

Talk 1 – But everyone else is doing it !!

We all like the idea of being good and doing right.

We all like the idea of keeping rules that are good for us – but somehow we don't always manage it

Why is that?

Well I want to play a game and there is a very big chocolate bar up for grabs if you win.

Now I need three people who are quite competitive to try really hard to be a winner!

But I need to tell you that there can only be 1 winner.

The winner will be the first one to complete the task on this piece of paper.

I am going to put up the instructions up on the screen – and I wonder if the mums and dads would read the instructions to the children and explain the game to them.

Meanwhile dads you are not to look at your instructions until I say “Go”.

** → ON SCREEN

The Paper has the following instructions.

- 1. Read the instructions before you begin.*
- 2. The first person to do what is required wins !!*
- 3. Eat a teaspoon of tomato ketchup*
- 4. stand up and say “hallelujah I’m going to win”*
- 5. put chocolate on your nose*
- 6. sit down on the chair.*
- 7. only do action 6 to win.*
- 8. enjoy your chocolate!*

end of game.

We all like the idea of following instructions that are good for us but

– when we think we'll lose by doing right

- when everyone else seems to be doing wrong and getting away with it

then we are tempted to just do what WE want – its human nature!

We all like the idea of living in a right relationship with the **world**.

not chopping down rain-forests –

did you know that from the year 2000 to 2005 Brazil chopped down 150,000 sq kilometres of rain-forest – about the size of Greece. Never to be replaced. <explain photo>

Here is a picture of how much Borneo has chopped down its rainforests

What you don't see is that 95% of the low-lying Rain-forest in Borneo has gone

This is the home of the Orangutan – the Orangutan natural habitat has been almost completely destroyed. They are critically endangered

not being cruel to animals –

did you know that – 25 million chickens in our country live with this much space for their whole life, they get so frustrated that they peck each other, so we cut their beaks off so they will stop.

not exploiting cheap labour in the 3rd world –

did you know that according to UNICEF it is not unusual to find children as young as 7 working 12-16 hours days in clothing factories in Asia for less than 10p. Children exploited with dull, day-long, repetitive, low-paid/unpaid/forced labour

We all like the idea of living in a right relationship with the world.

But when we think we'll lose out by doing right because

we'll have to avoid our favourite hair care product because it is made using **Palm Oil**

we'll have to pay more for our **chicken** because it does NOT come from battery farms or

we'll have to pay more for our **trainers/tee shirts/coffee** (because they come from places that treat their workers well)

THEN we choose to ignore our conscience and do what we want anyway – its human nature!

What is more, when everyone else seems to be doing it and not taking these things seriously

THEN we are even LESS inclined to do what is right,

EVEN MORE inclined to do what WE want.

“Why should we, if everyone else is doing it?” we say – its human nature.

→ When we look at the way human beings treat the world we get a good insight into human nature.

We all like the idea of following instructions that are good for us EXCEPT

– when we think we'll lose by doing right,

- when everyone else is getting away with it

then we too often do what WE want – its human nature!

This is true of our relationship with God

We all like the idea of living in a right relationship with **God**.

I imagine everyone likes the idea of living in a right relationship with God

we don't want to screw up our body with alcohol or drugs

we don't want to lie

we don't want to be selfish towards others

we do want to know God's presence in our life

we do want to do what he thinks is right

we do want to be kind, patient, caring

I imagine everyone likes the idea of living in a right relationship with God

But when we think we'll lose out by following God

when we have to say “sorry”

when we are teased by our friends because they don't believe

when we are called to share our wealth with the poor, our time with those in need, our life with people who are not like us

when we think we'll lose out by following God

THEN we'll very often ignore God's way and do what we want anyway – its human nature.

What is more, when everyone is doing it

THEN we are even less inclined to follow God.

EVEN more inclined to do what we want!

Application.

When we look at the way we treat the world we get a good insight into human nature.

When we look at the way we treat God we get a good insight into human nature

But so what – what's the big deal!

what if we ignore Creation?

what if we ignore God's call?

What's the problem with that....

Talk 2 – Surprisingly the Consequences always Surprise us!

Consequences are funny things.

Consequences (the things that happen as a result of what we do) are funny things

- The further away the consequences are the less we care,
- The less it affects US the less we care.

Look here is a £5 note.

I'm offering it to you - but if you take it then you must do 1 hours gardening in the Rectory, immediately after church? Will you take it?

What if I said

I'm offering it to you - but if you take it then you must do 1 hours gardening in the Rectory, in 5 years time? Are you more tempted to take it? Yes of course? Why?

→ likely to forget,

→ it seems so far away.

What if I said

I'm offering it to you but if you take it then <this person> must do 1 hours gardening in the Rectory, immediately after church? Are you more tempted to take it?

Do you see? Consequences are funny things

- The further away they are the less we care,
- The less they affect us the less we care.

This can be seen in the way we treat the world.

Very often the consequences are a long time off and far away

In August 2007- Yangtze River Dolphin became extinct (just 4 years ago) primarily to unregulated fishing

The largest recorded flock of birds was recorded in 1866 with a flock of Passenger Pigeons being 1 mile wide, 300 miles long, and taking 14 hours to pass a single point. 50 years later the Passenger Pigeon went from 4 billion birds to extinction because of hunting and deforestation.

In 20 years the Atlantic cod went from 800,000 tons of fish caught to nothing.

We haven't learnt the average prawn trawler throws 80-90% of the sea animals it captures overboard, dead or dying, as bycatch <explain>. In Indonesia, 26 pounds of other sea animals are killed and tossed back into the ocean for every pound of this prawns we eat.

Does it matter

if animals become extinct?

if rainforests are cut down?

if pollution mounts up?

if people (far away) remain in poverty so that children have to go out to work?

It matters because God has called us to look after this world and others

Not just for the world's sake but for our sake.

By looking after the world

we learn not to be selfish

we learn that our life is not just all about us and what we want

we learn that some consequences are forever and cannot be changed

God calls us to look after the world not just for the world's sake

but because he teaches us what it means to be responsible for something.

The consequences if we live just for ourselves in relation to the world
is that the world gets sick and dies
and we remain selfish

The consequences if we live just for ourselves in relational to animals is that
animals, fish, birds, plants get sick and die
and we remain selfish

The consequences if we live just for ourselves in others is that
they remain poor and sick
and we remain selfish

The consequences if we live for ourselves in relation to God
(because God seems so far away)
(because it seems we can ignore him)

is that our relationship with God gets sick and dies
and remains dead forever
and we remain selfishly thinking that the best we can do with our life is to do with what we want and
not what God wants.

The consequences of rejecting God look like this and this + matters.

What we do with God's gift of creation and God reveal what we are like

- we are good so long as it suits us
- so long as other people aren't getting away with being bad we will be good

The consequences are that if we don't care about the world, others and God
the world gets sick and dies
people remain sick and die
our relationship with God dies

So
it matters how we shop and what we buy
it matters how we live in relation to the world
it matters whether we ask God to guide our life, our thoughts, our actions
it matters

So
please shop differently
please lend your voice to the campaigns that we support to make life different for the poor and marginalised
please seek God – don't reject him but find him
the consequences are life changing...

- don't be put off because it seems hard to be good
- don't be put off because others seem to be getting away with it
- don't be put off because the consequences seem so far away
- don't be put off because you think Christianity is for others.