

SOLOMON THOUGHT ABOUT LIFE

ECCLESIASTES 1



CHRIST CONNECTION: Nothing we get in this world lasts forever. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: *What does God know? God knows everything.*

KEY PASSAGE: Fear the Lord and turn away from evil. Proverbs 3:7

STORY POINT: Solomon taught that God gives life meaning.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The book of Ecclesiastes is part of the Old Testament poetry and wisdom division. Ecclesiastes was written by King Solomon toward the end of his life as he reflected on his legacy and leadership. Though he had all the riches and wisdom life had to offer, he relayed in this writing that nothing matters apart from fearing the Lord and walking in His ways.

If everything is worthless, how are we to live meaningful lives as Christ followers? How is Jesus able to redeem our purpose in life?

The overall tone of Ecclesiastes seems pretty dreary. Solomon spoke of the meaninglessness of all our hard work and effort as people in a fallen world. These ideas seem to be in stark contrast to the ideas of God's beautiful, wonderful creation that we find throughout Scripture. A deeper look reveals that Solomon wasn't commanding his readers to stop caring about working hard, investing in the next generation, or experiencing what life has to offer. Instead, he poetically explained how lives spent on pursuing only the things of this world have no eternal meaning and will not be remembered.

The pursuits of this life are done in vain when we place them above our pursuit of the Lord and the wisdom He provides. Everything loses its meaning when held up against the cross of Jesus Christ. Only a life built on faith in Jesus will matter in the end.

When we order our lives with Jesus as our main pursuit, we experience the purpose and meaning that Christ died for us to receive; we experience life everlasting here and now. The gospel frees us from chasing after temporary, empty things and transforms our hearts to love and serve God. Christ died so that we may have life and have it in abundance (John 10:10).

Lead boys and girls to see the beauty of a life spent pursuing Christ! When all else seems meaningless, in Him we find our meaning as creations lovingly fashioned by a good Creator. Pray that they would turn from their sins and receive the gift of abundant life.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



Social/Arrival Activities (8:45-9:10) (10:30-11:55)

WELCOME Preschoolers

Car Play

Use painter's tape to create a large circle on the floor that is large enough for children to push small cars along. Arrange toy cars next to the taped circle. Invite children to take turns pushing a toy vehicle around the circle. Free play with cars and ramp.

SAY "Do you enjoy driving cars around and around the circle? Solomon's book says, 'People are born, people die, and the world keeps going around. The sun goes up and down. The wind blows. Rivers flow into the sea, but the sea never gets too full. What you do today, you'll do again tomorrow. It's like a big circle that never ends.' Solomon said this to teach people that the most important thing is to know and to follow God. The things we get in this world don't last forever. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to save people from sin so we can be with God forever."

DRAW DAYTIME AND NIGHTTIME PICTURE



Distribute a piece of both light and dark-colored paper to preschoolers. Suggest preschoolers draw pictures on the paper to show things that might happen in the daytime (going to the park, eating breakfast) or the nighttime (putting on pajamas, looking at the stars).

SAY *King Solomon thought a lot about life. He wrote down the things he thought about. Solomon wrote that the sun comes up in the morning and it goes down in the evening—over and over again.*

The things Solomon wrote about are in the Bible in the book of Ecclesiastes. We will hear about some of Solomon's thoughts in today's Bible story.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LOOK AT BOOKS

Set out several nature books that have pictures of rivers and oceans. Lead children to look at the different pictures. Talk about how rivers eventually flow into the ocean. Note the different animals that live in each body of water. Consider making the reading area cozy by setting up throw pillows, soft blankets, and playing water sounds on a sound machine.

SAY *Would you rather see a river or the ocean? [Allow responses.] Both are beautiful bodies of water God made and are filled with amazing creatures. King Solomon said 'rivers flow into the sea, but the sea never gets too full.' God knows how much water is in the sea. **What does God know? God knows everything.** If God knows everything, that means He knows you. God created you and loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life, die on a cross, and come back to life to save you from the punishment for sin.*

Bible Story Video/Worship Song (9:15-9:25) (11:00-11:10)

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Welcome boys and girls to the group time area. Show the laundry basket and talk about what a basket like this is typically used for.

SAY *"I have a few laundry baskets like this at home, and it seems like they are never empty. Whenever clothes are dirty, we put the clothes in the basket. The clothes get washed, but as soon as the basket is empty, we put the next day's dirty clothes in it. Over and over, the basket is emptied; then it is full again. In today's Bible story, we won't hear about washing clothes, but we will hear about things that seem to go around and around and never end. Listen closely to hear about the things King Solomon thought about."*

2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Ecclesiastes 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY *"The words we read in the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes are the words that King Solomon wrote. God gave Solomon thoughts about life, and he wrote down those thoughts."*

Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3. WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

4 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “*Nothing we get in this world lasts forever. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever.*”

Sing the key passage song, “Turn, Turn, Turn (Proverbs 3:7).”

Feel free to sing another worship song of your choice if time and interest allow.

At this time, we will split the class into two groups. (The teacher should divide the kids equally – age doesn’t matter.) 1 group will remain in Room 204 with 2 volunteers to complete the craft with their group. The other group will go to Room 205 with the other 2 volunteers to do a few review activities/games. After about 15 minutes, switch groups and repeat the same process. When both groups are ready, gather all the children and volunteers together back in Room 204. At this time, the children can repeat any games or activities they enjoyed or simply have free play time until church is over.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Small Group/Bible Story Review (9:30-9:45) (11:15-11:30)

LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “*King Solomon thought about so many things. He was wiser than anyone. But who is wiser than Solomon? God is. **What does God know? God knows everything.** God is the one who gave Solomon the wisdom to think about all the things we read in today’s Bible story. God showed Solomon that the most important thing in life is knowing and following God. Because nothing we get in this world lasts, trusting in Jesus is the only thing that matters. Jesus came to earth to rescue sinners so we can live with God forever.*”

PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Form a line of preschoolers at one side of the room. Invite preschoolers one at a time to say “Fear the Lord,” walk to the other side of the room, turn around, and say, “and turn away from evil” before returning to the starting point. Let each preschooler have a turn.

Guide preschoolers to put the yellow plates in order, using the Key Passage Poster as a guide. Say the verse a few times as children work.

SAY “*These plates remind me of the rising sun King Solomon wrote about. Solomon wanted people to know how to live in a way that pleases God. When people trust God, they want to make the best choices and turn away from sin. The only way to be saved from sin is through Jesus, who came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever.*”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

PAINT WITH WATER

Gather kids at the table. Distribute paper and a paintbrush to each preschooler. Set cups of water within reach. Lead preschoolers to paint simple shapes on their papers using water and the paintbrush. (Note: Warn preschoolers ahead of time that their paintings will disappear or evaporate.)

SAY “What happened to the water? It evaporated! It was here one minute, and then it was gone! Solomon taught that God gives life meaning. Nothing we get in this world lasts forever. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever.”

List Everyday Actions

Invite preschoolers to think of and share actions they do every day. Write their answers on a white board. Examples include eating breakfast, brushing teeth, putting on shoes, walking, taking a nap, and so forth.

SAY “Can you believe how many things we do every day, over and over? These are all important things to do, but they don’t give our life meaning or purpose. Solomon taught that God gives life meaning. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever.”

PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

SAY “God, we are so thankful You know everything. Because You know everything, we can trust You. Thank You for sending Jesus, who came to rescue sinners. Please help us remember that trusting in Jesus is the only thing that really matters. Amen.”



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL



Craft (9:47-10:02) (11:32-11:47)

MAKE AND PLAY WITH A SPINNING TOP

Give each child a circle and crayons or markers. Tell them to decorate their circle. As children finish, poke a pencil halfway through the hole in the middle to make the top. Demonstrate how to twist the pencil to make the top spin and move. If time and interest allow, let kids make 2 tops.

SAY "It was fun seeing how fast we could spin these tops! In Ecclesiastes, Solomon wrote 'People are born, people die, and the world just keeps spinning.' The tops we made spin, but then stop moving. The earth God created is always spinning. Solomon taught that God gives life meaning. Nothing we get in this world lasts forever. Only trusting in Jesus really matters. Jesus came to rescue sinners so we can have life with God forever."

ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete "What Is Different?" on the Activity Page.

SAY "You circled pictures of the things that are different from the others. The items that are the same are all part of today's Bible story. King Solomon wrote about some things he was thinking, and we can read Solomon's thoughts when we read the book of Ecclesiastes."

1st service volunteers, Please remember to set up the arrival activities for the children who will be attending second service. Also, reset any games or activities in room 205 that will be needed. Thank you!



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL