BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP March 27, 2011

Lesson No. 4

The Study of Ecclesiastes

Life Under the Heaven Ecclesiastes 3:1-15



"a time for everything"

- The Need to Acknowledge
- The Need to Accept
- The Need to Appreciate
- The Need to Apply
- The Need to Answer

Key Verse: Ecclesiastes 3:1 to everything there is a season, and time to every purpose "under the heaven"

INTRODUCTION: In Ecclesiastes the most common expression for limiting the view point of man's perspective is "under the sun" However, Solomon has also used the phrase "under the heaven" which appears three times 1:13; 2:3; 3:1

Under the heaven suggest that we look at life from God's perspective, His point of view.

The focus of chapter 3:1-15 is the sovereignty of God. Sovereignty characterizes the whole being of God. God is sovereign in all His attributes "absolute, irresistible and infinite" When we say that God is sovereign:

- We affirm His right to govern the universe, which He has made for His own glory, just as He pleases; as the right of the Potter over the clay. Jeremiah 18:1-6 and Romans 9:20-22
- We affirm that He is under no rule of law outside of His own will and nature; and that He is under no obligation to give an account of His matters to anyone. 1 Samuel 2:8
- God is sovereign in the exercise of **His power**.1 Chronicles 29:11; **His mercy**. Exodus 33:19; **His grace**. Titus 2:11 and **His love**. 1 John 4:8-10

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 is a poetic masterpiece and is considered a **carpe diem** passage. Carpe diem is Latin meaning "seize the day" "pluck the day, put no trust in the future" "strike while the iron is hot"



Ecclesiastes 3 is not merely a description of what happens in life, but it is a description of what God sends.

The following 28 activities in 14 couplets or stanzas, 2 in each verse are events that are both "the unpleasant as well as the pleasant experiences" but always appropriate from God's point of view.

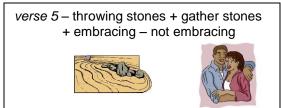
I. We must ACKNOWLEDGE that God has a reason for all that happens in our lives. vv. 1-8 We all have things happen to us that cause us to ask, "why me? or why now? God has a purpose for everything that happens in our lives:





- 1. The Providence of God: God controls the affairs of people's lives.
- Psalms 115:3 "but our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased"
- Psalms 31:15 "my times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me"
- 2. The Purpose of God: God has a specific purpose behind all that happens.
- Genesis 50:20 "but as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"
- Acts 17:25-28 "for in him we live, and move, and have our being"
- 3. The Power of God: God can cause things to happen whenever He wants.
- Genesis 18:14 "is anything too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son"
- Isaiah 40:25-31 "but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength...."
- II. We must ACCEPT God's purpose and control over all that happens. vv. 9-11





- 1. It affects our Evaluations: vv.9-10 we may not always see God's reasons, but we see what happens to us in confident; that God is exercising His purpose and control. Romans 8:28
- 2. It affects our Expectations: v.11 God has put eternity in our heart. Everyone at some time or another will consider their eternal destiny
- The closer we get to the inevitable fact that we will die, the more eternity becomes a great question.
- III. We must APPRECIATE the time we have as a gift from God vv.12-13





Seeing that God is in control, He knows all the days of my life. What then should my reaction be?

Psalms 39:4 "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am"



- 1. It affects our Attitude: Once the issue of our eternal destiny is settled, we can relax and begin to enjoy life as a gift from God.
- After trusting Christ as savior most Christians begin to appreciate God's creation differently, because we now know and appreciate our Creator differently
- 2. It affects our Actions: We should do good works "under the heaven" because this is the only time we have.
- 1 Timothy 6:17 "charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate"
- IV. We must APPLY these facts to our own attitude toward God. v.14
- Realizing that God is the master of our lives, this should result in personally acknowledging His control.
- Revelation 15:3-4 "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints"
- V. We must ANSWER to God for how we have used our time. v.15
- God controls life and death; however, He has given us freedom to use the time that we have to do good "under the sun"
- We need to enjoy life and know that God will require an account of what we have done.
- Ecclesiastes 12:14 "for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"