Recovering Eden

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***NOTICE:** The emphasis of our discussion is to see how the Written Word (Bible) and the Spoken Word (Preaching) work together to build up the believer, so when you see WORD in the questions, know it refers to the Scripture and the Sermon.

Recap: *Look back* for evidence of God's word reshaping your heart and life.

1. Does anyone have a testimony to share with the group of how you applied last week's "Respond" section?

Engage: ***Look into* the Word of God in light of Sunday's preached sermon.**

2. Read Ecclesiastes 1 as a group and discuss your initial observations.

Reflect: *Look deeper* at the preached and written Word.

3. How does the concept of 'vanity' in Ecclesiastes challenge our modern pursuit of meaning and purpose? In what ways might we be seeking satisfaction in things 'under the sun'?

4. Who is the "preacher" writing this book? Discuss the significance of the kind of life he has lived and had access to in light of what he has to say about the meaning of life.

5. How does the idea that 'everything is forgotten' impact your view on legacy and the pursuit of earthly accomplishments?

6. How does the concept of 'recovering Eden' shape your understanding of salvation and the ultimate purpose of Christian faith?

7. In what ways does Jesus' incarnation - entering the 'gainless world' and feeling 'the pain of Ecclesiastes' - offer hope in light of life's apparent meaninglessness?

Respond: ***Choose one or two of the following applications of Sunday's message and commit to it/them this next week.***

1. This week, try to notice moments when you're tempted to find ultimate meaning or satisfaction in things "under the sun." Pause and remind yourself of God's presence and sufficiency.
2. Write a short prayer expressing your longing for the full recovery of Eden and thanking God for the hope we have in Christ.

3. Choose one area of "meaninglessness" in your life or community. Brainstorm ways you can participate in God's work of restoration in that area.
4. Meditate on Colossians 3:1-4 this week as an antidote to the despair that Ecclesiastes can provoke.