



TITLE: Welcome to My Funeral

ICE BREAKER: What do you imagine people will say about you at your funeral?

BIG IDEA: Life's not fair and you're going to die, so entrust your life to the hand of God.

MAIN SCRIPTURE:

Ecclesiastes 9

A Common Destiny for All

9 So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no one knows whether love or hate awaits them. **2** All share a common destiny—the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad,^[a] the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not.

As it is with the good,

so with the sinful;

as it is with those who take oaths,

so with those who are afraid to take them.

3 This is the evil in everything that happens under the sun: The same destiny overtakes all. The hearts of people, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward they join the dead. **4** Anyone who is among the living has hope^[b]—even a live dog is better off than a dead lion!

5 For the living know that they will die,

but the dead know nothing;

they have no further reward,

and even their name is forgotten.

6 Their love, their hate

and their jealousy have long since vanished;

never again will they have a part

in anything that happens under the sun.

7 Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do. **8** Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. **9** Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun. **10** Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your

might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

11 I have seen something else under the sun:

The race is not to the swift

or the battle to the strong,

nor does food come to the wise
or wealth to the brilliant
or favor to the learned;
but time and chance happen to them all.
¹² Moreover, no one knows when their hour will come:

As fish are caught in a cruel net,
or birds are taken in a snare,
so people are trapped by evil times
that fall unexpectedly upon them.

Wisdom Better Than Folly

¹³ I also saw under the sun this example of wisdom that greatly impressed me: ¹⁴ There was once a small city with only a few people in it. And a powerful king came against it, surrounded it and built huge siege works against it. ¹⁵ Now there lived in that city a man poor but wise, and he saved the city by his wisdom. But nobody remembered that poor man. ¹⁶ So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength." But the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are no longer heeded.

¹⁷ The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded
than the shouts of a ruler of fools.

¹⁸ Wisdom is better than weapons of war,
but one sinner destroys much good.

OPENING THOUGHTS: Although life may seem random, be unfair, and death is an inevitable destiny for both righteous and unrighteous people, there is still hope and a promise of enjoyment for the living if they entrust themselves into the hand of God.

MAIN POINTS:

1. LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE, DEATH IS CERTAIN (vv.1-6, 11-12) Although life may seem unpredictable, unjust, and death comes for us all---the wise are in the hand of God.
2. EAT, DRINK, & ENJOY LIFE (vv.7-10) Find enjoyment in God's provisions, relationships, and work as circumstances allow.
3. WISDOM, WEAPONS & WOUNDS (vv.13-18) By His wisdom God used the foolishness of the cross to offer life and enjoyment to all who die.
4. Life's not fair and you're going to die, so entrust your life into the nail-wounded hands of Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does the Teacher observe about life under the sun in each section? (vv.1-6 & 11-12) (7-10) (& 13-18)?
2. What difference then is there between the life of the righteous and the unrighteous? Is there any benefit to the wise?
3. What does the Teacher say about how we should enjoy life under the sun? vv.7-10
4. The invitation of this passage is to accept the seeming randomness of life and the inevitability of our death: Jesus invites us also to die to ourselves. What does this look like in day to day living?

CHALLENGE: How will you reject being rebellious and accept Godly biblical submission? How do we need to accept our limitations (weaknesses), and start trusting God? Are there areas in your life where you have or currently are abusing the authority God has given you? Will you repent from it now or on the Day of Judgment? How will you stop questioning God, and engage your father in conversation? Accept the inevitability of your death, accept the reality that life is not fair, and entrust your life to the nail scarred hands of Jesus---only then can you begin to truly live and enjoy life.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Lord, help me to see beyond what my eyes can observe on this earth. Help me accept that although life may seem random and the circumstances are often unfair and unjust, you've have me engraved in your hands, forever secure as I trust and follow you. Thank you for the joy you allow me to experience on this side of life. In Jesus' name, amen.