



ECCLESIASTES 3:16-22

LEARNING TO TRUST GOD AS WE WORK AND DIE IN A WICKED WORLD

TRUST GOD BECAUSE INJUSTICE AND JUSTICE ARE INEVITABLE (3:16-17)

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.

- “*Moreover*” – Solomon connects these instructions with the one’s about work that precede this section
- “*under the sun*” – the life of the people on God’s earth
- “*in the place of justice*” – the places on earth the people of God go for justice is the courts where the Law of God is to be applied
- “*even there was wickedness*” – people are not receiving impartial decisions regarding law and order from the bench
- Corruption removes justice from the people
 - When dealing with lawbreakers, there is to be no place for pitying the poor and downtrodden
 - Rich and influential lawbreakers are not to sway verdicts and decisions
 - Leviticus 19:15–16
 - Deuteronomy 16:20
- When justices, and those in authority, think they are more insightful than the law, the doorway to evil and wickedness opens and enlarges as time goes on

TRUST GOD BECAUSE INJUSTICE AND JUSTICE ARE INEVITABLE (3:16-17)

- “*in the place of righteousness*” – among the religious
- “*even there was wickedness*” – religious leaders and the people of God are to center on truth and righteousness, without man-centered compromises (*wickedness*)
- It is necessary that the people of God be people of biblical justice
 - Micah 6:8
 - Amos 5:24
- Jesus condemned the religious leaders of the day for self-righteous injustice
 - Luke 11:42

TRUST GOD BECAUSE INJUSTICE AND JUSTICE ARE INEVITABLE (3:16-17)

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.

- We can rest assured God will balance the scales of justice in His time
 - Ecclesiastes 3:1
- No one escapes when God balances the scales of justice
 - Galatians 6:7–8
- We are encouraged to take comfort in the wisdom of God's timing
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10
- In His time God balances the scales of justice in courts, in churches, in families, and with the world through the final judgment
 - Hebrews 9:27–28

DEATH IS THE INEVITABLE END OF WORK AS OUR DELIGHTFUL TASK ON EARTH (3:18-22)

¹⁸ 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.

- The *test* does not reveal things to God, but it reveals the futility of man-centered life to man
- Solomon isn't assessing composition and biology, but ultimate end of man and beast on earth

¹⁹ 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.

- Death is the inevitable end of life for man and animals
- Men and women develop in sophistication and can experience achievements on honor among peers
 - Psalm 49:12
- “*all is vanity*” - an earthly man-centered life provides no substance or purposeful understanding to life

DEATH IS THE INEVITABLE END OF WORK AS OUR DELIGHTFUL TASK ON EARTH (3:18-22)

²⁰ *All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.*

- Genesis 3:19
- Psalm 104:29
- Both man and beast die and turn to dust

²¹ *Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?*

- By observation at the time of death, it is impossible to tell if there is an immaterial continuance of man or beast
- we know from Scripture that the soul of man is eternal
 - John 11:25
 - John 14:3
- If the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus don't pave the way of eternity with Him, Christianity is a fool's errand
 - I Corinthians 15:17–19
- The truth of life beyond the grave is substantiated by Solomon in this book
 - Ecclesiastes 12:7
 - Ecclesiastes 12:14

DEATH IS THE INEVITABLE END OF WORK AS OUR DELIGHTFUL TASK ON EARTH (3:18-22)

²² *So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot.*

- Ecclesiastes 2:24
- “*his lot*” - the point is that this is what God gives man to do
- The people of God are to delight in their work, doing all that they do to His honor and glory
- The fruit of work done by a God-centered man on earth, provides a living for he and his family, and gives him purposeful delight before His God
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:10b–12
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:11–13
- Work during one’s earthly life has God-honoring and fulfilling purpose
- Life beyond the grave has a different God-honoring and fulfilling purpose

DEATH IS THE INEVITABLE END OF WORK AS OUR DELIGHTFUL TASK ON EARTH (3:18-22)

Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

- Regarding Legacy - No mortal gives insight into what will be after our death
- Regarding Eternity - Scripture warns us about the evil of necromancy
 - Leviticus 19:31
- It is our Lord Jesus who gives us hope and insight into eternity
 - John 14:1-3
- One thing we know for sure, we will forever be with our Lord
 - Psalm 16:11
- Rejoice in your work, doing all you can to build the kingdom of God
- Better days are coming
 - Romans 8:18

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- In what ways is the lack of justice on earth challenging to you?
- What can you do to promote justice and place your hope in the God of justice?
- Are you worshipfully preparing your heart for death?
- Are you enjoying your work on God's earth until the day of death dawns?



ECCLESIASTES 3:16-22

LEARNING TO TRUST GOD AS WE WORK AND DIE IN A WICKED WORLD