

**Sermon Discussion Questions: April 19, 2026**  
**The Wheel Keeps Turning**  
**Beyond Vanity: Finding a Solid Purpose in Life (series)**

**Call to Worship: Psalm 90:1-4, 12**

1. “Everyone ought to know the measure ... of his days, or he will play the arrogant fool.” (NIV Study Bible.) How does remembering the duration of our earthly life protect us from arrogance or foolishness?
2. What dramatic difference do we see here between our existence, and God's?

**Sermon: Ecclesiastes 1**

**I. The Preacher and Vanity – Verses 1-3**

1. If indeed Solomon authored this book, why wouldn't he identify himself as King Solomon, which would have impressed the reader more than “Preacher”.
2. What clue does the reader get, in these opening verses, that the book is not an assessment of the entirety of human experience?

**II. Cycles of Nature – Verses 4-7**

3. Nature does not acknowledge us. We never conquer it. The Preacher gives three examples here of natural cycles that men cannot alter. What are the:
  - a. Technical/social implications of this?
  - b. Theological implications of this?
4. List two ways that you expect, once the prophesy of Romans 8:19-21 is fulfilled, nature will be different.

**III. The Futility of the New – Verses 8-11**

5. There is a delight in novelty. Depending on the kind of novelty we are seeking, the quest may be wholesome or destructive.
  - a. Under what circumstances is the desire for novelty sinful?
  - b. Will we desire novelty once we are resurrected?

6. What new thing does the Gospel introduce into the cycle of life?
7. Fortunately, some common experiences (birth, falling in love, seasons) remain interesting in spite of recurring billions of times. How can we prevent life from becoming monotonous?
8. How can realizing that human nature remains constant (and consistently screwed up) help us make wise decisions?
9. Every culture builds monuments to its greatness. How do you want to be remembered? Do you want any physical memorial?

#### **IV. The Burden of Man's Wisdom – Verses 12-18**

10. An existentialist would reply to the Preacher: "Yes indeed, there is no inherent meaning or purpose to life. However, we can work out a moral code and determine what is our purpose. Then we can strive to live by that code and fulfill that purpose. While this does not change the ultimate meaninglessness of the universe, it makes our lives meaningful." How would you reply?
11. Some atheists use the decaying universe as evidence there is no God. For example, one atheist states that 99% of all species that ever lived are now extinct. (Likely true.) How would you reply?
12. AI Question 🤖: How does Ecclesiastes 1's emphasis on the transience of life and the limits of human wisdom influence your priorities and decisions?

#### **Prayer Points:**

- Ask that God would lift our gaze above the "vapor" of this life to find our lasting satisfaction in His eternal Kingdom.
- Pray for the grace to accept that we cannot "straighten" this crooked world through our own intellect or effort, but need to rely entirely on the wisdom and power of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for peace in the midst of the "wheel that keeps turning," knowing that while our earthly legacies may be forgotten, our names are eternally remembered and written in the Lamb's Book of Life.