



# WHAT'S THE POINT?

*the **gospel** according to Ecclesiastes*

*“Know Your Place in Time”  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15*

There's a story of a child that may or may not be true, but this story is probably close to situations many of us have experienced. You see, there was this time where this child disobeyed and then the parents told this child to sit in a chair in the corner. When went to the chair, the child sat down, folded his arms and then proceeded to say, “I’m sitting down, but I’m standing inside!”

If that were your child, and I assume you love your children more than any other children, when you hear your child say that, you probably think, “Why do you feel the need to resist me? I *love* you!” Have you had situations like me before where you tell your children, “I wish you would obey because you know I love you.” My heart aches at times when I see my children disobey because I know *they’re* the ones missing out. Even though they didn’t understand *why*, they could have still had greater joy if they had just trusted.

Now, I want you to imagine that Solomon is kind of like that little kid. In some ways he kind of sounds like a child who knows their parents are right, but struggles to trust them. Think about it. How does he evaluate life at first? He tries to ignore God. He wonders if a type of wisdom that only evaluates life on the basis of what he sees is going to give him the significance he yearns for. He turns to that kind of wisdom. So, it’s like he’s saying, “I’ll be wise, but not wise in the way you want.”

Then he turns to living the life of excess – food, music, drinking, women, power, fame. He gets all he sets his heart to get, but in the end, he comes to the painful realization that he’s no better off. He still doesn’t turn to God, refusing to obey – he wonders if work will give him what he wants. That doesn’t either.

Finally, we come to the end of chapter 2, and Solomon turns his heart to God, and acknowledges that he needs to submit to the Lord. Only in God is there true joy. And God alone gives all blessings we receive. Instead of acting in rebellion, being angry that he can’t figure everything out, Solomon realizes he needs to know one thing most of all: God. And in knowing God, he can trust him and then rejoice.

But some of you could say, “How does knowing and trusting God lead to rejoicing?” You could go off on a litany of horrible events that have happened to you in your life or maybe even this past week. You struggle to acknowledge God’s goodness when you look around and see shattered relationships and painful circumstances. You’d rather trust yourself than trust God because you would rather trust your eyes than God’s eyes. You’d rather trust yourself because somehow you think you can evaluate things better than God can.

The text we’re going into this morning addresses those questions and concerns. For those who still want to evaluate the meaning of life purely from your own vantage point, Solomon writes a poem to help you to come along with him and see that **Joy is found in embracing God and his sovereign God.**

Please turn in your Bible to Ecclesiastes 3, and after we pray I'll read verses 1-15 for us.

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**3** *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*

- <sup>2</sup> *a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;*
- <sup>3</sup> *a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;*
- <sup>4</sup> *a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;*
- <sup>5</sup> *a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;*
- <sup>6</sup> *a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;*
- <sup>7</sup> *a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;*
- <sup>8</sup> *a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

<sup>9</sup> *What gain has the worker from his toil?* <sup>10</sup> *I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.* <sup>11</sup> *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.* <sup>12</sup> *I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live;* <sup>13</sup> *also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.* <sup>14</sup> *I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him.* <sup>15</sup> *That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.* <sup>1</sup>

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These verses reveal that all of life is under God's control. And when I say *all* of life, I mean ALL. OF. LIFE. You see, like little children who obstinately resist their parents and think they know better, Solomon lovingly confronts our tendency to do the same thing with God. We tend to think our perspective on life is the right one. Our way of doing things is the right way.

But here, Solomon shows us the right perspective. He causes us to take some steps back and see where God is, where we are and how that ought to affect our response to God. And in the end, Solomon says that if you really have the right perspective on God and life, you'll find the joy you're yearning for.

So, let's jump into the text. We see that joy is found in embracing God and his sovereign control because:

**1. God's sovereign control is masterfully glorious (vv. 1-8).**

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 3:1–15.

Verse 1 states, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. . . .”<sup>2</sup> Now that Solomon is talking about God and our need to trust him, all of a sudden, he sees life not merely as an endless cycle of vain monotony. He realizes he can’t judge God by what he sees. He’s not the smartest. He’s not the wisest. God gives him everything – even his wisdom. So, he needs to listen to God, not merely himself and his limited, vain wisdom.

Solomon says that there’s a “time for every matter under heaven.” Now, that phrase “under heaven” could be one-and-the-same with the phrase “under the sun.” After all, in chapter 1, Solomon uses “under heaven” and “under the sun” close together. But, while I think that these phrases are closely related, I don’t think they’re identical. Both tell us where we are: under something. But I tend to agree with one commentator named Phil Ryken who stated that this phrase “seemed to have much more positive connotations” (Ryken, p. 80). Ecclesiastes will tell us later that God is in heaven. And so I think “under the sun” and “under heaven” tell us our vantage point, but under heaven speaks to our vantage point of not merely being under some unthinking powerful object, but instead it speaks to us as being under God’s all-powerful, complete control.

This would make sense given that Solomon has just talked about how we ought to recognize and embrace God. But again, we could be thinking, “Why should I when life just seems to pass us by and so many problems come up?” Here Solomon calls us to recognize our position. And then he calls us to see that since God is good; the seeming chaos to us is actually very orderly.

Solomon communicates this majestic and powerful order by writing a poem. Even the orderliness and purpose of the poem communicates his point. The word “time” is used 28 times. Now please know that when Solomon talks about “time,” he’s talking not only about the measurement of time, but in this poem he’s talking about circumstances happening in time. Therefore, God is in control of everything – time and circumstances! Finally, in this writing, Solomon uses a figure of speech called “merism.” That means that there are two things that communicate a whole. So think of Genesis 1:1, where we’re told that God created the heavens and the earth. That means that God created *everything*. So here when we read about a time to be born and a time to die, Solomon is talking about birth, death and everything in between.

Through repetition and through talking about life, emotions, warfare, work, speech, friendships; Solomon covers every possible aspect of life. In doing so, Solomon emphasizes God’s heavenly authority. He is the King over his creation, and he is King over time – which is something he created!

But Solomon also emphasizes what this control looks like: every single second happens in the specific placement God puts it. Tomorrow’s second wasn’t intended for today, and last week’s hour wasn’t intended for today. God ordains it all. When Solomon says that there’s a “season” for everything, that word for season refers to everything having a “fixed time, a predetermined purpose” (as quot. in Ryken, p. 81).

So Solomon tells us that we need to get our perspective, God is over all, in heaven; and God is in control of every moment as well as all that happens in each moment. This is precisely where many of us struggle. How can God be in control of all things that happen? Death? What about killing? Why weeping? Does God want us to mourn? Refrain from embracing? War?

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<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 3:1.

These are the questions we have, and Solomon doesn't try to tell us *how* God is sovereign over all. Instead he simply says that he *is* sovereign over it all. It's this precise point that I think so many of us struggle with. It's actually this point that many people will claim is the reason they deny God. They say either God can be in control of everything, but can't be good. Or God can be good, but then he isn't in control of everything. Therefore, because they can't see God as both great and good, they deny him.

This reminds me of the story of a woman named Joni Eareckson Tada. When she was 17, he jumped into a lake and her head hit the bottom, breaking her neck. She would have drowned had her sister not seen her floating. Joni was rescued, but her whole body below her neck was paralyzed. In the days to follow, she questioned God. She searched other religions. When she tried to think of what happened, she said her perception of God was that when she jumped, God was taking care of some problem somewhere else. Then when he turned around, he saw her and needed to help out there.

But as Joni went on to learn about God, she realized that if her accident was truly a complete accident, then God is really limited. And while she didn't fully understand *why*, she knew that she could trust a God who is both in control of the accident and loving towards her. You see, if God isn't in control of all and if circumstances can get out of God's control, then circumstances are in control. As a result, we (as well as God) are at the mercy of fate.

How much more glorious to know that God is in control, and while I may not understand, I can know that there's a season for everything. The Bible tells us that God forms our inward parts in our mother's womb (Ps. 139). Man's days are determined (Job 14:5-6). We're told that God plants people and then digs them up in punishment. He hates sin. He does not embrace those who continue to refuse him. But he embraces those who come to him. He makes war against Satan and evil. He laughs, and yet he also takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

God is infinite. That means he's complex. If you figure him out and figure out how he functions, you're not thinking of God. God is glorious and majestic, and we should see our place. We're under heaven. He's in heaven! And as the Psalmist says, "**Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.**"<sup>3</sup>

Let's recognize our place. Somehow, in ways unknown to us, God is over all – the joys and the sorrows; the lovely and the unlovely; the painful and the healing. To all of this, some people could become angry. You're thinking of life. You're thinking of circumstances. You're thinking of time. You're thinking of your accomplishments, and you might be thinking, "No! I accomplished great things. It wasn't under God's control. It was mine!" Or, you could be thinking, "Wait, are you saying that I'm not responsible for my sin because God's in control of all?" Before I go further, let me say that the truth of God's sovereign control over everything involves much mystery. God never does evil. God is always good. You're responsible for your actions. Yet at the same time, all your actions – whether you think they're major feats or failures – God is sovereign.

If you're confused by this, good news – we all are. And actually, it's that confusion that Solomon acknowledges in the next few verses. Solomon shows us that joy is found in God because *God* is the one who controls all events. But then he also tells us that joy is found in God because:

## **2. We were never meant to have control over time (vv. 9-13).**

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<sup>3</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ps 115:3.

Look at verses 9-13 with me again: <sup>9</sup>What gain has the worker from his toil? <sup>10</sup>I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. <sup>11</sup>He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. <sup>12</sup>I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; <sup>13</sup>also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man. <sup>4</sup>

Solomon moves back to the question related to our labor. I think another way of asking Solomon's question is something like this: "If God's in control of everything and everything is fixed in its specific season, then what's the point?" Or, in other words, "how does the sovereignty of God keep us from being fatalistic? What's going to happen is going to happen, right? So, why be good? Why care? Why do anything? God's ordained it anyway, so even my disobedience is ordained, right? Who cares?!"

So, what's the point of my labor if everything's fixed? Am I just a robot? Solomon understands the urge for humans to question like this – obviously he understands! He affirms he understands when he says that he's seen the business God has given us. But then Solomon goes straight back to talking about God again: "He has made everything beautiful in its time." Why isn't Solomon addressing the question?

Oh wait, Solomon is addressing the question. Instead of focusing on finding answers "under the sun" – from a merely earthly perspective. He's decided to answer the question by going back to God. Now I know that when we hear about the infinite wonder of God, many of us tend to want to redirect the focus back to us. When we hear that God's in control of everything, we ask, "What's the point?" And we think the answer is found in looking at us or things around us. But to do that always comes up short. Solomon has already proved that, right?

I think about the few times I've complemented one of my children and another child will say, "But look at me!" Or, "But I can do that, too!" In those moments, they simply cannot rejoice with their sibling. On a much grander scale, Solomon is trying to get our minds off of us and on to God, but what do we do? Yeah but what about me?!

A couple of weeks ago, I was up north in Interlochen, Michigan. I went outside late at night and the sky was crystal clear. The stars were shining brightly and we could even see the haze of the milky way galaxy. Staring at such beauty, I didn't then say, "Wait a second! I'm beautiful, too." Or, I didn't say, "I don't really understand how we're rotating on an axis in space within a galaxy that's spinning. I don't get that there's a haze and that it takes light years for the light to reach us." Because I don't *get* these things, I'm just going to think about me now.

If you did that, you limit your joy in those moments. The same is true here in Ecclesiastes. It's not inappropriate to ask the question of "What's the Point?" But if we refuse to be in awe of God's magnificent power, we will never be at rest. I may not understand the times, but I do know who holds them – and he is infinitely wondrous!

If we'd just stare a little more at God! Solomon says that "He has made everything beautiful in its time." And this is a hope-filled promise. We can't change anything within time by our power. But what about God? He made time and he ordains time! He set everything in place, and while we don't understand all the how's and why's, we do know this: all together, God will reveal the beauty of HIS time some time

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<sup>4</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 3:9–13.

when it is time! Do you get the orderliness and complete control that God has over time and circumstances? Be amazed.

But now Solomon takes your gaze off of the wonder and then turns back to us. It's like we stood outside gazing at glory and then we naval gaze. But even if we try to turn back to us, Solomon states that God won't let us get away from the fact that we need to gaze at God. In the end of verse 11 we read, "Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end."<sup>5</sup>

If you're resistant to acknowledging God over all, and working in all and through all – Solomon says you cannot get away from the fact that you need him. Innately, God has created you with a longing for the eternal. You've felt it haven't you? That void after you just got what you've always wanted. That feeling of wanting more even though you already have so much. C.S. Lewis once wrote it this way, **"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove that the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing."** To add to this, Lewis describes this longing as "the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited" (as quot. in Ryken, p. 93).

I believe humans are tenacious in figuring out this longing. The Muslim who wants eternal life and bombs people is trying to fill that eternal void. The alcoholic who just wants to feel alive. The sheer number of religions reveal that people know that's more. And even the atheist and agnostic must address the feeling of eternity we possess.

God, in time, lovingly forces all human beings to face the fact that there is the eternal and there is the Eternal God. And, by the way, you're not the eternal. You have the void. And you have the confusion. You don't know how circumstances and time pieces all together. He does. So, where are you going to turn? You were not meant to control and be the "master of your fate." You were meant to know the Master of All who is the Master of Time who is the Master of Your Time! You don't create your purpose. You submit to the One who has his purpose.

When you see that God holds eternity and not yourself, then you'll agree with Solomon that all of life is God's gift. Again Solomon brings up eating, drinking and enjoyment in toil - some of the most basic and essential elements to life. When you realize God is the one ordaining the seasons and times, you realize that all things – even these seemingly mundane tasks – are gifts. They're not given to us for us to prove ourselves to God or make an everlasting imprint on this world. They're gifts from the sovereign God!

This viewpoint of Solomon is important for us to grasp. Think of what a gift is. If you bought something for someone for their birthday or anniversary or "just because," and then that person took it and started to ponder how they were going to prove their worthiness or maybe they strained to understand the point of this gift and how they were going to change the world. As they deliberate, they think they figure out the point of the gift. So, they use it in that way; but they're not satisfied. Then they use it another way; but they're not satisfied. Finally, you say, "I didn't give you that for those reasons. It's a gift."

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<sup>5</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 3:11.

Now, the illustration breaks down, but let's just go with a part of it. With God, he's given everything as a gift. That doesn't mean we're not responsible to use his gifts appropriately. But that's the point. What's "appropriate?" We look at the gifts and think they're "saviors." These things around us are going to give us all we're longing for, but God says that they're gifts! The only way we're going to have satisfaction is if we look to the Giver of the gifts and entrust ourselves to him. When we look to him, then we'll have found satisfaction because in his presence is fullness of joy. Now, in entrusting ourselves to God, we can recognize gifts as gifts. And, when we see them as gifts, we can rejoice in God's kindness instead of putting ourselves under an impossible weight of finding eternity in things like food, drink or work. Ventura, enjoy God's gifts. Enjoy even the toil because there's a season for it. Recognize your life was never meant to be bound by this temporary life. It was meant to bound to God, the Eternal King.

So, if you were created for God, our joy comes in living out our design of trusting him? So, we see that our joy is found in embracing God and his sovereign control because God controls all events, and we do not. But there's one more reason:

### **3. God is our Judge and Redeemer (vv. 14-15).**

Read verses 14-15 with me: <sup>14</sup>I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him. <sup>15</sup>That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.<sup>6</sup>

Solomon reiterates certain points about God now and then emphasizes a new one here. The somewhat previously stated points are that God's actions within time have eternal effects. Nothing can be added to his works or taken away from them. In addition, Solomon says that the things that are in the past and the things to come are the same from his vantage point. In other words, God isn't bound within time. He created it all and sees it all at once. In the midst of these statements, Solomon says, "God has done it, so that people fear before him." In other words, our human works (left to ourselves) will not last forever. God can change them, modify them or keep us from doing what we want. We'd like to think that we can change what's to come or make up for what's already happened, but we are bound within time. Not so with God. No one can stop God!

These realities should put us in our place and cause us to fear God. Fear him, really? Yes. I'm going to try to describe the idea with two different analogies. The first one might not work for some of you, but it may for others. I am a person who loves to watch a storm roll in. I love a good thunderstorm where it's dark, very cloudy and the thunder booms and shakes the ground. Some of you might find me crazy for liking those storms, and I understand. Thunderstorms can wreak havoc. But here's the thing with me: the power is immense. It cannot be tamed and yet I can listen to it and watch it's magnificent and terrifyingly terrific power. In the storm, I possess a fear and an awe.

Now I said that illustration may not help, so let's use a different one. Say you're going on an African safari and you see a lion in the wild. Would you get out of your vehicle and start whistling to it to come over to you so you can feed it some kitty treats? Absolutely not. But you might stare at it as it walks. You might hope to hear it roar. There's a terrific beauty and a terrifying power.

With both a storm and a lion, we are in awe of the very nature of these things even though they could kill us, maim us or do something else we'd think is negative. Yet we have an awe. What about God? Can

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<sup>6</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 3:14–15.

he be tamed? No. He is terrifying and terrifically glorious. The reality of his sovereign control shouldn't cause you to reject him, but instead it should impel you to know who he is and for you to lay down your pride, submit to him and embrace him!

An example I'm reminded of in the Bible of this right response is Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. He elevates himself, expands his kingdom and his wealth. He thinks he's in control and then God humbles him. Nebuchadnezzar goes crazy for seven years (at God's command), and then in the right time, God gives Nebuchadnezzar his mind back. Nebuchadnezzar was never in control in the first place, and he finally realizes it and says, **"I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; <sup>35</sup> all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'"**<sup>7</sup> Finally, his reason returned, and being reasonable means that he will praise God for having all control! Can you praise God for his complete control?

At the end of verse 15, Solomon says, "God seeks what has been driven away." This phrase is somewhat confusing in the Hebrew language, but it seems to be a poetic way of talking about the judgment of God. The things that happen will never be forgotten by God and not only that, he seeks them. So, I think it's appropriate that translations and commentators refer to God's judgment when reading this phrase.

The idea of judgment is brought up in Ecclesiastes elsewhere, like in 12:14, where "God will bring every deed into judgment. . ."<sup>8</sup> God is in control, but clearly humans are not mindless, un-blamable beings. How that works, I don't know. I'm not God. But I do know God will hold all accountable for *everything*.

Having said that, the wording of the context here seems to be referencing some more. One commentator puts it this way, **" . . .the language of seeking is so positive that it suggests that God is looking to redeem the past, and not simply to render judgment. By his grace he will recover and restore what seems, from our vantage point, to be lost forever"** (Ryken, p. 97).

This is where we see the terrifying and terrific majesty of God. In his judgment and redeeming power. And this is where we're led to the gospel of Jesus. we see chaos, the Bible reveals that God is working all things together for good for those who love him. While we see chaos, we see that God has a plan to redeem. In the Old Testament, we read of different times in Israel's history and over all of those times, the Bible tells us that "when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son. . ."<sup>9</sup> There was perfect timing for Jesus to enter the world. And then we're told that Jesus lived perfectly within time. He used illustrations of a field and vineyard where you would replant things. He also talked about the appropriate time to uproot and bring judgment. He would heal at the appropriate times. He would speak or not speak when appropriate. He was loving. He had righteous anger. He spoke of tearing down the temple and them building upon Peter's confession. He responded with sorrow and also with joy.

Within time, he submitted and embraced the Father's will, responding perfectly. But we're told he even died at the predetermined time. Remember? Jesus said in John 7:30 that his hour [to die] had not yet come. But when it was time to die, he did and so Paul writes, "at the right time Christ died for the

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<sup>7</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Da 4:34–35.

<sup>8</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ec 12:14.

<sup>9</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ga 4:4.



ungodly. . .”<sup>10</sup> Even his resurrection was done in the way God prescribed it – three days and nights after his death.

Listen, you may not understand how God’s sovereignty all works, but when you look at Jesus – his life, death and resurrection – you ought to see that you can trust God. Jesus, the God-Man, came to our vantage point, a sin-filled world, and he didn’t come as the greatest but as the least. And he came to rescue us from the sinfulness of our rejection of God. He came to set us free so that we would trust God and obey him – finding satisfaction in him and not merely in circumstances. God’s sovereign plan is a loving plan. Can you see it?

As a result of God’s plan within time, the Bible goes on and tells us who trust Jesus that while the days are evil – referring to vanity – we can “redeem the time.” We do that by seeking to exemplify God and his glory over all. Psalm 34:1 says, “<sup>1</sup>I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. <sup>2</sup>My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad.”<sup>11</sup> In all we do, glorifying God is our aim. It may involve “waiting on the Lord,” but it always involves recognizing that our “times are in [God’s] hand” (Psalm 31:14-15). Redeeming also includes recognizing that there is a day of death and judgment and an eternity future. That changes our perspective on the “every day.” Eating, drinking, working is not merely about me having sustenance and a bigger savings account. It’s about enjoying God and exemplifying him to others – for without him we are lost! Helping our kids with homework is not merely so that their brains get smarter, but for our children to recognize the God who gave them their brain and our service to them is to show the love of Christ. Working a job isn’t merely so that you can get a raise, but so that people see God’s image through you and they’re drawn to Christ. Coming to gather with the church isn’t to impress God, but to be amazed by him and anticipate the day when God’s church gathers together as a whole for all eternity.

One other thing: redeeming the time means that we seek to tell others of this message of Jesus, the Lord of Time. In other words, evangelize. Ventura, we’re commissioned to “make disciples” wherever we are. People ought to see in your actions and hear in your words the glory of God’s power and plan to save sinners. Why would we not want to share? **Without Jesus, what’s the point? But with Christ, we have eternal joy! The Bible tells us that Jesus is coming again – a second time (Heb. 9:28) a time the Father has appointed (Matt 24:36). So we ought to long that God teaches us to “number our days (Psalm 90:12). And for those of us who have turned to Jesus, the Lord of Time, for forgiveness and eternal life; by God’s grace, our works here matter for eternity because they are done by his power and for his glory, which is our good.**

**This is the gospel according to Ecclesiastes.**

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<sup>10</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ro 5:6.

<sup>11</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ps 34:1–2.