

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-14 / AUGUST 30

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Read and Pray

This week's sermon focuses on Ecclesiastes 3:1–14. With your group, read the passage, which reminds us that life unfolds in seasons we cannot control, but every season remains in the hands of a good and sovereign God. After reading, spend time in silent prayer. What stood out to you? What might the Spirit be pressing into your life from this message?

Sermon Recap (to *apply*, not rehash the sermon)

Review the sermon with your group, focusing especially on these points:

- Life comes in seasons—some joyful and some painful—and we cannot control which season comes next.
- We can trust that God is working out a beautiful plan, even when we cannot yet understand what he is doing.
- Trusting God frees us to enjoy the life and good gifts God has given us today.
- Life is a gift to receive, not a prize to grasp. We can enjoy today because God holds tomorrow.

Group Discussion

1. The sermon compared the seasons of life to waves coming toward us at the beach—we cannot predict or control what comes next. What season of life are you in right now, and what has that season been teaching you?
2. Look again at verses 1–8. What contrasts do you notice in the different “times” the Teacher describes? What do these verses emphasize about the experience of a human life?
3. Verse 11 says that God “has made everything beautiful in its time,” yet we cannot see everything he is doing from the beginning to end. In other words, God is doing something good in our lives, but we often can't see it. Why do you think the Teacher puts those two truths together? Do you find this truth comforting or discouraging?
4. In verses 12–13, the Teacher responds to the uncertainty of life by telling us to be joyful. How can joy be an act of trust in God?
5. Think about a season from your past that you didn't choose for yourself. Can you see ways God was at work that you could not see at the time? What did you learn about the character of God in that season? How might that help you trust him with what you cannot understand today?
6. The sermon concludes, “Life in God's world is gift, not gain.” Where are you grasping for control instead of receiving today as a gift? What would it look like to open your hands and enjoy what God has given you today?

WEEKLY REFLECTION QUESTIONS

REFLECT:

What season of life has God placed you in right now?

RESPOND:

What is one gift from God you want to slow down and intentionally enjoy this week?

REACH:

Who do you need to share this message with this week?

PRAYER

- ☐ Ask God to help you trust his wisdom in the parts of your life you cannot understand.
- ☐ Thank God for the specific gifts he has given you in this season, and ask him to help you enjoy them.
- ☐ Ask the Holy Spirit to loosen your grip on tomorrow so you can faithfully receive today as a gift from God.