

Ecclesiastes – Life and a time for everything

Introduction to Ecclesiastes from The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB) p.1048

An illustration of a fly in the ointment and how this is like life

Blessings for Readers on p.1049 TLSB

1. Do you ever feel that life is a waste of time? What is the point?
 - A. Solomon summarized life in the phrase: “All is vanity.” 1:2b
 - a. Is it true that there is nothing new?
 - b. Vv. 8-9 expand and describe why all is vanity. Check the footnotes for v.9 and v.10

2. Step back and take a look at life through the experiences of Solomon.
 - A. 1:12-18 The vanity of _____
 - a. Read vv.16-18

 - B. 2:1-11 (read all) The vanity of _____

 - C. 2:12-17 Both the Wise and the Foolish _____
 - a. Read vv.12-14

 - D. 2:18-23 Human _____ is in vain.
 - a. Read vv.18-21

 - E. 2:24-26 Solomon shares a key thought.

3. If time is short, then read 12:13-14 and the footnotes
 - v.13 “*Fear God...duty of man*”

 - v.13 “*whole duty of man*”

 - vv.9-14 The search for meaning in life...

3. Time and the Purpose for every activity.

- A. 3:1-8 God gives a proper time and purpose for every activity
 - a. Read these verses and reply with four examples to any “a time for...”
 - b. See additional material below as interest and time allows.
 - c. TLSB Ftnt. v.1
- B. 3:9-15 What God does will endure forever
 - a. Read. Vv.12-13
- C. 3:16-22 God is the final judge
 - a. What truth do we still see from vv.16-17
 - b. What do we confess in the Creed about judgment?
 - c. V.22 We cannot see the future, so be content with our present vocation.
- D. 4:1-16
 - a. Read vv.1-8 and the various nuggets of wisdom
 - b. Vv.9-12 are familiar. See TLSB ftnt. v.9 and v.12
- E. 5:10-6:12 God alone gives joy in life.

Time is considered the most precious commodity now, even above money. How do we use our time?

Additional Material for Ecc. 3:1-8

3:2 **THE DASH** *the poem by Linda Ellis*

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend. He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning... to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke of the following date with tears, but he said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time they spent alive on earth and now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own, the cars... the house... the cash. What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard; are there things you'd like to change? For you never know how much time is left that still can be rearranged.

To be less quick to anger and show appreciation more and love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a smile... remembering that this special dash might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy is being read, with your life's actions to rehash, would you be proud of the things they say about how you lived your dash?

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3:7 Silence and speaking

"As empty vessels make the loudest sound, so they that have the least wit are the greatest babblers." Plato

"TALKERS ARE NO GOOD DOERS." SHAKESPEARE

"Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues." Proverbs 17:28

COROLLARY: BETTER TO REMAIN SILENT AND BE THOUGHT A FOOL THAN TO SPEAK AND REMOVE ALL DOUBT.