

**Introduction:**

1. What sort of mindless activities do you enjoy? Why?
2. What do you find is the most annoying thing that you have to do over and over and over?

**Understanding:**

Read 2 Chronicles 1:7-12 for some background about Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes.

3. What is the main request that Solomon made of God? Why did he ask it?
4. Because of Solomon's request, what kind of extra benefits did God say that he would give to Solomon? What is the huge danger of such extra benefits?

Read Psalm 103:15-18

5. How do verses 15-16 reflect the same pessimism as in today's scripture passage?
6. What is the wonderful truth in verse 17 where we start to see that the repeating cycles are NOT a closed system?
7. How does Christ enable us to meet the requirements of verse 18?
8. Pastor Dave mentioned cynicism, (getting jaded and bitter and cranky) existentialism (I'm responsible to create my own meaning), and despair as three possible responses to emptiness. Which of these three are you the most likely to fall into and how?
9. Pastor Dave mentioned distraction ---with work or working out or sex or partying or constantly renovating your home or whatever---as the most common response to emptiness. Which of these are you most likely to fall into? Why?
10. Read Romans 8:20-25. As Pastor Dave mentioned, the word "frustration" used here is the same word that Ecclesiastes uses for "vapor" or "meaningless."
11. What does what happened in the Garden of Eden have to do with the frustration?
12. What is the promised release from the frustration?
13. We are waiting. What are we waiting for? And in what area of your life should the "waiting" give you a more patient attitude?

**Application:**

14. In what specific ways can you step out in faith to begin to change in what you fall into in Question 8 (cynicism, existentialism, and despair)?
15. In what specific ways can you step out in faith to begin to change the typical response you fall into in Question 9 (distraction)?
16. In what area do you most struggle to believe that Christ is the answer to meaninglessness? Pray that God will begin to change it this week and throughout this series!