

Keswick Convention 2022

Grasping God's Masterpiece: Learning to rejoice in the Old Testament

Seminar 4: Grateful for its Wisdom

Grateful for its wisdom

Well-being is the buzz thing of our day. Our bookshops, podcasts, and TV shows are full of popular self-help books. Some contain some practical advice, but nothing can beat the depths and practicalities of Biblical wisdom literature. It is no wonder Paul told Timothy that the Old Testament thoroughly equips for every good work! Do we appreciate the treasure store we have? Can we really rejoice in Ecclesiastes?

Break Out Question:

Ecclesiastes is like marmite - do you love it or avoid it?

The Pessimistic Preacher

Ecclesiastes 1:2

Ecclesiastes 1:14

Ecclesiastes 1:18

Ecclesiastes 2:2

Ecclesiastes 2:4-11

Ecclesiastes 2:17

4,000 weeks

Hebel - fleeting - mist, vapour, vanishing - 38 times

Ecclesiastes 1:3-11

The teacher looks at the world from two angles

1. Under heaven - under heaven is how God has ordered the world

Ecclesiastes 1:12-15

Ecclesiastes 2:3

In God's world there is a time for everything

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Acts 10:42

*He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God **appointed** as **judge** of the living and the dead.*

The ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man the roles are reversed. He is the judge: God is in the dock. He is quite a kindly judge: if God should have a reasonable defense for being the god who permits war, poverty, and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that Man is on the bench and God is in the dock. C.S.Lewis - God in the dock

2. Under the Sun

Life in a fallen world is very tough

Ecclesiastes 4:1-3

Ecclesiastes 10:5-7

Life under the sun is unpredictable

Ecclesiastes 9:1

Ecclesiastes 9:11

Ecclesiastes 11:5

Under the Sun - good things to do

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Ecclesiastes 8:15

Ecclesiastes 9:9

Ecclesiastes 2:13-14

Ecclesiastes 10:13-18

Ecclesiastes 11:9

But remember you will die

Ecclesiastes 9:12

Ecclesiastes 7:2

Ecclesiastes 7:4

CS Lewis war time sermon - learning in war-time 1939

What does war do to death? It certainly does not make it more frequent; 100 per cent of us die, and the percentage cannot be increased. - War makes death real to us: and that would have been regarded as one of its blessings by most of the great Christians of the past. They thought it good for us to be always aware of our mortality. I am inclined to think they were right.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-8

Grateful for wisdom

1. It teaches us to walk patiently - use now well but not be surprised by hard times.
2. Now matters because of the future
3. It will be the best of times and worst of times all of the time
4. In our lives weep and rejoice a place for both
5. Use our time faithfully
6. We are finite - frail - not in control but God is in control - he is the creator

We know something more than the preacher

The future is certain because of the past - the cross

It is about Jesus

1. Creator
2. Judge
3. Rescuer - he is the one who brings true comfort
4. He is the one who makes the crooked straight!

Questions to think about

How do you view time? Are you daunted by the preachers perspective or do you find it encouraging?

How do you experience the tension between the suffering of the fall and the goodness of God's gifts in your life, in your Church?

How does knowing the preachers perspective equip us to face life now and prepare us for the future?

Karen Soole
<http://karensoole.com>