

What Season Are You In?
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 (NLT)

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For everything, there is a season,
a time for every activity under heaven.

² A time to be born and a time to die.

A time to plant and a time to harvest.

³ A time to kill and a time to heal.

A time to tear down and a time to build up.

⁴ A time to cry and a time to laugh.

A time to grieve and a time to dance.

⁵ A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.

A time to embrace and a time to turn away.

⁶ A time to search and a time to quit searching.

A time to keep and a time to throw away.

⁷ A time to tear and a time to mend.

A time to be quiet 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 do people really get for all their hard work? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. ¹¹ Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. ¹² So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. ¹³ And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.

¹⁴ And I know that whatever God does is final. Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. God's purpose is that people should fear him. ¹⁵ What is happening now has happened before, and what will happen in the future has happened before, because God makes the same things happen over and over again.

Back when we were on Country Club, Bishop Turner preached a message about seasons. He talked about how you must recognize in your life what season you are in so that you will know how to maneuver. During that sermon, he talked about the 4 seasons -spring, summer, winter and fall-, today I want to drill down to the moments in life that we all experience that King Solomon referred to as “seasons.”

We know that in the natural, each season only lasts about 90 days, so whatever season you are in will have a beginning and an ending. It will not go on forever, even though it may feel like it will.

In Ecclesiastes 2:11 KJV, King Solomon give us some wisdom about life, *“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.”*

Vanity in Hebrew is HEBEL (pronounced H-vel) which in the Hebrew Bible often refers to mist, or vapor, or breath. It’s a now-you-see-it-now-you-don’t word. If something is *Hebel*, it can’t be grasped, can’t be pinned down; it’s here one minute and gone the next. Ecclesiastes tells us that’s what life is like. Uncertain.

Sometimes irrational. Sometimes ironic. Something that can’t be pinned down or grasped or counted on to unfold in predictable ways. And that’s how he starts his book – declaring that all of life is like *that*. And then in chapter 3 he breaks it down even further that everything that is good will be counted with something that we would consider “bad”. Birth v. death, laughter v. crying, dancing v. grieving.

Discussion Question #1:

What season are you in right now? Are you happy, sad, speechless? Do you want to tear up stuff and just sit and be quiet? Do you experience all of this in the same day?

Discussion Question #2:

Why do you think God allows us to experience the good and the bad?

I think when we look to chapter 3, with all its talk of times and seasons, we're finding a word that is the hard truth about life. He's not saying this is what you should do, here are all the items to be checked off on your monthly 'to-do' list: kill and heal, seek and lose, make war and make peace—no. Simply: this, too, is the way life is. There *are* times of war and times of peace, just as there are times of mourning and times of dancing, times of love and times of hate, times of breaking down, and times of building up. He's telling it like it is.

Life is not about only beautiful things. It's wonderful *and* awful, it's filled with moments of bitter grief and moments of profound joy. People are born and they die. We weep and we laugh. We work and we play. Again, during all of life's uncertainties, there are certain things we can expect to encounter sooner or later. Some are fantastic. Some are painful. Some are pretty ordinary. That's just the way it is

Because of this Covid-19 era, some of us are grieving. We may be grieving the loss of loved ones during this time. People are dying of other things, not just Covid-19 but the restrictions of the virus do not allow us to go to the hospital or even hold

funerals as would like to. Some may be grieving the loss of a job or income. Some may be grieving the loss of the “old times” when we could come and go as we please with no masks!

Let’s read Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 Verse 14 from the Message Bible: *“I’ve also concluded that whatever God does, that’s the way it’s going to be, always. No addition, no subtraction. God’s done it and that’s it. That’s so we’ll quit asking questions and simply worship in holy fear.”*

The main thing we must remember during life’s uncertainty is:

- God’s actions are permanent (**it shall be forever**)
- God’s actions are effective and complete (**nothing can be added to it**)
- God’s actions are totally secure (**nothing can be taken from it**)

Remember on Sunday when I talked about everyone complaining and acting up? Well, King Solomon deals with that. Stop asking “why” and just worship. God isn’t always going to explain why he is doing what he is doing. Worship is not just singing. According to Webster’s Dictionary, *Worship is to honor with extravagant love and extreme submission.*

Discussion Question #3:

What do you think “extreme submission” means?

“What is happening now has happened before, and what will happen in the future has happened before, because God makes the same things happen over and over again.” Ecclesiastes 3:15 NLT,

The world survived the Flu pandemic of 1918, when it is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world’s population became infected with this virus. The number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 occurring in the United States.

The world survived the Flu pandemic of 1957 when the estimated number of deaths was 1.1 million worldwide and 116,000 in the United States.

The world survived the Flu pandemic of 1968 when the estimated number of deaths was 1 million worldwide and about 100,000 in the United States.

and we will survive Covid-19. In the end, God is in control and as King Solomon suggested in verses 13 and 14, we just need to go ahead “be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.”