



SUSTAINABILITY IN SCRIPTURE

Below you will find the texts for each slide with the questions that appear on the screen. These are followed by a short paragraph putting that into context and then further points for discussion.

We used the New Living Translation.

Genesis 1 – The Story of Creation

Do I recognize the gifts of Creation around me?

Can I mirror the creativity of God in my attitude towards others and the environment?

We often think about God creating the universe, our world, the animals etc but rarely think about how God has created us. Or how we are like him and therefore have that same creative spirit within us. In what ways are you creative?

How could you use that gift more?

How could you use it to help others?

Are there creative gifts that you see in others (maybe those in the room with you) that could be used more often or more effectively?

Genesis 41 v33-36 – Joseph’s interpretation of Pharaoh’s dream

Do I use the resources given to me with wisdom?

Can I help others plan for a better future?

Pharaoh’s dream was telling of 7 fruitful years which would be followed by 7 years of famine. Joseph’s plan was for 7 years ahead to last for 7 years! It seems impossible to us to know what we want to do in 7 let alone 14 years time.

What things could you plan for several years ahead? (eg. covenanted giving or sponsor a child)

How much waste do you have (not just general household waste but clothes, shoes, DVD’s etc?)

Could you recycle more?

How can you buy less stuff?

Deuteronomy 30 v11-16 – Moses call to the people

Am I aware of how my daily decisions affect those around me?

Do I sometimes make the wrong choices?

Moses talks hard to the people of Israel. They must make choices and he urges them to choose the way of life; the way of God.

When have you made a choice that has had consequences that you could see – either for good or bad?

Can you think of a time when you have chosen the right thing to do even though you wanted to do something else? What were the consequences?

Ezekiel 47 - Ezekiel tells of his vision

**On my doorstep are there divisions between rich and poor?
In our world can we help those who have lost their land or are displaced?**

Sometimes when people/nations can't agree they go their separate ways. For nations this can mean extreme hardship on those who have to move through no fault of their own. They may have to walk hundreds of miles to a safe place with only themselves and the things they can carry.

**If you had to do this what items would you take with you and why?
What would be hard to leave behind?
What would you miss the most?
How do you think you would feel?
What can you do to help immigrants here who are going through those experiences?**

Habakkuk 3 v17-18 - Rejoicing in suffering

**Habakkuk tells of a failed harvest, failed crops, and dead livestock. This would bring extreme suffering to the people, yet he says, he will still rejoice in the Lord.
How can he still rejoice?
How can poor people be happy?
What does it mean to be rich? Is it more than money?
Would you rather be rich in poor health or poor in good health?**

Matthew 14 v13 - Feeding the 5,000

**Do I have faith that prayer can give hope to hopeless situations?
What is the little amount that I can offer to other?**

Jesus had been teaching the people all day and no one had realized how late it was. They were all hungry and the disciples wanted to send them all away to eat. Jesus told them they could feed the people but they couldn't see how with just 2 fish and 5 small loaves. It's easy to think we have nothing to give ourselves, but God can use all that we offer.

**When have you given or done something that has been appreciated by someone else?
Did you expect it to have that result?
Have you ever prayed for something and God has answered your prayer much more than you expected?
Do you believe your prayer can make a difference?**

Acts 2 v 44-45 – How the first Christians lived

How can I work in unity with others to promote sustainability?

Are there things I can get involved with in my church to help make a difference for those in need?

The early church worked together in all things. They shared all they had with each other.

What do you have that you could share?

Where do you see disunity?

How could you help to bring peace to that situation?

What individuals or groups, does your church work with who are in need?

How could you help them in this task?

What other groups could you work with to promote sustainability?

James 2 v17 - It's more than faith

Do I sometimes fail to follow through on my convictions?

How could I demonstrate love for the world around me?

As Christians we must have a balance between our spiritual lives and our actions in the world. Neither on their own is enough. In the text James is criticising those who pray but do nothing practical.

What happens if you pray but have no 'action'?

What happens if you are all action but no prayer?

When did you last help someone else?

Did you expect something in return?

When did someone last help you?

Did you pray for them?

Revelation 21 v1,3 & 5 – The future

This is a vision of the end of time. God creates a new heaven and a new earth. Everything is new again and there is no more crying or death.

If you could change one thing about the world in which we live, what would it be?

What could you do to make that thing happen?

Do you pray for it?

**If you could do one more thing to help sustainability what would it be?
How can you help it to happen?**