

Chasing the Wind - A Study of Ecclesiastes Discussion Guide: Week 6 - Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Summary of this week's teaching: In the previous weeks, the Preacher has railed against the vanity of wealth, success, self-indulgence, toil, wisdom... practically anything of which he could think. However, Ecclesiastes 5:1-7, radically switches gears. Instead of attempting to illustrate the vanity of yet one more aspect of life, Solomon *seems* to affirm some very sensible ways to approach worshiping the Lord. While there is undeniable truth in the wisdom offered in this passage, closer inspection reveals that Solomon's "under the sun" approach is still alive and well. Solomon's idea of worship is heartless religious duty, not passionate worship of a good and loving God.

Connect: Relational questions to get conversations started.

1. What are 3 things that you are thankful for this week?

Seed: The Bible, God's inspired Word, is very much like a seed- it contains everything we need to experience life. Please read the following passages of scripture as a group: (perhaps in two different translations) Ecclesiastes 5:1-7, Isaiah 1:10-20, and John 4:23-24.

1. What constructive wisdom is offered in the Ecclesiastes passage?
2. In what ways does it misrepresent God's loving, merciful, and long-suffering character?
3. What does the Isaiah passage teach us about proper and improper worship?
4. What do you think it means to worship God in spirit and in truth?

Roots: Like subterranean tree roots which extend in all directions searching out water, each believer needs to grow and develop spiritual roots that allow us to make personal connections with our God.

1. Worship is an incredible way to personally connect with the Lord! When/where do you find it easiest to spend time worshipping God?
2. How do you guard against offering God the half-hearted worship that is spoken of in Isaiah 1?

Trunk: Without trunks, plants may be large, useful, and beautiful but they are not trees. The same is true for our faith - without it we are not saved and cannot please God. These questions will help us grow our faith in Him.

1. Is it possible for someone to have vibrant faith in the Lord but lack any desire to worship Him? Please explain.
2. How is unhealthy fear of God detrimental to our faith? How is reverential fear of God constructive to our faith? How can you tell the difference between them?

Crown: Crowns are the glory of a tree; the culmination of the roots and trunk working in harmony and can be seen for miles around. The crown of a tree represents the visible portion of our faithlife. These questions will encourage us to apply these principles into our everyday lives.

1. Please read (or recite) Romans 12:1-2. How do you apply this verse to your life?

