

THANK YOU FOR
JOINING US TODAY!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Agape Thanksgiving All-Church Family Dinner

Sunday, November 24, 5pm at Element.
Join us for a family-style dinner. We ask
each family to make and bring a recipe
from our Menu - there are easy and
more advanced recipes to choose from.
Recipes are available in the lobby.

Holiday Store for Delta

Element will be hosting and providing
items and support for a free Holiday
Store for all students at Delta High
School. Donations and help needed.
See the Welcome Center for more
information.

Store open December 10-13th.
Donations needed by December 8th.
Volunteers needed the week of.

Gospel Community (GC)

GC's are our primary organizing struc-
ture here at Element. It's where we see
Disciple Making take place when we
orient our lives together, on and around
the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is where
we commit to grow as a disciple, disciple
others, and make disciples; to share our
lives so they are visible and accessible.

DISCIPLE: A disciple is one who
increasingly submits their life to the all-
empowering Lordship of Jesus Christ.

JOIN: Connect with a Group by emailing
connect@ourelement.org or visiting the
Welcome Center.

Join Our Weekly Email Update

Sign up using a Connect Card located
under the seat in front of you or by going
to ourelement.org.

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Ecclesiastes

The Existential Hangover

Week 30: Culture Addicted to Vapor

Ecclesiastes 11:7-10

TODAY'S VERSES:

Ecclesiastes 11:10
Ecclesiastes 11:7-10
Psalm 16:11

Psalms 37:4
Philippians 4:6-7

Week 30: Culture Addicted to Vapor

Ecclesiastes 11:7-10

What things consumed your thinking today?

What things do you use to distract you from those thoughts/feelings?

Solomon starts the section of Ecclesiastes that we are looking at today by being hopeful and encouraging. It is a departure from how he communicates the previous chapters of the book. He will say that when life and its rhythms flow in the perfect direction, life is (and can be) very beautiful. He says, *“There are days that life is unbelievably sweet and the sun feels good to your skin.”*

When is the last time you truly enjoyed God’s creation (sun on your skin?)

After wanting something for a long period of time, do you enjoy that “something” as much as you thought you would?

Solomon again urges us to seek God early in life and stick close by Him each of our days so that we don’t end up miserable and old, filled with regrets like him. Ecclesiastes chapter 3 deals with seasons of life. Solomon seems to be remembering that when you are young, it is like spring time, but don’t forget that winter is coming. Life has seasons and God has brought about the ability for us to enjoy them all when we aren’t solely focused on life “under the sun.”

What emotions do you have from not getting what you desire most?

Is joy, or lack thereof, tied to this for you?

We usually lack joy because we seek our own desires; the truth is we will come to resemble what we worship. If it is money we will be greedy, if it is fame we will be narcissistic and self-centered, but if it is God we will look like Christ. Solomon is compelling us to live free and full. The early church father Augustine said, *“love God and do whatever you please,”* because when we truly love God what we “please” will actually please Him because we love Him first.

Read Ecclesiastes 11:7-10.

If you are willing, ask those who know you what thing, or person, do you most resemble (look like) due to your worship.

Do their answers surprise you?

What does it mean to look like Christ?

How does worshipping God make us look like (resemble) Christ?

Solomon does his best to lay out in front of us the total honesty of who we are and our lives under the sun. Living in joy is more than finding ways to remove discouragement from our souls and to minimize damage to our bodies; it is a call to see everything in light of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we get discouraged by the vanity of life, Solomon says we should count our blessings we have received because the best remedy for “vanity” or “vapor” is understanding God’s great love and rescue of us.

What do you have the most fear and anxiety about?

Does it control you?

What vices do you use to numb yourself for the day, to help you cope with these things?

There is a time to be young and strong, and as long as we are in that season of life, we should celebrate its blessings...but we will only fully appreciate all of it when we get older and realize the great grace we had. In the end it will all pass like a vapor because we are but mortal creatures. The beauty of the Gospel is that into this meaninglessness, God has spoken words of promise and renewed full life. All that we have seen and gone through under the sun is NOT meaningless when we have our faith placed in God’s rescue of us.

Where do you have bitterness? What caused it?

How is the world a hard and disappointing place?

Why do we allow that disappointment to rule our lives?

How is the Gospel of Jesus Christ worthy of our ultimate hope in life?

The only way we will live in new life is by trusting Him more than our hearts because our hearts will always want to steer us away from the good news of the gospel.

Aaron said, “The Biblical way of removing anxiety is to cast our cares on God.” Who has a story they can share of how they were able to do this in their life?

Was it a one-and-done casting, or a daily one?

Spend some time in prayer as a community, repenting from not trusting God and for ways we have sought comfort/ways of coping in created things. Acknowledge to God why He is trustworthy. Ask for faith to trust Him what He says and thank Him for His promises.