

SUNDAY - March 1, 2026

THE GRIND: Ecclesiastes 1:1-3 - Intro

SERMON SUMMARY:

Self-help culture teaches people to make themselves the center of everything, but Ecclesiastes exposes the emptiness of that idea. Life cannot be fully controlled, predicted, or made safe, and trying to do so only leads to frustration.

Ecclesiastes stands alongside Proverbs and Job. Proverbs shows how life usually works, Job shows undeserved suffering, and Ecclesiastes shows that even having everything—wealth, wisdom, pleasure, and power—still leaves a person empty. The author repeats the word *hevel* (meaning vapor or futility) to show that life without God feels temporary and meaningless.

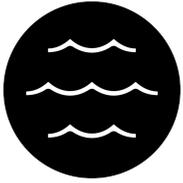
When life is viewed only “under the sun,” everything fades, and nothing lasts. But that emptiness points to something deeper: our longing for meaning is evidence that we were made for more than this world. The final hope is found in God’s promise to restore all things. Communion reminds believers that this broken world is not the end, but a preview of the greater reality still to come.

SCRIPTURE:

Ecclesiastes 1:1-3, Revelation 21:5

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What two key phrases are repeated throughout the opening of Ecclesiastes, and what do they signify?
2. According to the wisdom literature, what are the different roles of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes in describing life?
3. What are the two main conclusions the author of Ecclesiastes reaches when viewing life "under the sun"?
4. What is the final answer given to the problem of life's meaninglessness?
5. The author of Ecclesiastes had immense wealth, wisdom, pleasure, and power, yet found it all "hevel." Why do these things, which promise so much fulfillment, ultimately fall short?
6. If life "under the sun" is ultimately meaningless, why do people still passionately pursue justice, create art, and seek love? Where does this sense of "ought" come from if we are just chemical accidents?
7. How does the reality that every person will eventually be forgotten challenge our modern drive for legacy, social media influence, and being remembered?



8. The frustration and weariness we feel at life's absurdities and injustices is presented as evidence for something. What does this common human experience point to?
9. Where in your own life have you experienced the "hevel" of a project, relationship, or achievement that promised meaning but ultimately felt like a vapor?
10. What is one area where you are currently trying to engineer safety, control outcomes, or assign blame, rather than accepting the inherent unpredictability of life under the sun?
11. The desire to leave a lasting legacy can drive a lot of our work and anxiety. How might your daily priorities change if you truly believed that only what God does through you has eternal significance?
12. Think of a recent frustration or a sense of "this isn't how it's supposed to be." How can that ache be redirected to fuel hope for Christ's restoration of all things rather than leading to cynicism?
13. When you consider that your affections, enjoyment of beauty, and sense of morality are not just random chemicals but echoes of a real world to come, how does that affect the way you value those experiences today?
14. Is there a situation in your life where you have been applying a "Proverbs" expectation of how things should work, but are actually experiencing a "Job" or "Ecclesiastes" reality? How can you move from demanding an explanation to trusting God's wisdom in the mystery?