

Nothing New Under the Sun

August 2, 2026

Main Passage: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Theological Theme

Life on earth without God at its center is futile.

Introduction

- ❓ How can you relate to Andy and Paul's story? Has something like this ever happened to you or someone you know?
- ❓ What kinds of things does our society tell us to chase that often lead to disappointment?

1. The Teacher (Ecclesiastes 1:1-2)

Money really doesn't buy happiness, and Solomon would know (1 Kings 3:13; 2 Chronicles 1:15). Solomon, King David's son by Bathsheba, succeeded David on the throne and served as the third and final king of the united kingdom. When God appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked, "What should I give you?" (1 Kings 3:5), Solomon answered righteously, asking for wisdom in ruling God's people. Because he responded well, God granted him both wisdom and riches and honor. Solomon's wisdom was truly legendary.

- ❓ What does it mean that "everything is futile" (v. 2)? Does that mean nothing matters?
- ❓ When have you felt this reality?
- ❓ How would you answer the question above? How does the evidence of your life support or deny this claim?

2. Under the Sun (Ecclesiastes 1:3-7)

Solomon followed up his claim that "Everything is futile" (v. 2) with evidence from nature. "Under the sun" refers to life on earth (v. 3), and Solomon took a broad view in these verses. He asked what all our effort amounts to? Several generations down the line, will anyone even remember us?

- ❓ What point did Solomon make by alluding to the cycles of nature?

- ❓ Why is nature a helpful illustration to make this point?
- ❓ What is a pattern in nature or in your life that makes you feel futile at times? Why?

3. Nothing New (Ecclesiastes 1:8-11)

Everything is . . . wearisome. After living many years, we better understand how someone could reach this conclusion. Discontentment runs rampant in our world, and our culture is built on the idea that we should never be satisfied. We're encouraged to work hard for more. In many spaces, we are measured by our accomplishments and what we have accumulated. But the more we have, the more we want.

- ❓ What point did Solomon make in these verses?
- ❓ How do Solomon's conclusions make you feel? Hopeful? Discouraged? Something else? Why?
- ❓ What do you know about those who live three or four generations before you—even family members? How does this convey the truth of Solomon's words?

Conclusion

- ❓ How have you been tempted to chase futile things in your life? What happened?
- ❓ Have you ever come to a point in your life where you thought . . . what's the point? How do you answer that question?
- ❓ What does today's reading teach us about God and His character?