

# Youth Teaching Resources

January 1, 2017



## Looking Forward (January 1-February 26)

**Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 – “It’s Always Time”**

Isaiah 42:1-9 – “A Time for Justice”

Isaiah 49:1-7 – “A Time for Light”

Isaiah 9:1-4 – “A Time for Hope”

Micah 6:1-8 - “A Time for Mercy”

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# It's Always Time

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-13*

## YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

### PARENT PREP

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Our students go through a lot of ups and downs and twists and turns. For many youth it is hard for them to see past the current situation that they are in. A lot of this can be chalked up to personal experience and time. They haven't lived through as many seasons of life. The realization that there will be an up after a down and that you don't always stay on top. As you live with and experience these twists and turns with your youth, remember that words such as "You will live through this." or "It will all turn around." while true, aren't as helpful because they haven't experienced them. Instead, share stories of when you were low and what happened for you to come out of it. Allow them a glimpse into your life to see that you did come through it. Walk with them through the seasons of their life and share your stories along the way.

### TEACHING THE LESSON

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#### Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip "The Byrds - Turn, Turn, Turn" uploaded by John1948TwoC1 to YouTube. If you are unable to show the clip, you may find a recording for the group to listen to. Either way, after the group has heard the song, facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What different "times" does this song mention? Hint: Listen for "there's a time for..."
- 2) What other times, or seasons, would you add their lyrics?
- 3) What is your favorite time of year?
- 4) What is your favorite time of the Christian year?
- 5) How does your faith influence how you face the different seasons of life?

## Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What seven pairs does the author of this poem list? How can each of these be both independent of each other and related to each other?
- 2) Which pair do you most relate to? Explain your reasoning.
- 3) How does the author of this poem make God evident without mentioning God directly?
- 4) What does the author believe the task of the human is in their relationship with God?
- 5) Do you believe the author's perspective on his, and our life, would have been different if he had an encounter with Jesus? Explain.

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Who was Qoheleth?
- 2) What are some of the different translations of *level hevelium* that you read in your different versions of the Bible?
- 3) Some scholars translate "pleasure" instead of "matter". Does this change the way you interpret the text? How?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": Why couldn't Solomon have written Ecclesiastes?

## Transformation

Close your time together by distributing large pieces of paper and writing utensils. Prompt your students to create a timeline of their life but have them trend the line up when they feel their life was on the rise and trend down when they felt low. As they create their timelines, have them also think about what happened to help them out of the low spots and who they celebrated with at the high points of their life. As time allows, have volunteers share their timelines and how they got out of their lows and who they celebrated with at their peaks.

Close your time together with a prayer thanking God for being with us throughout the highs and lows of our lives and giving us opportunities to help others through their different seasons of life.