

## Ecclesiastes 3:16-22

As we continue our study in the book of Ecclesiastes Chapter 3, I'd like for us to look back at verse 12 of Ecclesiastes 3 where it says, <sup>12</sup>*I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.* <sup>13</sup>*And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.*

Solomon is telling us rejoice and do good in this life. Eat, drink, and be merry. You've heard that saying. Eat, drink, and enjoy the good of all the labor that you do. It's a gift of God. Everything that we do and partake of in this life is a gift of God. We need to get that in our minds and our hearts as saved people, and as unsaved people, you need to understand that everything comes from God. It's only through God that we have the breath that we breathe, the air that we breathe, the life that we have in this life is given to us by God. And notice, it is the gift of God according to verse 13 of Ecclesiastes 3.

Not only is this the gift of God that we have life here, but there's another gift that God wants to give everybody and that is eternal life. In Ephesians 2:8-9, it says the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. <sup>8b</sup>*It is the gift of God: <sup>9</sup>Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

It's a gift of God. There's nothing that we can do in order to have this gift. It's a gift. We must accept it in order to get it, and that's all we do is accept the gift that God wants to give us, and that is the gift of eternal life. Once again, everything that we enjoy here is a gift of God, and everything that we will enjoy in the life to come is a gift from God, and we need to understand that and we need to receive Jesus Christ as Savior in order to have

the good things that await those people who know Him as Savior.

Verses 14-15 say this: <sup>14</sup>*I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever...* It's not going to end... *nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.* <sup>15</sup>*That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.*

And once again, Solomon knows that what God does man cannot change. God does it, and He's not going to change it, and we need to understand that according to what the Word of God is telling us here, God does it in order that men should reverentially fear in preparation to meet Him. Fear... fear God before you stand before Him, according to verse 14, because God requires an account of what man does in this life. You're not going to live forever in this life. This life is going to change. It's going to stop, and we need to make preparations now while we still have the breath of life in us.

Solomon, goes on in verses 16-22 and he talks about the injustice and wickedness of men, and in verse 16, we see what the preacher saw here. <sup>16</sup>*And moreover I saw under the sun... That's on the Earth... the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.* Well, God's judgment is upon the Earth. Why? Because of the wickedness, according to verse 16. And instead of righteousness, iniquity was on the Earth, once again according to verse 16.

In Genesis 6:5, we see somewhat of the same thing taking place there in Noah's day. It says, *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man*

*was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6:11: The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup>And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. <sup>13</sup>And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through then; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. This is Genesis 6:11-13.*

Well, as we look around us today, we see that this Earth is corrupt, so how close is the coming of the Lord today? In Matthew 24:37, it says, *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* There's corruption all around. There's iniquity all around. It abounds, and it seems as we look that people of this world have forgotten God. And we look at our own country, the United States, and we can see specifically how that man has forgotten God.

There's no Ten Commandments in the schools anymore; you're not allowed to do that; no Bible in the schools anymore; there is no prayer in the schools anymore. And things are getting worse and worse, but I have news for you. Jesus is coming soon, and for those of us who know Jesus as Savior, He's coming back for us before His Second Coming. He's coming for us in what is called the rapture of the church. The Bible tells us that we're going to be caught up together with those who have gone on before to be with the Lord in the air, and we'll see that in just a moment.

But let's look on now in verses 17-21 at what the preacher reasoned here. First of all, in verse 17, it says, *<sup>17</sup>I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work. God is the Judge of the*

righteous, according to II Corinthians 5:10, and we'll read that in just a moment, and the wickedness, according to Revelation 20:11-15. Why? Because there is a time for every existence or every purpose for everything, all things done, according to verse 17 of Ecclesiastes 3.

In II Corinthians 5:10, the Bible says there, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...* That's not for every human being; that's only for those people who know Jesus as Savior. Why? It says, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* We're either going to receive a reward or we're not going to receive a reward, according to that. We're not going to stand before Jesus at the Judgment Seat to see whether or not we're saved.

I've actually had people tell me... I've asked them, "When do you go to Heaven? How do you know you're on your way to Heaven?" And I've actually been told by certain individuals, "Well, you're not gonna know until Jesus makes the decision, until you're dead and till this life is over with, until Jesus decides where you're gonna go." Well, that is not true. The Bible says now, today is the day of salvation. Now is the appointed time. We have to make a decision now whether or not we're going to go to Heaven.

And the Lord came that we could have eternal life. The Bible tells us that God gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal, everlasting life, and those people who have that everlasting life are going to appear before Jesus Christ at the Judgment Seat to receive rewards, not to see if they're saved, but they're going to receive rewards for the things they've done for Him while on this Earth.

I'm sad to say Revelation 20:11-15 says this about the unsaved: *<sup>11</sup>And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup>And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. <sup>13</sup>And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. <sup>14</sup>And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup>And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

That's the unsaved, those people who have never trusted Jesus Christ, their names have not been written in the Book of Life. Well, how does your name get in the Book of Life? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, but by me... but through me." You must receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and you'll not stand as the White Throne Judgment to be judged that you are lost. You're going to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ because you're saved if you've trusted Jesus as your Savior. But if you've never done that, your name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life and you will be cast into the Lake of Fire, according to Revelation Chapter 20.

Solomon believes that, if only God would reveal what eventually happens to the human body, men would recognize that in death all earthly flesh ends up the same. Look with me at verses 18-20 in Ecclesiastes 3: *<sup>18</sup>I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are*

*beasts. <sup>19</sup>For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. <sup>20</sup>All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.*

Solomon realizes that animals and men have at least two things in common. First of all in verse 19, the bodies of humans and animals return to the dust of the ground, or the grave. They all die physically. And secondly, they all have one breath. They all breathe, according to verse 19. I mean, that doesn't take a lot of brains to figure out that people go back to the dust. So do the animals, the body, and we all have breath in us.

Notice also that Solomon also realizes man experiences at least one thing animals do not experience, according to verse 21, and verse 21 says: *<sup>21</sup>Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?* In other words, man's spirit goes up, and I believe it's speaking of the saved person. The spirit goes up and the beast goes downward. Well, man's spirit goes back to the One who gave it, according to verse 21.

Isaiah 31:3 says, *Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.* But notice the flesh; the horses don't have the spirit. And in Ecclesiastes 12:7, it says, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

What the preacher concluded here is in verse 22. It says, *<sup>22</sup>Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should*

*rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?* Nothing is better than rejoicing in one's own works, he says here, which is his heritage, according to verse 22.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.* Work to your fullest, he's saying. Work now because it will be too late after death. You remember the old song, "Work for the Night is Coming," and I would ask you as a Christian, please work today for the night is coming. Tell others about Jesus Christ. Tell others that they need to receive the Son of God as Savior before it's too late.

If you've never received Him, you need to ask Him into your heart right now. "Lord, come into my heart. I receive You as my Lord and Savior. I trust You to save me so I will see You one day in Heaven."

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