

Holding on to Hope: Overcoming Life's Unexpected Challenges
Week 6: Overcoming Emptiness
Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021
Ecclesiastes 1:8-11 (The Message Bible)

Introduction: Our _____ is a gift from God. Who we _____ in this life is our gift to God.

Week 1: Overcoming Cynicism: "The more you _____, the more you hurt." Ecclesiastes 1:18
Your past is not your future if _____ is involved!

Week 2: Overcoming Temptation: Put your _____ first; make your _____ match your walk.
Refuse to _____.

Week 3: Overcoming Disconnection: Loving our specific neighbors requires _____ them
and spending time with them.

Week 4: Overcoming Pride: "*Pride makes us artificial and humility makes us _____.*" – Thomas Merton
"All who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted." - Jesus
Hold the _____ for others to go in front of you and stay behind them in line.

Week 5: Overcoming Burnout: God works through _____: gather professional helpers.

This Week: Overcoming Emptiness

Three thousand years ago, _____ was the most powerful human alive.

He had multiple homes, every food available, servants, _____ wives and _____ concubines.

Solomon, the son of David, says you can have it _____ and still be empty inside. Ecclesiastes 1:1-9

Today's trap: More: When you make _____ money, you want _____ square footage.

Better: After you have more than enough, you want an _____: TV, car, home.

Different: While others get more or better, you are unique, special, rare, _____.

The only thing left after different is _____. Ecclesiastes 2:1-10a, 11, 17.

Solomon got to the very top. And it was _____.

If your life is about what's in it for you, "No church will be good enough, no group will be good enough, and God will seem only as good as he's been to you lately." – Carey Nieuwhof

A Life Worth Living for: Another Son of David

Roughly a thousand years after Solomon, Jesus said, "*If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.*" Matthew 16:21, 24-26

In the act of _____, of giving up our lives to Jesus, we find life.

"The only thing more terrifying than dying to yourself is living for yourself." – Carey Nieuwhof

When you give your life to Jesus who _____ you, you find the real you!

Jesus Had a Mission Bigger than Himself: Luke 19:29-31

When Jesus rode on the donkey into the capital city, it was a _____ sentence. Luke 19:37-40

Jesus was fulfilling the prophet Zechariah's words, "See your King comes to you...gentle and riding on a donkey..." Zechariah 9:9

This is the _____ time the Bible records Jesus on a donkey.

In the garden, Jesus knelt down and prayed, "Not _____ will, but _____ be done." Luke 22:39-42

"If you want to beat emptiness, find a mission that's bigger than you..."

When you die to yourself, something far greater will emerge." – Carey Nieuwhof

Action Steps: Invite Jesus to be the real _____ of your life.

Ask, "Which kingdom am I living for? _____ or God's?"

Trust God to _____ your life this Holy Week.