

Bible Passages

- Matthew 6:19–21
- Matthew 6:24–31
- Matthew 7:4–27
- Matthew 8:20
- Matthew 10:29–31
- John 15:1–5

Good News for Creation

Some Insights from the Gospels

Introduction

Lifestyle is a buzzword of the 21st century. Week by week magazine articles and television programmes bombard us with lifestyle 'musts', from the latest look in fashionable clothes to designer kitchens, from the colour of our eggs to the design of a room. Sunday supplements include articles about so-called media personalities under such titles as 'A day in the life of...' or 'My favourite room by...'.

Warming Up

Discuss how the group feels about our increasingly 'lifestyle' orientated world.

WWJD?

An acronym has entered the Christian vocabulary from America – WWJD? It stands for What Would Jesus Do?

Imagine that you have to compile a Sunday Supplement article under the title 'A Kingdom Lifestyle by Jesus of Nazareth'.

For Discussion

• What are key features of the lifestyle of Jesus that you would include in this article?

Some suggested texts for reference include: **Matthew: 6:19–21, 24–31, 7:4–27, 8:20, 10:29–31**. Consider writing your thoughts as an article for your church magazine and an appropriate location for a contemporary photo-shoot!

Impact

Different lifestyles are said to give us particular benefits: a beer and chips diet might enhance our girth and it is said that our choice of clothing or a car can make a statement about who we are. Lifestyle choices impact on the environment too!

For Discussion

• Consider one or two lifestyles, including your own, and the Jesus 'Kingdom style' above, and for each one discuss the impact of it on the environment and our personal well-being.

Change

We know that Jesus lived in a very different world to our own. 2,000 years ago there were no mobile phones and e-mail was as fast as the nearest donkey. But there are some similarities – people are still concerned about relationships and passionate about issues including healing, forgiveness, debt, food, isolation and poverty.

For Discussion

- What environmentally-beneficial features (i.e. good news!) of the life-style of Jesus are you attracted to?
- How is it possible to translate them into life in the 21st century?

Church Lifestyle

More Good News for Creation

The Gospel according to John opens by mirroring the first verses of Genesis: 'In the beginning...'. In doing so John links the person of Jesus with God from the beginning of time and then reveals how God begins a new relationship with people through Jesus. For example, in John 15 there is the account of the teaching of Jesus on the vine and the branches. The passage builds on the Old Testament understanding of God as the vine keeper and Israel as the vine, but it can also be interpreted as an intimate picture of the Church and Christ. Read John 15:1–5.

For Discussion

• Building on the gardening imagery, what parts of Church life would you prune and what parts would you encourage to fruit, that creation might bloom?



Bible Study Series 1 is prepared by Rev. Dr. David Pickering, who was responsible for developing the Eco-Congregation Programme (UK). Previously published in the United Reformed Church 'Roots and Branches' environmental pack, these five studies have been modified for the A Rocha Good Seed Sunday Project.

www.goodseedsunday.com

www.arocha.ca

Inspiring Change. Caring for Creation