



Lesson Three: Living Wisely in Time
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15
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Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

¹ For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

- ² a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and time to pluck up what is planted;
- ³ a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
- ⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
- ⁵ a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
- ⁶ a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
- ⁷ a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
- ⁸ a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

⁹ What gain has the worker from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹¹ 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. ¹² I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; ¹³ also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God’s gift to man.

¹⁴ I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken away from it. God has done it, so that people fear before Him. ¹⁵ That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been, and God seeks what has been driven away.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which of the following statements best summarizes your current experience of time?
(These come from Zack Eswine's book on Ecclesiastes, Recovering Eden.)
"All I have is time!"
"Where did the time go?" (awe or loss)
"There aren't enough hours in the day." (fatigue)
"I've got to make the most of my time." (urgency)
"I've been waiting for this time." (anticipation)
"I've wasted so much time." (regret)
"When will my time come?" (waiting)
"I don't want this time to arrive." (fear)
"Do you remember the time...?" (memory)
2. Which of the times or seasons in the poem do you seek to avoid? Why? (3:2-8)
3. Why do we try to control the times and season of our lives?
4. Why is it crucial for us to trust that God controls the times and seasons of our lives?
5. By setting the times of our lives, what does the Lord want to teach us? (3:9-15)
6. How does the greater Story of Scripture help us to walk through the harder seasons of our own stories?
7. With God's help, how do we want to relate differently to the time He has given us?



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