

Series: Ecclesiastes

Sermon #1: The World Is Not Enough

Ecclesiastes 1:1 – 2:26

Dr. Matt Cassidy --- February 7, 2021

Well, good morning, Grace! And this is history. You are making history. It's the first time in eleven months since we had a second service. Oh, maybe this is the beginning of the craziness ending, right?

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

So, why don't we start off right? How about this... " 'Meaningless! Meaningless!' said the teacher. 'Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.' "

Well, that's a fine how-do-you-do. It sounds like a cynical, drunk philosophy professor at some graduation ceremony watching all the new graduates being all happy and optimistic, and he's over there slurping his scotch, saying, "Yeah, everything is meaningless."

But it's not. That is not where the source of that quote is. That quote is from the Bible. It is penned by Solomon in a book called Ecclesiastes. And Solomon is the wisest, most powerful, wealthiest man in the fifth century B. C. And that's what he says about life. It's the Book of Ecclesiastes, and we're going to study that for seven weeks together and it's going to be an adventure. It's about the meaning and purpose of life. And Solomon is uniquely able to give us a perspective that we can't have because, frankly, we don't have the resources, the time, the intelligence, or maybe the bravery to do it. And Solomon's going to tell us the way it is, and it's going to sound raw, sometimes irreverent. But it will be in our face.

I think he said it first: *You want the truth? You can't handle the truth.*

That's what's found in the Book of Ecclesiastes.

Solomon has a problem, and the reason he's able to come to these conclusions is because he's able to experience so many different experiences of life. And then he would stop and think about them. He'd go on long walks. He would think through it. He'd seen so many funerals. He'd seen good funerals and bad funerals. He'd seen wealth come and wealth evaporate. He saw

innocence violated, he saw evil men get away with doing evil. And then he would ponder that. He would go on these walks and he would think to himself, *What is the gain of anything? Why even bother trying?*

It's a fantastic book. And it spares no one. If you think, *Oh, I'm a committed follower of God and I'm going to be immune to some of his teachings*, that's not true. A shallow, superficial, or distracted life will not be tolerated when we go through the Book of Ecclesiastes.

Solomon's place in the world is somewhat unique. In God's gift to him, he was given—literally, by God—great wisdom and wealth and power. And in that he is able to go places that we can't go, to the extremes that we can't. Sometimes because we fear going down some road, maybe it's because we don't have the resources to get there. Or we can go down some road, but we can't go all the way down it. Those limitations didn't apply to Solomon. He had the resources. He had the gas—unlimited fuel. And he rode down these roads and they showed up to be dead ends, cul-de-sacs, without value.

Ecclesiastes 1:2

“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

Unlimited exploration, and he comes back and in the summary of his quest, this is what he says, chapter 1, verse 2: “‘Meaningless! Meaningless!’ says the Teacher. “‘Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.’” And that's a blunt summary of the book itself, but also of chapters 1 and 2 where he goes about doing experiments to find out the purpose and meaning of life. That's what we'll look at today in chapters 1 and 2. And he's just trying to prove his case.

If you've got an outline, this is how it looks. He's going to talk about how the Teacher sees life, and then we're going to look at what the Teacher sees in life. How does he perceive reality, and then, what does he see in that reality?

How the Teacher Sees Life

So, when we talk about, first, what the Teacher sees in life, it's important for us to get his world view, his perspective. What are the parameters of his experiment?

Ecclesiastes 1:3

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

And that's what he says: "What do people gain from all their labors which they toil under the sun?"

Key Phrase #1: Under the Sun

There are key phrases to understanding the paradigm that Solomon is going to be looking through. The first one is the idea of "under the sun." "Under the sun" is a phrase that's used about thirty times in the Book of Ecclesiastes and nowhere else in the Old Testament. "Under the sun" means earth—that's all we have—just the planet earth. "Under the sun"—meaning under the heavens. There's no spiritual dynamic to creation or even our souls themselves. *I'm just going to limit this to "under the sun."*

And then another phrase that's important here is the idea that if this is all the world is, then how come the world is not enough? How come there's the feeling that there's something missing? Why is there restlessness under the sun?

Key Phrase #2: Meaningless / Vanity

The second phrase is one he'll use throughout the book—"Meaningless! Meaningless!" Some of your translations will say, "Vanity! Vanities!" He'll use this about thirty-eight times. And in the context, that word is used outside of Ecclesiastes and it gives us a good definition. The word *hevel* in Hebrew literally means "vapor" or "smoke"—"a breath." That's how the word translates literally.

And the idea is that it's a metaphor for the human experience of existence itself; that life is temporary, it's fleeting, it's here and gone. It's a wisp. That's all. But also, the metaphor

shows that life, human experience, is an enigma. It's a paradox. It's not something you can grab. You can't grab smoke. It's frustrating, if nothing else.

Key Phrase #3: Gain

So, there's "under the sun" and there's "meaningless." And now the word "gain." That's how he's keeping score. He's an accountant.

Ecclesiastes 1:3

What do people GAIN from all their labors at which they toil under the sun?

Look at the passage again. It says, "What do people gain from all of their labors at which they toil under the sun?" It's a simple financial term. It's an accounting term. He says, *At the end of all of this, what's left over? Positive, negative, break even? What's going on here? After a thousand years, after ten thousand years of funerals, what remains?*

Jesus, in the newer Testament, says, "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world if it costs him his soul?" There's an accounting term as well. What does it gain by that?

So, he's not being pessimistic; he's just being an accountant, saying, "At the end, what difference does any of this matter? Is there anything good that comes from this?"

This week I'm just reading and listening to Ecclesiastes 1 and 2, and I could not get Kansas out of my mind. They're a classic rock band. Listen to this, "Dust in the Wind."

**I close my eyes
Only for a moment, and the moment's gone**

(Now it's forever gone.)

**All my dreams
Pass before my eyes, a curiosity.**

(... and I wonder ...)

**Dust in the wind
All they are is dust in the wind
Just a drop of water in an endless sea
All we do
Crumbles to the ground, though we refuse to see**

(... to acknowledge that or think about it ...)

**Nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky
It slips away
And all your money won't another minute buy.**

(And all the money we have, we cannot buy one more moment back.)

Yeah, there it is. Time and death will erase every single thing as though it never existed. That's how the Teacher looks at life under the sun. He's looking for gain in that.

What Does the Teacher Perceive?

The second point on the outline: What does he see? What does the teacher see? I'll just give you an outline there. He's going to summarize things: What I learned in summary is going to say, *Look, here's the research that I did. Here's what I experienced, what I lived. And then here's something you need to know. Here's something you can take away from it.* That was his outline—I thought it'd be pretty good for ours too.

A. What I Learned: Life Is Passing

Ecclesiastes 1:4

Generations of people come and generations of people go but the earth remains forever.

Part one: What did he learn? That life is passing. It's short, it's brief. It's faster than you think. Look at verse 4. It says, "Generations of people come and generations of people go but the earth remains forever."

And then he just paints a picture for us in verse 5 and the next few verses there. He's talking about how the sun rises and the sun sets; the winds blow east and then the winds blow west; the streams fill the rivers, the rivers fill the ocean, the ocean fills the stream. Just the power of the planet always being there consistently, doing what the planet does. And yet, men and women come and go. He's looking at the four elements and saying, *They've got a lot on us. Comparatively speaking, they're permanent. We're in transition.*

Ecclesiastes 1:11

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

He says in verse 11, “No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.” Look at you and your life, living full, having a family, seventy, ninety years. The planet says, *Never heard of you. I don’t even know about the generations coming ahead of you. I’ve already forgotten them and they don’t even exist yet. You’re going to die and be forgotten very soon.*

What does it gain to even bother living? What’s left under the sun?



The world is not enough. Just ask Planet Earth. Solomon is appealing to creation itself. Look at the logo for our series. I wanted to make sure we have the ocean in there and the mountains, because wave after wave continues, before, after, and during our existence. It doesn’t care about us. The mountains will stay there and they won’t care before, during, or after. They won’t even care about our future family. Don’t know, don’t care.

And then we as humans have the audacity to name rocks. Think about that. We fly to Boston, we interview Plymouth Rock.

Hello, Plymouth Rock, we'd like to talk to you about ...

First of all, don't call me Plymouth Rock, okay? Because I was here ten thousand years before your little pilgrims showed up, and I'm not even bothered to remember the name of your country because I'll be here ten million years later and you'll just be a blip on the map. So, my name is not Plymouth Rock. My name is Ralph. What do you want?

We say, I conquered a mountain. Wow, look at man and his ingenuity. I conquered a mountain, Mt. Everest.

Well, interview Mt. Everest. She'll tell you, My mountain is a graveyard for people. And if you think you've conquered me because you made it to the top, call me in maybe 2031. We'll talk about who's here and who's not.

He's calling out the brevity of man. And because of the brevity of man and its generations, life is meaningless. Because death and time will completely eradicate everything that we love, like it never even existed. We're just dust in the wind. That's all. Just dust in the wind.

B. What I Lived

Here's what the teacher lived. This is his experiment. This is his test case. He's a unique person, again, that he's going to take the various distractions that keep us not thinking about the fact that we will die and be forgotten—he's going to take the distractions—or maybe the distractions are finding purpose and meaning in life. He'll take the four most popular ones to a place that you and I can't imagine. He has the fuel to get there, he has the courage to take it to its cliff.

1. Pursuit of Wisdom

The first one is his pursuit of wisdom. He says, *Hey, do you know what? I'm just going to become wise. That's what I'll do. I'll seek out greater understanding. That's the cure to life.*

Ecclesiastes 1:17

Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom but I learned at the end of the day that this too is like chasing the wind.

Verse 17: “Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom but I learned at the end of the day that this too is like chasing the wind.”

If you know the story of Solomon as the wisest man in that period of time, his walls were covered with diplomas—various degrees, different disciplines. He becomes an expert in many of them. And what does he have to show for that? What does he learn from all that education?

Ecclesiastes 1:18

For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; ... the more knowledge, the more grief.

It says in verse 18: “For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; ... the more knowledge, the more grief.”

The more he thought, the more he went into research, the more questions he had coming out of it. There was nothing gained in that. In all that education, he still couldn't find what he was looking for. There was still something missing. He was still feeling as though he were dust in the wind, because the earth is not enough. His soul cries out for something else.

2. Pursuit of Pleasures

So then, he thinks, *I'm going to be a rock star. I'm going to get a new house, I want a bathroom where I can play baseball, I want a king tub for ten plus me. That's it, that's what I'm going to do.*

He has this reckless pursuit of passions for pleasure. Chapter 2. The scene's brightened. If you read, you can see in Chapter 2, *Oh, look, maybe I have a little hope here. Why not have some fun?* And that's what he does. It's a multiyear, all-out commitment to decadence, hedonism. I just want to feel good.

Ecclesiastes 2:3

First, I tried cheering myself with wine.

And so, verse 3: “First, I tried cheering myself with wine.” And he is off and running.

If you read in his story—his literal story is going on in 1 Kings chapter 4—when he talks about having a party, we’re looking at 30,000 to 40,000 people in Jerusalem and having a very merry time. It says, “Judah and Israel were as many, as much as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.”

How much wine do you think it takes to fill a soul? A lot. More than you can buy. It’s never enough. He ends up with nothing more than a hangover.

3. Pursuit of Stuff

And so, if wisdom doesn’t win the day, and just pleasure doesn’t, he says, *I’m going to build things. I’m going to collect stuff.* And now it’s in his great pursuit of stuff. And this section of Scripture is the most detailed, because Solomon is saying, *Here we go.* He’s going to collect things like no one else has.

Ecclesiastes 2:4

I undertook great projects: I built houses ...

And so, it says in verses 4 through 9, “I undertook great projects. I built houses ...” Can we just stop with that, because we might think, *Oh yeah, I know people that build houses.* If you look at 1 Kings chapters 9 and 10, first of all, it’s not a house, it’s houses, and it’s not really a house. These are castles. These are palaces. The main palace, the one in Jerusalem, took thirteen years to build. I can’t imagine being married to this guy.

Hey honey, guess what? We’re going to have a baby. Could you build maybe something with a nursery in it?

I'm on it. I'll be right back. Hold on a little longer... hold on, honey ... okay, now we're moving in.

Really? Your firstborn is thirteen. He's in eighth grade. Thanks for that.

He built houses, he built palaces. This main house was so beautiful that the queen of Egypt came to visit and was amazed. When a queen is amazed at your main house, you must have a pretty nice place.

And even still, I bet some of you are thinking, *I know people with houses. Sure, I mean, they've got a house—they've got a main house and they've got a lake house and they have a beach house. They've got a mountain house. Maybe I know some people. I know people that know people that have a place in Sweden and Spain.*

That's not what we're talking about. It says in the Bible that Solomon built cities. He built cities—six of them! Picture him riding up in his chariot, cutting the ribbon, you're the mayor. *Got to go, five more. I want more balloons at the next scene, okay? I'm doing stuff, I'm building things.*

Ecclesiastes 2:5-8a

I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. ⁶I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. ⁷I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. ⁸I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces.

He stepped back and said, *You know what? Kind of bland. Let's fix them up. Let's make them pretty.* So, the passage continues. “I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. I bought male and female slaves ...”—because you can—“... and then I had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me.” You're winning. “I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces.”

It says in 1 Kings chapter 10—let me read it—“Gold and silver were regarded as common stones in Jerusalem.” That's how wealthy he was. That's how much he collected.

Ecclesiastes 2:8b

I acquired men and women singers ...

But this is my favorite. This is what I would do, I think. He says, “I acquired men and women singers ...” Listen, I would love to see the Eagles. I tried to see the Eagles because I’m a big fan. My daughter saw the Eagles twice, the front row, one of them. I hate her for it, but anyway, let’s not talk about that thing.

But he didn’t host the Eagles concert; he didn’t buy the Eagles label; he didn’t hire the Eagles to sing. He **bought** the Eagles. He bought the Eagles, he bought Fleetwood Mac. I mean, can you imagine what it’s like at this palace? *Okay, Don, okay, let’s go. I know about Glen, he’s got a son. Get out there on the stage. Fleetwood Mac, you’re on next. Quit fighting. Beyoncé, get away from the mirror long enough to get on deck. You’re going to be on pretty soon too.*

Ecclesiastes 2:8c-9

... and a harem as well—the delights of a man’s heart ...

⁹ I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me.

He owned them. And more to come. “I had a harem as well”—of course he did, you know—“... the delight of a man’s heart ... I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me.” Yeah, man. This is it. I told you, he has more gas to go down these roads farther than anyone else has before.

Ecclesiastes 2:10

I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.

And this is it, the summation of his endeavor on this third road: “I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.” Good. Awesome. He went farther than we could go, he went farther than we would go.

Ecclesiastes 2:11

Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind ...

And this is his conclusion. I'm glad he did this, because this got to fill all the voids. Is that what he says? No. "Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything is meaningless"—there was no profit, there was no gain—"a chasing after the wind."

Dust in the wind. The world is not enough. Still, something is missing. We have an eternal, everlasting longing, and temporal stuff can't fill it. And the brevity of life and time itself erases everything as though it never existed.

Many of you probably know the actor Jim Carrey. I don't know if you know his story, but it's rags to riches. He had to drop out of high school so he could be a custodian so he could help pay for family needs because they were living in a van as a family together. And he dreamed of being rich and famous and powerful and all that. And he thought that maybe one day he would be an actor and he would get twenty million dollars for a single film. So, he wrote a check to himself for twenty million dollars for a film. That's what he was paid for *The Cable Guy*. He's worth a lot more than twenty million now. He's also dated for long periods of time various supermodels. So, there's that.

I hope everybody could get rich and famous and will have everything they ever dreamed of, so they will know it's not the answer.

--Jim Carrey

Here's Jim Carrey's advice to us: "I hope everybody could get rich and famous and will have everything they ever dreamed of, so they will know it's not the answer."

4. Pursuit of Hard Work

Boom. Wisdom, pleasure, construction, possessions ... now he's going to try and pursue just working hard. *I'm just going to be a good family man. I'm just going to be like a Hallmark husband and dad. That's what I'm going to do. I'll do that.*

Ecclesiastes 2:17

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.

So, verse 17 of chapter 2, he says, "So I hated my life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of this is meaningless, a chasing after the wind."

Really? Just being a regular, good guy, working hard, building a company, having your name on the door? That wasn't what bugged him. Here's what hurt. Here's the futility in that.

Ecclesiastes 2:18-20, 22-23

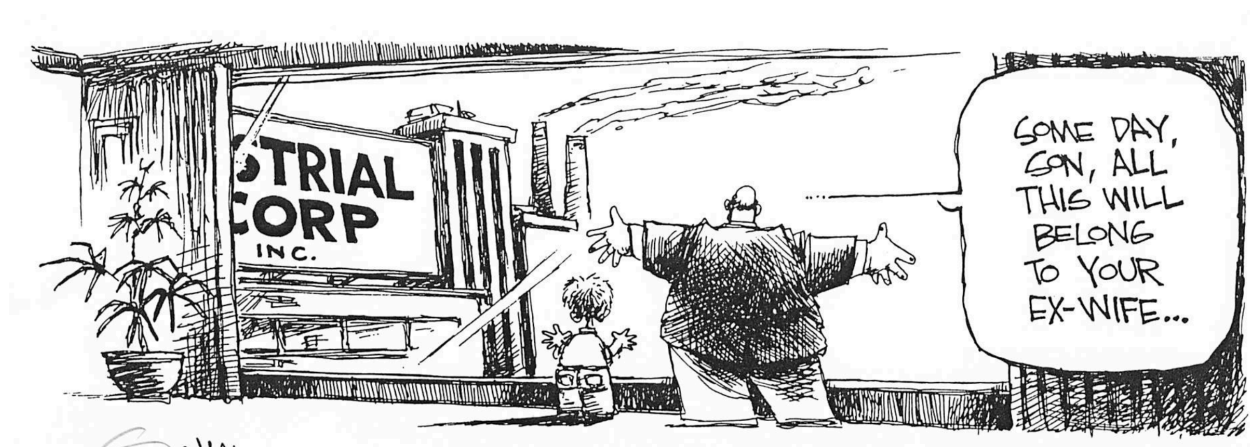
**I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun,
¹⁹ because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. ²⁰ So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun.**

²² What do people get for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labor under the sun? ²³ All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest. This too is meaningless.

Listen to verse 18 through 24: "I hated all things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? Yet he will have control over all the things that I have worked for into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless, it's a vapor, it's smoke, it's just passing ... so my whole heart began to despair over this toilsome labor that I had been doing under the

sun. What do people get for all the toil and the anxious striving with which they labor under the sun? All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest. This too is meaningless”—a vapor, a mist, a smokescreen. It doesn’t matter. It doesn’t count.

Why so miserable? Come on! Here’s why. Because Solomon imagines himself building himself from the ground up. He’s working in the mailroom and then he earns his way into various places by working fifty to sixty, eighty hours a week. He’s going to do that, and with every promotion he is earning that with his hard work and his wisdom. But then he buys the company. He changes the name of the company. His name is on that company sign there on the side of the building. It’s gone famous. And then he starts to think, *Yeah, the brevity of life; the consequence of time*. Maybe he stared into an hourglass a little too long. And then he realized this. [shows slide of cartoon]



“Someday, son, all of this will belong to your ex-wife.” *What have I done?*

And you wonder, does it matter how big the store is? No. I don’t know, what if it were seven billion dollars. Could you lose seven billion dollars in a day? Yeah, you can, apparently—two weeks ago. Seven billion—gone. Vanity is vanity.

Solomon here is the wisest, richest, most powerful man at this time. God has blessed him with the ability to have wisdom. And he is calling us, he’s telling us, *Don’t waste your life. Don’t go running down these dead-end streets. No matter how well they’re advertised, they can’t satisfy the longing of the eternal soul. Don’t waste your world. You’ll be drowning in regret and sorrow. Please, come on ... I left my kingdom to my son ... look what happened. His first decree as the king of Israel was to cause a civil war. It’s fleeting. It comes, it goes. Time and death will*

erase everything as though it never existed. The world is not enough. There's always going to be something missing, because we're just dust. All these things are a means—they're never an end.

In my opinion, there was a genius producer, writer, and director in the '60s and '70s. His name is Rod Serling. Some of you know that name. He had a TV series called *The Twilight Zone* that was crazy insightful. He wrote one episode his first season called "A Nice Place to Visit." And in that episode, a man wakes up after being killed and is greeted by what we would call a butler. It was more like a genie, actually, because when he wakes up, the butler says, "What do you want?" And it's not like a genie where he gets three wishes; he gets whatever he wants forever. All his dreams come true. And so, just like that, every pleasure is catered to. He's surrounded by many beautiful women and now he has a really nice place to stay. He loves fast cars and so he has the fastest cars. He was famous for his gambling, so every time he plays roulette, he wins—every time.

After a very short period of time of getting everything he wanted all the time, he says to the genie/butler, "I don't belong in heaven. I want to be in the other place."

And the man says, "Oh, what makes you think this is heaven? This is the other place. This is hell."

Hell is getting everything you want and nothing that you need. It's constantly trying to satisfy the eternal longings of the soul with temporal things and pleasures and distractions.

C. What You Need to Know

What Solomon learned is that our lives are a vapor. The people and the things that we love will be gone and forgotten. And the way he lived was an expression of trying out every single dead-end road to their extreme. And he says it's not there.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.

So, his lesson for us is this. When you read the book itself you just keep going. And we study to get to this end. We come to the end of the journey and he says, *This is how it works. It's*

rather simple. “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.” Fear God and keep His commandments. Just do that.”

Because there’s something about the nature of man that doesn’t make sense under the sun. We have an eternal everlasting soul and it cannot be quenched. It will dry up. It will die of starvation, of dehydration, if we don’t just fear God and keep His commandments.

**Thou hast made us, O God, for Thyself and our hearts
are ever restless until they find their peace in Thee.**

--St. Augustine

St. Augustine put it this way. You might know this quote. “Thou hast made us, O God, for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee.” Our hearts are restless until they find peace in Thee.

And so, to be clear, the balance of the values that we looked at today in the Bible are simple. The Bible promotes wisdom. It’s better to live wise than foolishly. Live a wise life. It’s just a means, not an end.

The Bible speaks a lot about enjoying the pleasures of life and really involving yourself in the beauty of life. Make sure you’re within the fence. Guard your heart—it’s the wellspring of life.

Stuff? By all means. It’s just a means, not an end. Make sure you own it and that it doesn’t own you. Don’t let your identity get wrapped up in this for sure.

Work hard. Show God what you can do with the gifts that He gave you as an expression of who you are.

Preach the gospel. Die. Be forgotten.

--Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf

But believe this—two parts. Believe this and enjoy this. We have to believe it first. This is how it's going to work. An old saint from the eighteenth century says this about how life works: "Preach the gospel. Die. Be forgotten."

Some of you don't believe that. Most of Pascal's writings were about how people stay distracted because they don't want to come to the realization that they will die and then be forgotten. Believe that.

Then, if you journey with me through the Book of Ecclesiastes, you will learn not just to believe that to be true; you will enjoy that. You will enjoy just living the gospel, dying, and then—fine—being forgotten.

Conclusion

I bet there are some of you right now that are thanking God that you're watching today, that you're here today. Because you are on a journey down one of these dead-end roads or those that run right off a cliff. And now you're looking at Solomon. And Solomon is grabbing you by the ears and saying, "Vanity of vanities! Meaningless! Meaningless! What does it gain if you get all those things?" You can learn from him. You can learn from his travels. And you're grateful because your day's coming soon. Maybe you're coming to realize that you will not exist and you will be forgotten. And Solomon's just the person to work all of us through that process of coming to terms with preaching the gospel and death and being forgotten.

The sole cause of man's unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room.

--Blaise Pascal

Here's why I wanted to study this series in this kind of context, and here we are. Again, Pascal, one of the smarter men that has ever lived, said, "The sole cause of man's unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room." The idea is that we don't know how to stop from moving, staying distracted, and being busy, and then, thinking. But a pandemic has

made us stop. It's taken away our distractions. Now we have to slow down. Now people are having to be in the room by themselves, but they're afraid to think, to ponder, to consider. What does it gain? Where's the profit in life at all?

So, I wanted to do this because we're being forced into doing this. We're being forced into slowing down enough to make us wonder, "Wait a minute. Why am I chasing the wind? It feels that way."

So, let's go through this together. Let's do what we need to do to come to this understanding that we will be dead and forgotten faster than we could ever imagine, the generations before and the generations to come. And Earth says, *Never heard of them*. Well, believe that to be true, and then we'll come to enjoy that. We'll come to enjoy that together. We'll solve many of the mysteries of life of why we are restless when we are at home here on earth.

So, would you join me in this adventure, this little journey? The meaning of life and the purpose? I hope you do. Join me in prayer.

First of all, Lord, I would ask that Your Spirit would call to our mind maybe areas where we have gone down some of these roads that Solomon went down years before at greater extents. And yet, we think it will be different. We're going to wrap our lives, our identity, our purpose, around some of these distractions. And Lord, I'd ask that You would convict us that those are not just ambitions, but that somehow they've become idols in our life. And I'd ask that Your Spirit would help us destroy those idols; that we'd care less about the here and now and more about just enjoying You and keeping Your commandments.

Lord, I'd ask that You would help us with courage; that the things that we stay busy and distracted so that we wouldn't think those thoughts, that You would cause us to think those thoughts, ask those questions, ponder our non-existence, when we're gone and people can't even remember that we ever even lived. Lord, I'd ask that You would help us face that so that we might enjoy that, and we'd glorify You with Your presence, knowing that to be true.

Lord, take us, gently, tenderly, down this path of purpose. Let us know that You're always with us and You'd never leave us or forsake us. We pray this in Jesus' name. And all God's people said ... Amen.