

Redemptive Time

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Discover

Redemptive means acting to save someone from evil. Time is the continual progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future viewed as a whole.

God created mankind for redemptive relationships. He is present and actively at work within our daily lives. He created us in his image to live within changing seasons with an awareness of and instinct for eternity. (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Time flows through cycles of seasons. God created the world for us to enjoy and designed us in his image for worship. God delights in us when we faithfully follow him and depend upon his guidance. (Ecclesiastes 3:12-14)

Our Father invites us to journey along ancient paths that he has carved throughout this age. These are righteous roads paved by Jesus' work on the cross. He modeled for us how to surrender daily to God's voice as we rest in and listen to him. We must battle our natural inclination to chart our own course through life without him. (Jeremiah 6:16)

Jesus calls us to a surrendered life. Our greatest joy this side of his Second Coming is taking up our crosses to follow him. Our bodies and minds resist this call to deny ourselves and forsake the flesh; yet, this path of holiness is the only road to eternal life in heaven. (Matthew 16:24-27)

This lesson will help us balance our time so the fullness of God's kingdom will be released through our lives. We are called to be living sacrifices: searching our Father's heart in prayer, seeking first his righteous kingdom, discerning his revelation about our purpose, and waging war against the corrupted patterns of this age's societies. (Romans 12:1-5)



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ECCLESIASTES 3:1-15

Draw

Wellspring Worship: disciple, well, & fountain - Our core identity is worshipers of God. All of us are called to care diligently for our own hearts and faithfully cultivate a personal relationship with God. He is the Source of our love, faith, joy, hope, and peace. Let us praise him! (3:14)

Marriage Garden: husband & wife - Marriage is a lifelong covenant relationship of intentional love. Embracing and not embracing is a balance of resting alone and enjoying community. Scattering and gathering stones illustrates practicing peace and reconciling during conflict. (3:5)

Healthy Home: parents & children - We invest daily in our children, spending face time with them as they grow. They are planted in our home for a season, then off they go. (3:2)

Sabbath Rest: tree, river, & person - We live in a busy, distracted society, so we have to reclaim the rest of God. Searching and letting go is about prioritizing, and keeping and filtering illustrates our values and passions. (3:6)

Diligent Labor: tent & tool - Our Creator designed us to care for the world. We discover unique satisfaction in providing for our family's needs. Tearing and mending represents healing and rebuilding. Silence and speaking up is about discerning when and how to share truth with others. (3:7)

Caring Community: cross & gathered disciples - We thirst for identity inside a safe, secure community. Jesus' Church serves this purpose. We gather in small groups to confess our brokenness and build one another up in love. (3:3)

Sharing Jesus: sower, soil, & seeds - Jesus illustrated God's kingdom as seeds sown into fields and grown into a great harvest. This process requires enduring patience with highs and lows, tears and laughter, sadness and dancing. (3:4)

Discuss

We see a significant view of our purpose in verses 12-13; we should rejoice and enjoy a good life. Describe a “good life.” How does our society define the good life? How does Jesus describe the good, blessed life in Matthew 5:3-12?

This passage describes 28 different seasons where each season is paired with the opposite to represent the full scope of human existence. How is it helpful to see all these experiences in a list? Which one(s) stands out to you? Why?

We do not perceive our life as a whole; instead, we focus on what happens today. The prayer in Psalms 90:9-12 says life passes quickly. What does it mean to “number our days?” What do you desire to do that you have not done?

James 4:13-17 describes the conflict between my will and God’s will. Jesus teaches us to seek first God’s kingdom in Matthew 6:33. When do you take time to ask God to reveal his will? What can you do when the answers are unclear?

Disciple

Let’s get practical. Here is the list of how we use our time: worship, marriage, family, sabbath, work, church, missions. Where are your strengths? Where are your weaknesses? What is at least one priority where you need to spend more time? What is the Holy Spirit guiding you to do next? Pray.

Dedicate

Father, thank you for revealing the brevity of our lives in the context of eternity. Thank you for creating us for worship. Holy Spirit, we invite you to examine our hearts and expose missing priorities on our schedules. We lay our calendars at your feet, Master Messiah. Lord, have your way with the rest of our time, in Jesus’ name and for his glory we pray, amen.