God for the good gifts He's given.