



**PRESENT**

January 4, 2026

**ECCLESIASTES 1**

### **SUNDAY REFRESHER**

Ecclesiastes doesn't sound cynical because the writer is having a bad day. It sounds unsettling because he is telling the truth. After a lifetime of experience, achievement, and reflection, the Preacher exposes how easily even good things become empty when they are asked to do what only God can do.

The key phrase "under the sun" reveals the problem. Life lived without reference to God inevitably feels exhausting and unsatisfying, no matter how meaningful our pursuits may seem. Ecclesiastes invites us to live differently, to include God in every moment so that the same work, relationships, and routines are no longer hollow, but deeply meaningful.

### **PERSONAL REFLECTIONS**

- *What did God say to you through this passage and teaching?*
- *Did God reveal anything new to you?*
- *How is this relevant in your journey to make disciples who Love God and Love people?*

## QUESTIONS

- *Where in your life do things most often feel like toil under the sun, busy, exhausting, or never quite enough, and why do you think that is?*
- *What good things in your life are most tempting to turn into ultimate things, asking them to give you identity, purpose, or worth?*
- *What steps can you take to practically be mindful of including God in each present moment?*

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Ecclesiastes 1:1–11 (ESV) | Matthew 6:19–21 (ESV) | Colossians 3:23–24 (ESV)

## CONCLUSION

Ecclesiastes does not argue that life itself is meaningless. It shows us that meaning cannot survive apart from God. The same world, the same responsibilities, and the same work can feel empty or full depending entirely on whether God is included. When we live above the sun, ordinary moments become sacred, good gifts are enjoyed without pressure, and work is done faithfully rather than desperately.

The gospel completes what Ecclesiastes begins. Life under the sun is exhausting, and Jesus entered that exhaustion for us. Because of Him, we no longer work for meaning; we work from meaning. We humble ourselves under God's sovereignty, do the work in front of us, enjoy the gifts He gives, accept mystery, practice gratitude, and walk with God, no longer trying to be remembered, but learning how to truly live.

