

LEAD SHEET

ECCLESIASTES - WEEK 7

IT'S NOT FAIR

MAY 15, 2016

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:

WORSHIP WITH YOUR LIFE

If you want to know God better, give back to Him!

GETTING STARTED

General Discussion:

- Was the game fair? Why or why not?
- What would have made the game fair?
- Is life fair? Why or why not?

Today we are going to discuss "fairness" and what Ecclesiastes has to say about how we should approach life. Is everyone ready?

DIGGING IN

Read Ecclesiastes 8:1-8

Discussion Questions:

1. What is someone's attitude toward the king supposed to be? (*One of obedience.*)
2. What will happen to anyone who obeys the king? (*They will be done no harm.*)
3. This advice, and the verses around it, all speak about wisdom. How do wickedness and a lack of wisdom go hand-in-hand? (*The wise seek God and follow His commands; the wicked go their own way.*)

Often, we do not understand what God's Will means for our future. We like to question it. However, when we know His Will, we should follow even if we do not understand the full purpose.

If we give up during the battle, that does not take us out of danger. We do not escape danger by joining the enemy, either. We must remember that we are in battle. Our duty as Christians is to follow what our Commander tells us. He sits on a high hill and sees the whole picture. He wants what is best for us.

Read Ecclesiastes 8:9-17

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever looked at someone who wasn't honoring God and wondered why he or she seemed to have it so well?

2. Solomon says, "The wicked get what the righteous deserve and the righteous get what the wicked deserve." Have you ever seen this happen? Can anyone give an example? (*A cheater makes 100% on a test and someone who studies makes a C, etc.*)

3. There is an attitude that is prevalent today. It goes, "If I can get away with it, I can do it." Do you know anyone who thinks this way? How is this attitude a bad one? (*Just because you can get away with it doesn't mean it is right.*)

Solomon's point here is that we all live in a fallen, unfair world. Sometimes the wicked do seem to prosper. Nevertheless, this should not cause us to falter in our faith. Instead, the servant of God should look for the enduring approval of the Lord.

It's just like the king mentioned in the early verses. If we live to please the King, no harm will ultimately come to us.

4. Solomon mentions long life. Is long life a result of how you live on this earth? (*No.*) Explain.

In Solomon's day, God revealed very little about the life to come. Long life is not necessarily living longer on this world. As we know, we are simply visitors to this world (1 Peter 2:11). Through Christ, we know that in the future we will have a reward that is much bigger than earth. The day of the wicked does not last longer than their time on earth.

MAKING IT REAL

Even knowing this, many people have a problem with the way things work in our world. For example, many people have a problem with evil. How can God let things happen the way he does? It is difficult for us to understand sometimes how God works. Solomon's explanation is that God has made life unpredictable on purpose to keep us from trying to take it over and control it (verses 16-17). We are reminded that everything is in God's hands, not ours.

Read Ecclesiastes 9:1-4

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the "certain thing" that awaits the righteous and the wicked? (*Death and judgment.*)
2. Why is a "live dog better than a dead lion," based on these verses? (*While we are still living, we have hope. Once dead, our destiny and fate are sealed.*)
3. When you think about the life after this one, how different will it be? (*Lots of differences, but one big difference is that the injustice of this world will disappear.*)

We live in a sinful and fallen world. Often, things that happen seem difficult to us. However, God is good. He often blesses us through our surrounding tragedies. Our goal is to please the Master and keep up hope through the tragedies that surround us.

This life is unfair, but what happens after this life is final--and it is just.

CLOSING PRAYER #CRAZYFORCHRIST