

FINDING MEANING IN LIFE AND THE PASSING OF TIME

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11, 12:1-14

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- Why do you think the writer of Ecclesiastes writes about time when exploring the meaning in life?
- In what types of situations are you most aware of the passing of time?

Time plays a significant role in our lives. We are uniquely aware of its existence and of its passing. We often talk about time as a commodity and carefully consider how we spend our time. It shouldn't surprise us then that the Teacher has pondered time and our relationship with it too. Studying his wisdom in Ecclesiastes teaches us the importance of interacting wisely with the present moment. He also encourages us to consider the bigger picture of how we can find hope and meaning in life during every season, even when everything seems meaningless.

Listen: [*Finding Meaning in Life and the Passing of Time*](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- In segment 1, host Scott Hoezee says, "It takes wisdom to apply wisdom." And often this has to do with knowing *when* to apply wisdom. When have you experienced this truth? Can you think of an experience when someone had good intentions or wisdom but wrong timing? Or the opposite, when someone said or did just the right thing at the right time? In either situation, how did the person's awareness of timing (or lack of it) affect the circumstances? How can we grow in our ability to discern how and when to act in the various circumstances or seasons of life?
- In segment 2, Scott and host Darrell Delaney consider the Teacher's comments in Ecclesiastes 3:18-19 about how we are like animals. They note that while the Teacher is right, there is one great distinction: as humans, we are God's image-bearers. Darrell goes on to say, "God thinks, God reasons, God loves, God feels, God grieves; and I think that because we have those characteristics, that is definitely going to separate us from being an animal. It is definitely going to be different for us because we are distinctly made in God's image." Have you ever considered your experiences from this perspective—that you are experiencing pain, joy, sadness, love, grief, etc because God does and you are made in his image? How does knowing that truth impact your reaction to your experiences?
- In Ecclesiastes 3:11, the Teacher declares that God "set eternity in the human heart." Scott calls it both a "divine gift" and a "burden." Why do you think this is true? Does it feel more like a gift or burden to you?
- Reread Ecclesiastes 12:1-8 and John 1:1-5. Why do you think remembering God's faithfulness and the truth of Christ's light *before* you experience the dark and difficult seasons of life, as the Teacher recommends, is beneficial to your faith? How can it help you endure those seasons? Which spiritual practices have helped you cultivate that memory best in your life or which spiritual practices would you like to try?

Related Passages

- **1 Chronicles 12:32**
- **Colossians 3:1-3**
- **John 1:1-5**

Conclusion

As a closing reflection, write a letter of encouragement to yourself about the wisdom you've gleaned from your study of Ecclesiastes. Make note of what's been particularly meaningful and what you don't want to forget.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/finding-meaning-in-life-and-the-passing-of-time>

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