

Monday

May 25

READ THE BIBLE WITH US!

student ministries daily Bible reading
may 25- may 31

***So you cannot understand
the work of God***

by: kate simmons

***Ecclesiastes
11:1-6***

facts:

The author in this passage is instructing readers on how to engage with the future. He touches on our generosity and planning, as we don't know what the future holds. There are limits to what knowledge we can have, yet there is no limit to what God understands, so true wisdom lies in trusting God.

heart:

- Often we can try to analyze the future. We can try to do everything in our power to make our next week or month perfect. The author here is reminding us that this is not in our control but truly only in God's control.
- He instructs the readers in the two main ways that we think that we can protect our future selves, even when we are limited in our knowledge. He instructs the readers to be generous now, to give what we can when we know that we are able.
- He also instructs the readers to understand that only observing circumstances and using that to rule our decisions is unwise. (V.4) We are not dependent upon perfect circumstances but on trust in God. The author says here that the wisdom is trusting the one who knows the way of the wind and how bones grow.

do:

Are you trusting circumstance more than God? Talk to God this week about how you can begin to let go of finding knowledge in the world and begin to see that he is the one who knows more than we could ever plan for.

Tuesday

May 26

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***However many years anyone may live,
let them enjoy them all***

by: jess loomis

***Ecclesiastes
11:7-10***

facts:

King Solomon continues to instruct his readers on how to engage with the future and seek joy from their creator instead of getting caught up in the things that are momentary.

heart:

- Look at verse 7. The words “light is sweet” also can be translated in Hebrew as “light is good”. This is a reminder that life is a blessing to wake up each day and experience what God has for us. Yes, this earth is not our permanent home, but we still have the ability to enjoy the things God has created because they are GOOD.
- Look at verses 9-10. Notice how Solomon encourages his readers to enjoy life while we are young - to not get held down from anxiety and troubles so much that we forget the goodness of the life God has called us into when we place our trust in Him.

do:

Yes, there are and will be many things in life that are challenging, difficult, confusing or heartbreaking - its all a product of the fall and sin in our broken world. Yet, there is still joy and peace and hope. These all come from our creator and we can be rooted in these things because we belong to Him. Today, write a list of at least 10 things that are GOOD in your life - things God has blessed you with or maybe things you dont often remember to thank Him for. Spend a few minutes thanking him for the gift of life and those many blessings in your life!

Thursday

May 28

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Remember your Creator in the days of your youth

by: becca stavert

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

facts:

- Our lives are not our own- we are not our own creators- God created us and in that act of creation gave us an unmovable purpose- to live life to the fullest, despite circumstance, with God and for His glory.
- Remember and live for God not only at the end of your life, but with all the gift of life you have been given! Aging and death and sorrow and pain are inevitable, but the hope and fullness of life we find in living with God can be to! This is an older, wiser teacher looking back and saying "learn from me, take a hold of living for God while you are young!"

heart:

When I was in middle school, I remember thinking "I'll live for God more fully when I'm older, I'll just do what I want and have fun for now." Even now, over a decade later, I still struggle with this same mindset- that my time and my decisions are my own, that some things are more fun to pursue than God. However, If we've really been paying attention to Ecclesiastes, we see the stark truth time and time again- that we cannot find true meaning, fun, fulfillment apart from God. The author SO badly wants us to know that we shouldn't waste another minute apart from finding life in it's fullness in God- because pain, aging, sickness, sorrow, and death are all coming, and any moment spent not in the beauty and joy of a life with God is a sorrow in itself.

do:

- What are decisions, thoughts, things that you are holding back from God in an attempt to choose the "more fun" thing? What things are you thinking "I'll take that seriously in God when I'm older?" Be honest in prayer today with God about these things, ask Him how you can live in Him and for Him right now!
- Read 1 Timothy 4:12-You are a light now! No matter your age! How can you be an example of Christ today to those around you?

Friday

May 29

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***fear God and
keep His commandments***

by: zach zienka

Ecclesiastes 12:8-14

facts:

The Author of the Ecclesiastes wraps up their thoughts on the Teacher's lesson and concludes with their own reflection. The Author is very aware of the Teacher's wisdom but also the double-sided impact this book will have. The words are both painful and helpful. They prod and poke like a shepherd guiding his sheep on the right path.

heart:

Each of us going through this book have had different responses, reactions, and reflections on the words of the Teacher. We might have enjoyed his perspective or been frustrated by it at times. There might have been observations that resonated with you or thoughts that left you confused and unsure. Whatever you have learned, whatever your experience with Ecclesiastes has been, the Author leaves us with an overall takeaway. With all this wisdom we are still called to listen and obey God. Whether our obedience leads to peaceful living in this world as the book of Proverbs lays out or it leads to a mysterious, confusing life as Ecclesiastes has observed, we are still called to follow God's wisdom. Why? Because our obedience is not just about our own life here "under the sun". It is about life beyond that and leading others to see God through our life.

do:

Just as the Author has given us their reflection on what they learned from the Teacher, it is our turn to do the same! Get your journal, a piece of paper, or a digital document and record your reflection on Ecclesiastes. Starting first with prayer, asking God to reveal the things you have learned, you can use the following questions to guide your reflection:

- What are my initial feelings from reading this book?
- How would I summarize the message of this book?
- What verses or passages really stuck out to me?
- What wisdom have I gained from this book?
- How has my outlook on the world been changed?
- What's one lesson (maybe one sentence) I want to cling to from this?
- What is God trying to teach me through Ecclesiastes?

Saturday

May 30

SABBATH SATURDAY

Joy comes in the morning



Enjoy your Maker

In wrapping up this study in Ecclesiastes, we see that God and His goodness exists in everything He has created- which is everything! We also see that when we try and make the sweet things of life, the gifts from God, more meaningful than God Himself, we set ourselves up for pain and emptiness.

We are all living in a season of life where some of the things of life we used to enjoy and take delight in have been stripped away because of the pandemic. If you're anything like me, you are feeling sorrow and pain in their place.

We have different choices on how to respond in moments like these: let the enemy tell us the lie that hope and joy are gone because the things we loved have been taken, or let God show us the truth of our hearts and help us rebuild. We can so quickly turn good gifts from God into idols, and God uses moments of loss to help us see if this is the case.

So here's what we're going to do:

- List out what you have lost in this season. Don't hold back. Once you feel like you've covered it all, give that list to God in a way that makes sense to you.
- Find God's beauty today- in laughing with your friends or family, in the way the sunlight looks, in using your body or mind in a fulfilling way- do small enjoyable things with God & thank Him that He is still giving you good gifts!