

Gathering Palm Beach County's PRIMETIME NPB

Text: Ecclesiastes 3

Wednesday, 02/07/18

Teacher - Rev. Dennis DeMarois

1) What is Fatalism and Deism?

- Fatalism = a theory proved false by God's appeals to men to repent and obey.
- Deism = that God is unconcerned about his world, is disproved by the Scriptures emphasis on God's intervention in human affairs. (Dan. 4:23-27; Jn. 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9)

2) The Set Up

- a) The book's main theme = Man's Reasoning
- b) Main topic in Chapters 1-4 = The Teacher's Experience of the Meaningless of Earthly Things
- c) This main topic is broken into two big ideas = "Everything Is Meaningless" and "Life's not fair - filled with oppressions and inequalities" (see cp. 12:8)
- d) Here are the proofs used to justify this thinking =
 - The ceaseless cycle of created things (1:1-11)
 - Wisdom cannot satisfy (1:12-18)
 - Pleasure and riches cannot satisfy (2:1-11)
 - Wisdom is better than folly BUT both have an end (2:12-26)
 - The weary round of life (3:1-22)
 - Life is filled with oppression and inequality (4:1-16)

3) Our overall goal in today's text

- a) God has a plan for all people, thus he provides cycles of life each with its work for us to do.
- b) Although there are many problems that seem to contradict God's plan, these should not be barriers to believing in him, but rather opportunities to discover that without God life's problems have no lasting solutions!

4) Timing is important!

- "There is a right time for everything" - Opening Poem (3:1-8)
- All the experiences listed are appropriate at times
- The secret to peace with God is to discover, accept, and appreciate God's perfect timing.
- The danger doubt or resent God's timing. This can lead to despair, rebellion, moving ahead without advice.

5) Personal Musings on Life from Solomon

- "I have seen..." (v. 10)
- "I know that..." (v. 12)
- "I know that..." (v. 14)
- "And I saw something..." (v. 16)
- "I thought..." (v. 17)
- "I also thought..." (v. 18)
- "Who knows if..." (v. 21)
- "I saw that..." (v. 22)

6) Points to Consider from today's text

- a) **When is there time for hating? (3:8)**
 - see also Psalm 5:5
- b) **Your ability to enjoy work depends to a large extent upon your attitude. (3:9-13)**
- c) **What's the impact of having eternity set in our hearts? (3:11)**
- d) **What is the purpose of life? (3:14)**
- e) **How does one live with apparent contradictions to God's control of the world? (3:16)**
 - Live with eternal values in view, realizing that all contradictions will one day be cleared up by the Creator himself (Ecc. 12:13-14)
- f) **Are you now using your life as God would have you do? Do you see it as a gift from him? (3:19-22)**

7) Closing - God's perfect timing

God has his own sense of timing, "With the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8; AMP). He has perfect timing: never early, never late. God is never in a hurry, but he is always on time.

Let us remind ourselves that the Lord is sovereign over all - including the future (see Dan. 4:32). 'We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth' (2 Pet. 3:13). God is going to vindicate his people (Ps. 135:14).

But what do we do while we are waiting for God to do what he has promised to do?

Here are three suggestions for you to take with you today...

- 1) *Trust in the Lord (see Psalm 135:13-21)*
- 2) *Turn to the Lord (see 2 Peter 3:1-18)*
- 3) *Thank the Lord (Daniel 4:19-5:16)*