

Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

I. **Futility:**

II. **God's Immutable Plan for Life (3:1-22)**

A. **He Foreknows the Events of Life (3:1-11)**

1. **God's Appointed Times. 3:1-8**

- 1 There is an appointed time (**ZeMAN = 4x; an appointed time; a season**) for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—**(the heavens)**
- 2 A time to give birth (**YALADH**), and a time to die (**MUTH**); a time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted.
- 3 A time to kill (**HARAG**), and a time to heal (**RAPHA**); a time to tear down (**PARATZ = break down**), and a time to build up (**BANAH**).
- 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
- 5 A time to throw stones, and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing.
- 6 A time to search, and a time to give up as lost; a time to keep, and a time to throw away.
- 7 A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together; a time to be silent, and a time to speak.
- 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Summary:

1. There is an appointed time for “everything” so this list is _____ and not exhaustive.
2. This appointed time becomes an _____ time for various actions.
3. The list contains opposites that are designed to show us the importance of _____.
4. Only in the comparison between being born and dying is man's _____ not involved.
5. Clearly there are issues of _____ in order to know the time that each of these activities is appropriate. Jas 1:5
6. Jesus was very concerned about the _____ lack of wisdom in these areas. Matt 11:15-19
7. Also important is the wisdom that comes from _____.

8. Each contrasting event has an _____ point where changes are to be made.

2. Eternity In The Hearts Of Men. 3:9-11

- 9 What profit (word used only in Eccl. YITHRON = left over, profit) is there to the worker from that in which he toils? (cf 2:11; His conclusion was that there was no profit)
- 10 I have seen the task ('INYAN = occupation or task; only in Eccl) which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves.
- 11 He has made everything appropriate (YAPEH = appropriate, beautiful) in its time. He has also set (NATHAN = to give or set) eternity ('OLAM) in their (sons of men) heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

Summary:

1. There is not enough _____ "profit" to take with us into eternity.
2. Exploring God is the most important _____ in life.
3. This exploration is pursued in part by doing everything at the _____ time and thus seeing its beauty in God's plan.
4. We do not have enough time in this life to fully explore God so He set _____ in the hearts of man so they would have the time.
5. Man has an innate desire to know the _____ of any given subject, including God.

II. God's Immutable Plan for Life (3:1-22)

A. He Foreknows the Events of Life (3:1-11)

B. He Is The Judge (3:14-22)

1. Humanism And Faith. 3:12-15

- 12 I know that there is nothing better for them (sons of men) than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime;
- 13 moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor-- it is the gift of God.
- 14 I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him.
- 15 That which is has been already, and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.

Summary:

1. For the humanist who has _____ an eternal state, all they will ever encounter is found in this world.
2. They will even see good in their own _____ which Solomon calls a gift from God.

3. They will not attribute the “good” to God since they have _____ His role.
4. Believers can _____ for eternity, while the unbelieving humanist cannot. Matt 6:20; 1 Cor 3:10-15
5. Faith believes that God is the _____ builder and that His works are complete and thus awe-inspiring.
6. History will repeat itself, with God giving many _____ the opportunity to pass similar tests.
7. Humanists can only try to leave a _____ behind that will endure and for some that is their definition of eternal life.

2. The Problems With Judgment. 3:16-22

- 16 Furthermore, I have seen under the sun that in the place of justice there is wickedness, and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness. **(observation of injustice)**
- 17 I said to myself, "God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man," for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.
- 18 I said to myself concerning the sons of men **(HAADAM = the man)**, "God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts." **(BeHEMAH)**
- 19 For the fate of the sons of men **(HAADAM)** and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast, for all is **vanity**.
- 20 All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust.
- 21 Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?
- 22 And I have seen that nothing is better than that man should be happy in his activities, for that is his lot. For who will bring him to see what will occur after him?

Summary:

1. One of the greatest problems in understanding the total plan of God concerns the issues of _____ and _____.
2. By faith, we believe that God will take care of everything at its _____ time.
3. All _____ people realize that one day they will die.
4. Those who believe there is nothing past this life must view themselves as no better than an _____.
5. So the issue of happiness in this life is of _____ importance, if a person thinks there is nothing beyond it.