

Everything has its Season

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Big Idea: We can't control the seasons of life; so, we trust the one who can.

Learn truths from Ecclesiastes to avoid frustration in life.

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 a 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 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.

Big Idea: We can't control the seasons of life; so, we trust the one who can.

Everything has its Season

- 1.Seasons come and seasons go (1-8).
- 2.Every season has beauty (9-11).
- 3.Enjoy *this* season of life (11-13).
- 4.Trust God in every season (14-15).

1. Seasons come, and seasons go (1-8).

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 a 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 ...

God's timing is perfect, *right now*.
You're in the season God intends you to be in.

The seasons of life (good & bad) mold us.

- i. Our experiences happen as God determines (Rom 8:28-30).
- ii. Life's seasons prepare us for glory (2Co 4:17).
- iii. Various trials helps us grow to maturity (James 1:2-4).
- iv. Even Jesus died at the right time (Rom 5:6; Acts 2:23).

If we cannot control seasons, what can we do?

- i. Learn contentment in each season (Phil 4:11-13).
- ii. Make the time count (Eph 5:16).
- iii. Adjust your expectations as you wait for God's timing.
- iv. Connect with God, he knows what's going on.

- i. Learn contentment in each season.
 - i. We can't control the seasons. We can either complain or find contentment. Contentment isn't giving up – that's more like fatalism – but working to move forward no matter where you are.
 - ii. Perpetually lamenting your season of life won't get you out any faster.
- ii. Connect with God, he knows more than you about what's going on.
- iii. Adjust your expectations. Wait for God's timing (Ps 34:1). This season is just that – a season. It'll pass.
 - i. Trying to force your life into a season it's not ready for won't help you find contentment.
 - ii. Attempting to force yourself into a season you're not ready for will frustrate you.
 - iii. Don't avoid moving into new seasons.
- iv. Live in the moment. Live like you're dying (Heb 9:27; 2Co 6:2).
- v. Knowing that seasons of life come and go should allow us to rest some. Work as hard as you want, as hard as you can, and this season still ends.
- vi. Make the time count (Eph 5:16; Heb 9:28; Mt 24:36).

2. Every season has beauty (9-11).

⁹ What gain has the worker from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the business [affliction] that God has given to the children of man to be busy [afflicted] 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.

So, where's the beauty?

Things we think only cause pain, add to the beauty of the tapestry God is weaving, even if we cannot see it happening (cf. Rom 8:28; 2Co 4:16-18).

Under the sun we can only find answers by faith in God.

Under the sun we can only find answers by faith in God. Not a blind leap of faith that ignores facts, but rather the humble recognition that we don't have all the facts and we cannot have all the facts.

The things we think only cause pain, add to the beauty of the tapestry God is weaving ... even if we can't see it when it's happening (cf. 2Co 4:16-18).

In the mixture of life's beauty and toil we know something is missing in life.

CS Lewis said it like this: "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."

We thirst for eternity – for Christ – and nothing under the sun will eternally satisfy us. "drink and thirst no more" John 4:13-14

The God who put eternity into our hearts will make everything beautiful in its time. *Trust him.*

3. Enjoy *this* season of life (12-13).

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.

Enjoying life is an acquired skill.

- i. Let the seasons of life teach you to enjoy life.
- ii. Remember, seasons don't last long; a comfort and a warning.
- iii. Acknowledge your utter inability to make sense of it all ... and turn to the one who can – God. Trust him.

The seasons of life teach us to enjoy life.

Seasons don't last long. A comfort and a warning.

A comfort during bad times ... this too shall pass.

A warning during good times ... don't put all your hope on this.

Knowing seasons won't last, thank God and look to him for eternal meaning/purpose/joy.

Faced with our utter inability to make sense of it all we turn to the one who holds time in his hands – God. Trust him.

4. Trust God in every season (11, 14-15).

Also, [God] has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end... ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

Remember, in Ecclesiastes there's an author and a teacher. The author makes the book teach us about God, not just wisdom.

In every season:

- i. Let God be God; everything happens according to his plan (vv. 13-14).
- ii. Learn to trust/fear God more (v. 14).
- iii. Hope in God, because he is sovereign over time (v. 15a).
- iv. Trust God to redeem the past (v. 15b). Jesus came for that exact reason (Lk 19:10).

- i. Everything happens in the unfolding of God's plan. Let God be God (vv. 13-14).
 - i. God has given us seasons of life to teach us & grow us.
 - ii. He's given us seasons to enjoy and see the beauty of life.
- ii. Our lack of control over time turns us to the one who controls time. The purpose of us realizing: God's actions endure while ours fade away make us look for something more ... for God.
- iii. Fear God (v. 14).
- iv. God seeks what has been driven away (v. 15). Maybe he's seeking you today.

“If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.”

-- CS Lewis

Cf. Jn 4:13-14; 6:35