

### Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil – this is God's gift to man. I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him. That which is already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness. I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work. I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts. For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth? So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

## The Reality of Time

1. A poem about life in a fallen world;
2. A poem about all our experiences in this life;
3. A poem that directs us to the sovereign will of God;

## The Sovereignty of God

### 1. Trusting God

- a. "This means that part of growing up in the world is learning to grow small. God intends us to be like children who trust their parents to know best because they can see what the children can't see, and they know what the children are not yet able to know. And here's the thing – the relationship of trust is built on the character of the parents. If the parents are good and wise and kind, then the child who cannot see the end from the beginning has nothing to fear." (David Gibson)
- b. "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (Ephesians 5:15-17)

### 2. Enjoy God

- a. "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

### 3. The Fear of God

### 4. The Justice of God

- a. "If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay." (Habakkuk 2:3)

### 5. Our Mortality

- a. "Our present existence is a proving ground...in the sense of something that demonstrates our true character. One of life's purposes is to examine and ultimately reveal our true relationship to God." (Philip Ryken)
- b. "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes." (James 4:13-14)
- c. "...and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..." (2 Timothy 1:10)
- d. "Living well in God's world means recognizing that when it comes to our own lives, we are not mini-gods, and this is His creation, not ours." (David Gibson)

## Benediction | Romans 11:33-36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid?" For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

So teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom.