Enjoy Life When You Can’t Control It October 2, 2022

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-22 Series: Israel’s Greatest Philosopher*

Life is extremely short, and if its meaning is to be found, it must be found in the purpose of God, the giver of all life. – Peter Craigie

Intro: Damian Lillard’s longest day

1. Accept life as it is not as you’d like it to be
2. We all have our favourite season, but it only lasts for a few months

v. 1 *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven …*

1. We can’t choose the seasons, but we can prepare for them

v. 2 *a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted*

Job 2:10 *Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?*

* Can you think of any ways that we live in denial of some of the seasons mentioned in vv. 2-8?
* How does an acceptance of these seasons change how we approach our lives?

1. Revere God instead of playing God
2. God has a good plan, but we can’t see it

v. 11 *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.*

Job 11:7 *Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?*

1. Our lack of control should convince us that we’re not God

v. 14 *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.*

* If you can’t see what God is doing or why, what does it matter that He has a good plan?
* What does it mean to fear the Lord? Why is it so important?

1. Enjoy life instead of trying to control it
2. Life is to be enjoyed with gratefulness

vv. 12-13 *I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil …*

v. 22 *So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?*

1. The pleasure of life and good works is God’s gift

v. 13 *this is God's gift to man*

* How can you be “joyful” in a world where there is dying, weeping, mourning, and war?
* Why is accepting that you’re not in control necessary to finding joy in your daily life?

1. Live in light of God’s judgment instead in denial of it
2. The world’s injustice should convince us of judgment to come

v. 16 *Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness.*

vv. 18-20 *I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts. For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place.*

1. Enjoy life with a view to your death

v. 17 *I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work.*

v. 20 *All are from the dust, and to dust all return.*

Psalm 90:12 *So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.*

* Why does the injustice of this world force us to think about God’s final judgment?
* How does an acceptance of our mortality make us wise?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Ecclesiastes 4:1-16

Notes