

SOLOMON THOUGHT ABOUT LIFE

ECCLESIASTES 1



CHRIST CONNECTION: 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.

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

KEY PASSAGE: Fear the LORD and turn 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 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 children 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



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Dress up in Bible times clothes and write

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ chalkboard
- ☐ chalk
- ☐ eraser
- ☐ Bibles times clothing



LEARN

Play a guessing game

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Solomon Thought About Life" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Drop books through a slot

- ☐ large box with lid
- ☐ Bible storybooks

Play a matching game

- ☐ "Night and Days Cards" printable, 2



LIVE

Match the key passage phrase words

- ☐ magnetic letters
- ☐ index cards
- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Missions activity

- ☐ "Orvil Reid Photos" printable
- ☐ music player
- ☐ Christian tract or Bible

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Trace the Letters" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Drive cars around a circle

- ☐ painter's tape
- ☐ toy cars, 1 per child

Hop the key passage phrase

- ☐ painter's tape



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

DRESS UP IN BIBLE TIMES CLOTHING AND WRITE

On a table just inside the room door, place the chalkboard, chalk, and eraser. Position a Bible open to Ecclesiastes next to the chalkboard on the table. Spread the Bible clothing out on the tabletop around the board and Bible. As children arrive, guide them to the table with the clothing and the chalkboard. Encourage children to select a costume to wear and help them put it on. After children have put on Bible clothing, guide them to take turns drawing and writing on the chalkboard. As they write and draw, ask them to tell you what they are writing. Erase writing and drawings as needed so all children can have a turn.

SAY “ I am so glad to see you today. You all did a good job of writing and drawing. During our Bible story time, we are going to hear more about King Solomon and how he wrote a book in our Bible called Ecclesiastes. **[Point to the Bible.]** Solomon wanted everyone to know the most important thing they can do is to know God and follow God. **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** Our big picture question and answer tells us why it is important for us to know and follow God. It says, **What does God know? God knows everything.** ”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 PLAY A GUESSING GAME

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster near the board. Invite preschoolers to join you in the group time area to play a picture guessing game. After the children are seated, draw the following pictures on the board for the children to guess: crown, book, stick person, sun, flowing water, circle, and cross.

SAY “In our Bible story today, we are going to hear about a book that King Solomon wrote. Listen carefully to the Bible story to hear the items we guessed.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Ecclesiastes 1. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

SOLOMON THOUGHT ABOUT LIFE

SAY “Solomon was the richest man in the world. He was famous and wiser than anyone else. He was the powerful king of Israel. But King Solomon learned something important. He wrote a book to tell everyone what he learned. This is how the book starts:

“The Teacher says, ‘Everything is kind of pointless.’

Why? Because no matter how hard you work, you don’t really have anything to show for it.

People are born, people die, and the world just keeps going around and around.

The sun comes up, the sun goes down. The wind blows all over the place.

Rivers flow into the sea, but the sea never gets too full.

It’s like a big circle that never ends. It’s all very tiring!

You always want more and more, but nothing really changes.

What happened before will happen again.

What you do today, you’ll have to do again tomorrow.

Nothing is new under the sun.

People don’t remember other people who died long ago.

And the people who will be born later will not remember you either.”

Solomon wanted everyone to know that nothing we do really matters if we don’t know God. The most important thing is to know God and follow Him.”

Christ Connection: The things we have 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.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Point to the Bible Story Picture Poster. Ask the children to tell you: Who is in the picture? What is King Solomon doing? Then point to each of the pictures drawn on the board and ask these questions. (crown) Tell me again the name of the king in our Bible story. (Point to the book.) What did he write? (Point to the stick person.) Solomon wrote that people are born, and people ____? (Point to the sun.) Solomon wrote that the sun comes up and the sun goes _____. (Point to flowing water.) Solomon wrote that rivers flow to the _____. (Point to the circle.) It is all like a _____ that never ends. (Point to the cross.)

SAY “Solomon wrote to let everyone know that nothing we do really matters if we don’t know God. **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** 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.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Are You Sleeping?”:

What does God know? What does God know?
Everything, everything
There is no one like Him. There is no one like Him.
Trust His way. Trust His way.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Proverbs 3:7. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the passage aloud. Ask the children to tell you some of the things they know about God from the Bible. Invite children to stand and say the verse as they turn in a circle.

SAY “King Solomon wrote a book telling people that the most important thing is to know and to follow God. **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.**”

6 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us to know Him better.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 WRITE A BOOK



Prior to the session, fold a piece of construction paper in half to create a book cover. Then fold two more pieces of paper together for the book's interior pages. Tape the pages into the book. Make a book for each child. Distribute books to the children. Write their names on each book. Prompt children to "write" in their books with markers or crayons.

SAY 🗨️ What did you write in your books? [Allow responses.] King Solomon wrote a book, called Ecclesiastes, to tell everyone about some of the important things he learned. Solomon wanted everyone to know that nothing we do really matters if we don't know God. **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** 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. 🗨️

2 DROP BOOKS THROUGH A SLOT

Cut a large slot in the top of a box's lid big enough that a book can pass through it. Place the box on the floor of the room with a Bible storybooks next to it. Encourage the children to take turns dropping the books through the slot of the box. When preschoolers have dropped all the books through the slot, open the box, remove the books, close the box, and begin the game again.

SAY 🗨️ These are all Bible storybooks. They tell about God. King Solomon also wanted to tell about God. He wrote a book called Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes is a book in the Bible. In Ecclesiastes, **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** Solomon said that nothing we do really matters if we don't know God. The most important thing is to know God and follow Him. 🗨️

3 PLAY A MATCHING GAME

Make two copies of the "Night and Day Cards" printable on heavyweight paper and cut out cards along dashed lines. Invite several children to play a matching game with you. Mix up the matching cards and place them in rows facedown on a table. Invite a child to turn up two cards. If the cards match, the child can keep the cards. If not, guide the child to place the cards back where they were. Prompt the next child to turn up two more cards to try to find a match. Play until preschoolers match all cards.

SAY 🗨️ [Place all of the cards faceup on the table so the pictures can be seen. Point to pictures of the sun as you talk.] King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes: the sun goes up, the sun goes down, the wind blows all over the place, and there is nothing new under the sun. **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** 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. 🗨️

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 MATCH THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE WORDS

Write the words FEAR, LORD, TURN, and EVIL on separate index cards. Arrange magnetic letters, a cookie sheet, the index cards, and Key Passage Phrase Marker on a table. Read the key passage phrase aloud and prompt a child to select a word card. Lay the card on the cookie sheet and show the child how to spell by matching the magnetic letters to the letters on the card. After the child spells a word, invite another child to take a turn.

SAY “ Say the key passage phrase with me. ‘Fear the Lord and turn from evil. Proverbs 3:7.’ In today’s Bible story, Solomon wrote the most important thing is to know God and follow Him. That is what it means to fear the Lord and turn from evil. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Remind preschoolers that the good news about Jesus is too good to keep to ourselves! God wants us to tell others about Jesus. A follower of Jesus who is sent to tell others about Jesus is called a missionary. Print and display a copy of the “Orvil Reid Photos” printable. Lead preschoolers to sit in a circle. Show the photos. Play music and pass the tract or Bible around the circle. When the music stops, tell the preschooler holding the tract or Bible and say, “Tell others about Jesus.” Repeat the game until each preschooler has a turn. Thank God for people who make tracts and Bibles in different languages and distribute them to help more people learn about Jesus.

SAY “ Orvil Reid wrote small booklets called tracts to help the Mexican people know about Jesus. Orvil said people would get off their horses and donkeys or stop their cars to receive a tract. Many people read the tracts and wanted to know more about Jesus. Orvil and his team also sold New Testament Bibles at a bookstore. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION

Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ 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. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 PLAY CHARADES

Invite children to join you in the group time area to play a guessing game. Explain to the children that you are going to play out several things and their job is to guess what you are doing. Play out these things: writing on a page, reading/turning pages in a book, sun going up, flowing river. Thank the children for playing a game with you and invite them to listen carefully for the words you acted out while you tell them the Bible story.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Ecclesiastes 1. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

SOLOMON THOUGHT ABOUT LIFE

- Solomon was the richest and wisest man in the world. He was famous and powerful. King Solomon learned an important lesson, and he wrote a book about it.
- This is how the book starts: “The Teacher says, ‘Everything is kind of pointless.’ 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 have to do again tomorrow. And many years from now, people won’t even remember you.”
- Solomon said that the most important thing is to know God and follow Him.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Are You Sleeping?”:

What does God know? What does God know?
Everything, everything
There is no one like Him. There is no one like Him.
Trust His way. Trust His way.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Proverbs 3:7. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the phrase aloud. Invite children to tell you the names of people at church who teach you about God. Then, prompt children to stand up and to act out the key passage phrase while saying it aloud. For example, for “fear” they might make an afraid face, for “Lord,” they might point up, and so forth.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for giving us His Bible so that we can know Him better.

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 CUT ON A WAVY LINE



For each child, write, Solomon taught that God gives life meaning. across the bottom of a piece of construction paper using a marker. Then draw a wavy line, 4 to 5 inches above the phrase that goes from one edge of the paper to the other. Guide children to be seated at a table. Give each child a prepared piece of paper and blunt child-sized scissors. Show the child how to hold the scissors and how to cut along the drawn line. Help as needed.

SAY “ [Point to the words at the bottom of the page.] **SOLOMON TAUGHT THAT GOD GIVES LIFE MEANING.** Today, we heard how Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes to tell others that the most important thing is to know God and follow Him. 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. We had fun cutting and following a line with our scissors, but following God is what really matters. ”

7 DRIVE CARS AROUND A CIRCLE

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.

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. ”

8 HOP THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Tape box outlines the floor in a hopscotch pattern. Read the key passage phrase aloud to children and demonstrate how to hop while saying the phrase, one word per jump. Guide a child to hop on the hopscotch pattern while repeating each word of the phrase with you. Repeat the process of hopping and saying the phrase with each child as time allows.

SAY “ Let’s repeat the key passage phrase together again. ‘Fear the LORD and turn from evil. Proverbs 3:7.’ This is what Solomon was writing about when he wrote Ecclesiastes. He was telling people that the most important thing they can do is to know God and to follow Him. That’s what it means to fear Him. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.