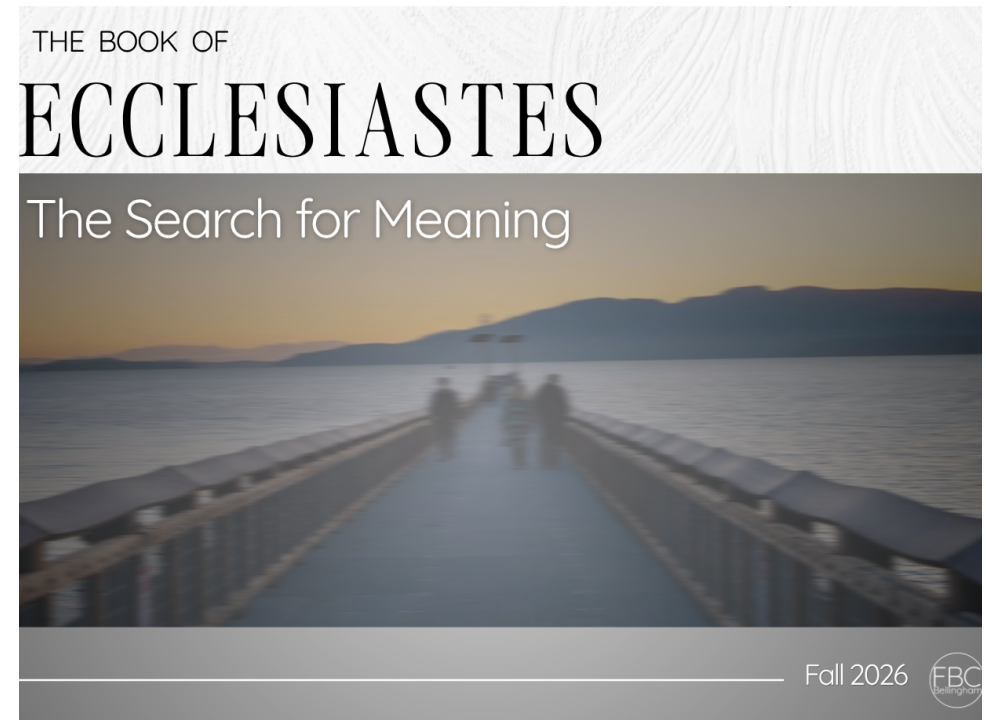


Saturday, October 3, 2026

List at least 20 things for which you are grateful, and which you see as gifts from God. Then take a moment to love Jesus and praise him for these things.



"The Search for Meaning" • Week 2
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, October 2, 2026

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26 (NIV) - ²⁴ *A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God,* ²⁵ *for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?* ²⁶ *To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.*

What is your motivation for getting up each morning?

How would you describe true joy (v. 25) to a friend who knows nothing of this?

What would your life look like later today if you truly believed these words in this passage?

Thursday, October 1, 2026

Ecclesiastes 2:17-18 (NIV) - *¹⁷ So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. ¹⁸ I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me.*

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 (NIV) - *²⁴ A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, ²⁵ for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?*

There is a tension between the Teacher's emotions in vv17-18 and his convictions in vv24-25. Do you ever feel the same tension?

Do you know people who express the same kind of tension or confusion?

How can we live with it, or encourage others to live with it?

Monday, September 28, 2026

As we make our way through the book of Ecclesiastes, we've got to hold the tension of letting the book be what it is, while at the same time living on this side of the cross and resurrection. We have an "advantage" that the Teacher (of Ecclesiastes) doesn't have!

THE Teacher, Jesus Christ, gives us a fuller picture of reality than what was available to Ecclesiastes.

We all have to figure out what Jesus has to do with the real stuff of life that Ecclesiastes is talking about.

Matthew 16:13-19 (NIV) - *¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"*

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, ^e and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

How would you respond to Jesus' question if he asked it today?
"Who do people say I am?"

How would you respond to someone who asked you what you think about Jesus?

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

Matthew 16:21-23 (NIV) - ²¹ *From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.*

²² *Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"*

²³ *Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."*

Jesus tells it like it is - he must encounter suffering. Peter then tries to control what Jesus should or shouldn't do about it. Are there moments when you try to control what Jesus should or shouldn't do? What do those circumstances entail?

How does Jesus' reply to Peter sit with you? What do you make of it?

Invite the Holy Spirit to point out any area you might have merely human concerns, rather than the concerns of God.

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Matthew 16:24-27 (NIV) - ²⁴ *Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. ²⁶ What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done."*

Jesus' words here echo a little bit of the Teacher's search for the meaning of life in our sermon this past Sunday - "What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?"

What do you think Jesus is getting at here?

What does "the good life" look like for you?