

ECCLESIASTES

Material for RS2/WORD for October 15th

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

1. To give an overview of the book of Ecclesiastes
2. To encourage the young people to give things to God

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. Video playing equipment.
2. Pens and paper for brainstorming
3. Candle (in the youth office) and matches
4. Small Fire safe container

INTRODUCTION

The point of this is to give an overview of the book itself, understanding some of the major themes that the Teacher talks about. Pick from the following or do your own thing!

1. Play the video <https://youtu.be/VeUiuSK81-0> and discuss it. Give a disclaimer that it's okay if the content is shocking - Ecclesiastes is meant to shock the comfortable and comfort the restless.
2. Read the passages to discuss the themes:
 - a. The difference between the Author and the Teacher
 - b. The March of time takes things out of our control
 - c. The inevitability of death takes things out of our control
 - d. The way we are affected by chance takes things out of our control
 - e. The best we can do is create/follow the Lord and enjoy His simple gifts.

REFLECTION

The point of this is to unpack some of the heavier aspects of Ecclesiastes, and to understand why the teacher draws the conclusion that being open handed and following God is the best

way to live life. Some ideas are:

1. Light a candle before the video. Snuff it out, and as the smoke rises discuss why the teacher compares life to smoke - it's impossible to pin down, it dances backwards and forwards, it can't be dictated to, it's beautiful and mysterious, we can't be an active part of the smoke without disrupting it, it can cloud our vision etc. How does that affect us and our plans?
2. Brainstorm some of the things that we think are important/things that we invest in - career, wealth, status, achievement etc. Discuss them and why they're important to us. Maybe they're a part of our identity? Discuss why these things are Hevel and how that makes us feel (probably not that great!)
3. Read 9:13-18. Why does the teacher still think that the Fear of the Lord is a good thing?
4. Read the passages about God's good gifts - job satisfaction, a good meal, a sunny day, time with friends and family etc. Why are these good? What would life be like if we were content with these things?

GIVING IT TO GOD

The point of this is to enact some of the reflections, and to give things to God in the knowledge that life has the most significance and meaning with him.

1. What does it mean to be open handed?
2. Write down the things that we hold too tightly, and give them to God. Destroy them, or burn them (OUTSIDE, IN A FIRE SAFE CONTAINER, WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE STOOD 2m AWAY).
3. In 2s/3s discuss what they need to be open handed with, and pray for one another.
4. Worship together.