

CHASING THE WIND

ECCLESIASTES



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SERMON GUIDE

CHASING THE WIND

Ecclesiastes 1:1-18 | Pastor Tim Prince

January 2, 2022

Faith Community Church | fcchudson.com

The Conversation Guide is a great tool for individuals, families, discipleship groups and Missional Communities to take a deeper, more personal dive into the content of the current sermon series. The Conversation Guide will be posted every Friday in the News & Blog section of our website. We encourage you to use it this week on your own, around your dinner tables, over coffee with your friends or in your Bible studies!

***QUESTIONS FOR KIDS!** Questions most suitable for children are marked with an asterisk.

Conversation Questions

1. Share about some of the dreams you had for your life with you were a kid. Which of those dreams has been realized and which have not gone the way you thought they would? In your opinion is this because something went right or because something when wrong?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-18. What verse or phrase stands out to you most? Why?
 - a. For a great introduction to the book of Ecclesiastes you might take a moment to watch this video from the Bible Project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeUiuSK81-0>
 - b. Or, you can go to YouTube and type "Bible Project Ecclesiastes" in the search bar. It will be the second video they suggest.
 - c. Two notes on translation that will be helpful for reading Ecclesiastes:
 - i. When the author uses the word "vanity" or "meaningless" this is a translation of the Hebrew word "hebel" (pronounced "hevel"). It's a word that means "smoke" or "mist" in most contexts. It's a really wonderful metaphor that depicts the fleeting nature, beauty and absurdity of something all at once.
 - ii. "...under the sun" in Ecclesiastes is a reference to our mortal lives here on earth.
3. "Vanity of vanities...! All is vanity" (v.1). Throughout the rest of the chapter, the Teacher uses poetic language to describe some things that make life frustrating and meaningless.
 - a. Which of the Teacher's observations about life resonate with you most?
 - b. Where have you seen some of these dynamics at work in your own life?
4. What do you think "striving after the wind" (v.14,17) means?
5. Americans tend to think of our lives as a linear path that is leading somewhere. We go to school to get a better job, achieve promotions, build a family or company, save for retirement, enjoy retirement, and then...
 - a. In contrast to this linear vision of our lives, verses 4-11 describe endless cycles that never seem to go anywhere.
 - b. What do you think the Teacher's point is?
 - c. How would understanding this lead to greater humility?
6. "There is nothing new under the sun..." and "...he who increases knowledge increases sorrow," says the Teacher (v.9,18).
 - a. Today we have access to almost unlimited information, data and news. How do you think this is impacting us positively and negatively?
 - b. How does the Teacher's perspective help us live more wisely in the Information Age?
7. At the end of his life, the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: "7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."
 - a. How do Paul's perspective on the resurrection and coming glory contrast with the Teacher's perspective?
 - b. How do both give us wisdom for living our lives today?Take some time to give thanks for the Teacher's perspective and ask God to deepen your humility in light of what you've read today.