

There Is No New Thing Under the Sun: Ecclesiastes 1:4-11 Explained

Scriptures for Today:

***Ecclesiastes 1:4-11** One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. 5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. 6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. 7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. 8 All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. 9 The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. 10 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. 11 There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.*

Introduction

I'm very happy that you are all here this morning. I want us all to be reminded of why we are here and what we have in our possession today.

Going to church can become just another routine in our lives if we don't stop and think about the importance of things.

Everything in this life is a cycle. God created order in Nature. God created natural systems that we follow. For example, we are supposed to wake up in the morning. Go to work. Come home and rest. And that cycle is repeated over and over again. That is a routine or system that we follow every day.

If we are not careful, going to church and doing the work of God can just become another routine that we add to our list. And the meaning and importance of why we are doing it can start to fade away in our minds.

That's when we have to take a step back and remember why we are doing this?

So why are we here this morning?

1. Serve and Worship God.

Psalm 100:1-2 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

2. To Hear Instruction from God's Word

Nehemiah 8:2-3 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read therein before the street that *was* before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and **the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.**

When you understand that these are not ordinary words. These are the Words of the Creator of the Universe. The Words of the Eternal God that has no beginning or end. That should make you want to sit down and listen to what He has to say.

If someone came to you and said "Hey, I've developed a course that can guarantee that you make 1 million dollars within one year. The course only costs \$5 dollars" There would be thousands of people signing up for that course.

Yet God, who owns all things and has all power and wisdom and knowledge, provides us with the ultimate guide that shows you how to have 100% success in your life and for eternity, but nobody wants it. Even when the guide is 100% free!

Understand that when we come to church, we are receiving instruction directly from God Himself. With that said we are going to take a look at God's instructions from the book of Ecclesiastes this morning.

Ecclesiastes is the 21st book in the Bible. It has 12 chapters and takes a little over 30 minutes to read through the entire book.

What is this book about?

In a nutshell, Ecclesiastes is God pulling the curtain back on real life. He's exposing the realities of the sinful world that we live in. The name Ecclesiastes essentially means "The Preacher". So this book is written from the perspective of the Preacher who we know to be Solomon, the son of David.

Solomon was the wisest man to ever live because he asked God for wisdom instead of riches. That pleased God, and in return he gave him wisdom above all men.

God said. ***"I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."***

Not only did God give him wisdom, but he also gave him everything else that he did not ask for. He had riches that exceeded all the kings of the earth. Nothing was held back from Solomon.

Everything that people live for today—money, pleasure, success, knowledge, power, Solomon had it all.

So the man that wrote this book had everything that this life can offer, and he is showing you that all of those things are empty and vain. Complete emptiness and vanity. It's like grabbing at smoke. It slips right through your fingers.

This book drives one hard truth: if God isn't the center of your life, nothing else will be enough.
You can climb the ladder, but the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.
You can fill your life with stuff, but there will always be an empty hole.
Because death is coming, time keeps moving forward, and this world can't give you something eternal.

But Ecclesiastes, The Preacher, isn't telling you to despair. He's telling you to get honest.
To stop living for what doesn't last, and start living in the fear of God.
You receive your food, work, family, daily joys as gifts from God—without worshipping those things.

Ecclesiastes is a warning to the man who thinks the world will satisfy him, and it's a guide for the man who wants to live wisely before God.

Recap

Last time we were in this book was October 26th of last year. Josh preached the opening sermon of Chapter 1:1-3. Please go on our website and watch that sermon if you haven't seen it already.

I want to give a quick overview of the first 3 verses that we studied last time.

1) The speaker is introduced (v.1)

Ecclesiastes 1:1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

Solomon is not writing as a storyteller—he's giving a **message**. This is the son of David who was king in Jerusalem. He's setting the tone with this statement. This was a man that had authority, wealth, power, yet he chose to call himself the Preacher. That shows you that declaring truth is far above any earthly title.

We all need to be preachers of truth. We are all called to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2) The theme is stated (v.2)

Ecclesiastes 1:2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.

“Vanity” is the idea of a breath, vapor, smoke, something you can't hold onto. It's visible, but it's temporary. Like breath on a cold morning, you see it for a moment then it's gone. That describes everything in this life. It's all temporary, it all fades away. The only things that last are what you do for the Lord.

3) The driving question is asked (v.3)

Ecclesiastes 1:3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

Profit is lasting gain, or something that is left over. So after all the working, striving, chasing, and building that you do in this life that does not pertain to God—**under the sun** is the key phrase there, everything outside of God—what profit is there when you labour for the things of this world?

The answer is absolutely nothing. There is zero profit.

That is why you lay up for yourself treasures in Heaven, where moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break in and steal.

So let's continue in chapter 1 and see what the Preacher is continuing to convey...

Verse 4

Ecclesiastes 1:4 *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.*

Think about how many generations of mankind this earth has seen. Based on the biblical timeline and genealogies throughout the Bible, we can estimate the earth to be roughly just over 6000 years old.

If a generation spans about 30 – 40 years that means the earth has seen approximately 150 – 200 generations of mankind.

This is a stark reminder that we have a finite amount of time on this earth in our current corrupted flesh.

One generation passes, and another cometh. It's a vicious cycle that no one can escape because of sin.

Psalms 103:14-16 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust. **15** *As for man, his days are as grass:*

Here in Kentucky, we have a season where grass grows. Everything comes to life in the spring. Just like right now. But the days of the grass are numbered because when winter comes, the grass dies. Just like the grass, the days of man are numbered...

...as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Think about the dandelions...

James 1:11-12 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

Even though man dies with each passing generation, the faithfulness of God is eternal.

Psalms 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

With each passing generation, God does not change. That's why you want to put your time, energy, and labor into the things of God.

Like teaching your children the Bible will bring you and your children eternal profit.
Reading your Bible, growing your faith, preaching the gospel. Those are the things that will extend beyond your own generation.

Verses 5 – 7

Ecclesiastes 1:5-7 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. **6** The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. **7** All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

Here Solomon describes the ever-continuing cycles of life on this earth. Everything is in constant motion without a final lasting conclusion. Life under the sun (life without God) is just endless repetition without satisfaction. Man withers away as he strives to obtain physical possessions day by day, but the earth and the cycles within show us how all of that striving is in vain.

Ecclesiastes 1:5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.

One of the most dependable things you can see in this life is the sun. You can count on it rising every day and going down every night. And it's guaranteed to come back up again as long as you're alive.

Many people live for the next day. "If I can just get to the next day, the next paycheck, the next season, the next stage...I know life is going to be better. I know I'm going to have this much money to spend." It's a daily grind of just chasing after tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the sun preaches and displays that you're living in an endless cycle that will not end until you die. You will never reach satisfaction by thinking that tomorrow will bring you happiness.

Matthew 6:34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Ecclesiastes 1:6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

Before there were weather balloons and radar, before satellites in space, Solomon understood the patterns of the wind. He describes the wind as having its own circuit.

A circuit is a closed path or route that returns back to the starting point. With modern technology we are able to see that the earth has large-scale global air circulation loops. Wind literally loops around the entire globe and creates broad circulation patterns.

Solomon understood this because he was the wisest man on the planet.

Think about how this wind is in a continual circuit. It's moving, but it's not really going anywhere. There is never a final arrival. It's busy, loud, and constant and then it goes right back around again.

Again, this is how many people choose to live their lives. There are people that are always moving, (just like the wind) always doing, always chasing, but they are never at peace. They are never settled. Imagine being exhausted but you have nothing to show for all your labor and you're still going around in circles.

For example, someone might spend their entire day running around the city begging for money, scouring the streets, or rummaging through trash just to find enough money to get their fix of alcohol or drugs. (We see it all the time and it's very sad. There are people out there right now looking for something to steal so they can sell it for drug money)

How about the billionaire that spends every waking hour of the day figuring out how to protect their assets and build more wealth for themselves.

Both of these people have one thing in common; their lives are utterly desolate and empty. It's an endless loop of insanity.

You don't want your life to be like that. You want your life to be busy with the work of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 1:7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

Again, Solomon describes another endless cycle of the earth. The water cycle. You'd think that if all the rivers pour into the sea nonstop then the oceans would eventually overflow. But it never does. The sea is never full.

That's a picture of this world. It's a bucket that has no "full" line. Everyone needs more money, more possessions, more entertainment, more accomplishments—yet the heart keeps on saying, "Just a little more". There is no satisfaction.

Proverbs 27:20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Just like the oceans will never overflow. Just like hell and destruction are never full. The eyes of man are never satisfied.

Anyone who has lived on this earth for any reasonable amount of time can tell you that this is 100% true. Children see a toy that they want. They just have to have that toy. And once they finally get it, they play with it for a week and then it ends up broken or they get tired of it. They move on to wanting the next thing.

Adults do the same exact thing but it's even worse. Because the things that adults want usually bring way more harm and destruction. Like men who are not satisfied with being with one woman. Or Woman who are not satisfied with being with one man. Or never having enough money. Seeking after those things will never appease your desires.

I love how everything around us and our own behavior constantly proves God's Word to be true.

Solomon is saying: Under the sun, everything is motion, repetition, and appetite—but nothing ever reaches lasting satisfaction. The sun never finishes, the wind never settles, and the sea is never full. And those things can be seen as a reflection of our lives when we seek after vain things.

Verse 8 – 11

Ecclesiastes 1:8 All things *are* full of labour; man cannot utter *it*: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

There is no rest found in the things of the world. Everything requires work. All things are full of labor. Owning a home. Raising a family. Paying Bills. Fixing things when they break. This is part of the curse of sin.

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Man cannot utter it; you can't put into words how tiring it is. (That's how it feels sometimes) The eye is not satisfied with seeing. The ear is not filled with hearing. That is man's sinful nature. We can scroll on tiktok and social media for hours and hours and never be full.

We can buy everything our heart desires, but it will never be enough. We will keep laboring and working until we die and it's all in vain without the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 The thing that hath been, it *is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is that* which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun. 10 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

As sinful human beings we love novelty. We are constantly looking for something new. New toys, new experiences, new feelings, new pleasure. But Solomon, The Preacher, is telling us that there is nothing new under the sun.

Everything that has happened before is going to happen again. History repeats itself—same sins, same problems, nothing new.

The devil has been tempting man with the same things for thousands of years. He is just really good at repackaging things. I want to give you four quick examples:

Witchcraft & Sorcery isn't new. It's been around since the fall of mankind. It has always been Satan's counterfeit spirituality—it's power without God, knowledge without truth, darkness disguised as "light".

Many Christians do not understand how much God hates witchcraft and sorcery in all of its forms.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, **11** Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. **12** For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

The devil was using witchcraft back then, and he's using it today. He gets people to say...

"It's just entertainment" (movies, shows, games, fantasy worlds). Little children are being taught these things are normal. "Good" Witches, wizards, casting spells.

"It's just harmless" (horoscopes, tarot cards, crystals). Get people more and more comfortable. In horoscopes, zodiac signs are used as a **divination system**—a way to claim spiritual insight about who you are, what you should do, and what is going to happen, based on the stars and the time of your birth. Instead of looking to God and His Word for truth and guidance, horoscopes tell people, "Because you're this sign, you have this nature," and "Because the planets are doing this, you should make this move,"

That is evil in the sight of God. You don't want to partake in those things. *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

Violence isn't new—Cain did it first—but now it's normalized, entertained, celebrated, and fed into the heart until anger becomes a lifestyle.

The devil desensitizes us through violent video games, movies, and music.

Sexual sin isn't new—whether it's fornication or adultery, it's the same lust and unfaithfulness—but now it's called 'hooking up,' 'living together,' 'an affair,' 'I deserve to be happy,' or 'we just grew apart.' Same sin, softer words.

The destruction of marriage and family isn't new—Satan has hated God's institution from the beginning—instead of outwardly sacrificing children to Molech, Satan uses abortion, homosexuality, pornography, relationships with AI (Artificial Intelligence) AI marriages, to prevent fruitfulness and destroy families.

There is no new thing under the sun. There are no new things that man will be satisfied with. Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? No, it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

Ecclesiastes 1:11 *There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.*

All the things that man labors for. All the success, the fame, the possessions. Everything that is done under the sun, without God, will be forgotten. There will be no memory of it.

Application

1. Redeem your limited time.

One generation passes, another generation begins. You don't have unlimited time so don't live like you do. Redeeming the time because the days are evil.

Don't waste years of your life on things that won't even matter on your deathbed.

Measure your week by things that advance the Kingdom of God. Praying for others, Reading His Word, Preaching the Gospel.

2. Don't Confuse busyness with purpose.

Remember that you can be moving nonstop but not going anywhere.

Some people are busy with sin; some are busy with money; others are busy with entertainment.

Ask yourself, what am I busy with in my life? Replace one time-waster with something eternal.

3. Don't be deceived by new.

When your flesh starts telling you, "I need something new" just remember that there is nothing new under the sun. It's all the same old vanity in a different package. Choose spiritual newness.

Romans 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

4. Stop laboring for what will be forgotten.

The World forgets. Fame fades away. Accomplishments get buried by time.

Invest in what God remembers.

- The souls that you preach the gospel to and end up getting saved will be your friends forever.
- Your children that you disciple and train up in the Lord will be with you forever. And they can lead millions of people to Jesus Christ.

Please think on these things and change something today. Let's Pray