

CAMPBELL STREET CHURCH

Focus in • So What • Next Steps

Life Under the Sun: “Then I Saw”

5/10/26

FOCUS IN: Read, pray, and meditate on Ecclesiastes 4. Write down your personal reflections:

- What do we learn about God/Christians in this passage?
- What has the Holy Spirit revealed to you in this passage, and how will you obey it this week?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this?

THE BIG IDEA: Solomon stood on the rooftop of life and looked honestly at the world around him. What he saw was not polished or hopeful. He saw oppression, people crying with no comforter. He saw endless striving, people exhausting themselves trying to outdo one another. He saw loneliness, people building successful lives while quietly falling apart inside. And after all his wisdom, wealth, and experience, Solomon kept arriving at the same painful conclusion: “This too is vanity.” Ecclesiastes reminds us that life “under the sun” will eventually disappoint us when God is removed from the picture. The world promises meaning through success, recognition, pleasure, and power, but none of those things can heal the deepest ache of the human heart.

But the beauty of the gospel is that Jesus stepped directly into the brokenness Solomon described. Where Solomon saw oppression, Jesus brought deliverance and comfort. Where Solomon saw restless striving, Jesus offered rest for weary souls. Where Solomon saw loneliness, Jesus created a family through His church. Jesus did not ignore the pain of humanity; He entered it. He touched the hurting, defended the vulnerable, and carried our sin and sorrow to the cross. What Solomon could only observe from a distance, Jesus came to redeem personally. The empty tomb declares that suffering is not final, striving is not our identity, and isolation does not have the last word.

The challenge for all of us is simple: What are we looking at? If we only stare at life under the sun, discouragement will eventually consume us. The world is broken, and no amount of success, entertainment, or achievement can fully fix it. But when we lift our eyes to Christ, everything changes. In Jesus, pain has purpose, work has meaning, and relationships have depth. The gospel gives us a perspective greater than what Solomon could see on his own. Ecclesiastes exposes the emptiness of life without God, but Jesus fills that emptiness with hope beyond the sun.

QUESTIONS:

1. Solomon repeatedly says, "Then I saw..." What are some broken things in our world today that can tempt people toward hopelessness?
2. Why do you think suffering feels meaningless when God is removed from the picture?
3. In what ways did Jesus directly respond to the oppression and pain Solomon described in Ecclesiastes 4?
4. How can the Holy Spirit still function as a Comforter in our lives today?
5. Ecclesiastes 4:4 connects work and achievement to envy. Why is comparison so exhausting spiritually and emotionally?
6. What are some modern ways people try to "prove themselves" through performance, success, or recognition?
7. Jesus offers rest in Matthew 11:28-30. What kind of rest do you think He was talking about beyond physical rest?
8. Why do you think loneliness is still such a major issue even in a world that is more digitally connected than ever?
9. Solomon says, "Two are better than one." What practical steps can Christians take to build genuine biblical community instead of shallow connection?
10. The sermon ends by asking, "What are you looking at?" How does focusing on Christ change the way we view suffering, work, and relationships?