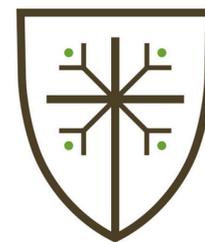


SERMON NOTES



March 1, 2026

A Whisper in the Wind

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES | LENT 2026 SERMON SERIES

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"A Repertoire of Distractions"

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, 24-26

1 Corinthians 15:12-19, 32

John 12:20-26

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Consider the things on your own "list" of distractions. How can you shift your perspective to view them as good gifts from God instead of ultimate ends in themselves?
2. What are some practices or rhythms of life that can help us maintain the balance of enjoying God's gifts in this world while not setting our hearts on them?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

Last week, Tim began our sermon series for the season of Lent on Ecclesiastes – a book marked by an emphasis on meaninglessness uncharacteristic to much of Scripture. But is it all hopeless and meaningless? In the end of chapter 2, the Preacher says no. So, how do we find enjoyment in this life in the face of death and seeming futility?

The List

From the end of chapter one to the beginning of chapter two, the Preacher turns from seeking meaning in study and learning and education to seeking it in and through pleasure both low-brow and high-brow. But in any form, he finds that this too is empty, fleeting breath.

He moves on in his list of distractions to occupations and great works, possessions, money, and sex. And at the end, what you end up with is power. This list is a checklist, of sorts, of what is required to be great in this world. In the end, even this, even greatness and power will fail you.

The Failures

There are two failures of pleasure in this world. The first is the failure to distract. All the diversions are still not enough to drown out the meaninglessness. Our soul is filled with too much longing and desire for any amount of worldly pleasures to cover up. The truth will keep coming through somehow.

It also fails to satisfy. It's never enough. The Preacher calls it "striving after the wind." You can't keep it, when it's gone it's gone. This is our own experience of pleasure in this life. You'll never find through it what your heart most deeply longs for.

The Shift

In order to find meaning and enjoyment in this life, there has to be a shift in perspective of how we view the world. The first two paragraphs of chapter two don't mention God at all. But in verse 24, the Preacher shifts. He's not saying that the good things of the world are all there is, but he is saying that there is something to the good things in this world that brings joy because God gave them to you. You didn't gain them but rather, were given them by God. Enjoy them for what they are but don't set your heart on them. If you set your heart on them, you'll use them for something God never intended them to be and they will ultimately fail you.

We often make one of two mistakes with the things of this world – either we regard them as everything and all there is or, usually when they fail us, we do the opposite and cast them aside as nothing. We are like the Greeks in the Gospel passage from John. Their deepest desire is to see Jesus. He is what our souls yearn for and that to which every good in this world points. Everything matters because of Jesus, but nothing matters more than Jesus.