

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume 9 Number 1

SERIES: "AN ETERNAL EDUCATION FROM ECCLESIASTES"

or "Answers to Life's Toughest Questions"

SERMON # 7 - "Making the Most of the Bad Times" (B)

Ecclesiastes 3

Editor's Note: This "MM" is the first email message of 2010 in a series that ARM is sending as an encouragement to preachers, chaplains, and Christian workers around the world. This issue is the 97th "MM" sent. All are archived -- just [click here](#) to see links to all messages sent since January of 2002.

This month's message (Part two of Ecclesiastes 3) is the seventh and concluding installment of a series on Ecclesiastes. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach and lead.

May God bless your labors! -- **Rod Farthing, Development Director**

"Making the Most of the Bad Times" (B)

Ecclesiastes 3

In [Part "A"](#), we found five attitudes concerning using time wisely as we looked at Ecclesiastes 3.

Eccl 3:1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: 2 a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, 3 a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, 4 a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, 5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, 6 a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, 7 a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, 8 a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. (NIV)

We looked at the first two in the last lesson.

I. Accept the fact that God has a purpose for both the good and bad times of your life. II. Affirm your faith in God in bad times.

In this message we look at three more recommendations from Solomon concerning use of our time.

III. Apply the present time to doing good.

Don't waste the present! Ecclesiastes 3:12

So I realized that all we can do is be happy and do the best we can while we are still alive. (Be happy and do good!)

You were created for good works. (Ephesians 2:9,10)

Are you doing what God created you to do?

Proverbs 3:27 Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it

Gal 6:9-10 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Do it now! Get with it. No guarantee of tomorrow. Too many people waste their lives getting ready to really start living and giving. Today is the day to write that card, phone that friend, or even send a flower. (PS- we can't eat flowers, send chocolate!)

Seriously, DO IT NOW, IT IS BIBLICAL, IT IS RIGHT, IT IS WHAT WE WERE CREATED FOR. A PERSONAL EXAMPLE.

Personal testimony: I am so thankful to be a fulltime preacher so I can do the good works of Christian service AS A PART OF MY JOB. Some 5 days before Elsie Sheets died, I went to make a shut in call. What a visit! This was the visit during which she said, "No, we had no children, neither did Wilbur's brothers -- Stanford or Woodrow...they were ALL DUDS!" What a visit to cherish. Just days before her death. Do it now!

IV. Appreciate your time as a gift from God.

Time is a gift from God; not earned.

Ecclesiastes 3:13 All of us should eat and drink and enjoy what we have worked for. It is God's gift. Birthdays are God's reminder that He has given ANOTHER YEAR OF LIFE to you.

Imagine winning \$86,400 a day for life- but no carry over till the next day.

Could you spend it? Wouldn't it be fun to try? God gives us 86,400 seconds a day. Spend them wisely and enjoy your shopping spree.

Philippians 4:11b: "...for I have learned to be satisfied with what I have." This applies to money and to time. Contentment must be learned! Paul says to us all: "Quit comparing yourself to others and thinking you don't have enough time and money."

Thank God for what you have, don't dwell on what you lack. Gratitude is a difficult trait to teach, but, so necessary to happiness.

A professional golfer was having a bad year. He told a friend, "I'm going to try to time it so that my money and time run out run out at the same time. It looks now like I'll have to die after lunch next Tuesday!"

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY: You have enough time to accomplish God's will for you -- and that is all you need.

The Mailbag

Thank you. When I have a need for some good news, I choose such information. Blessings!!!!!!!!!!

Rod, I read through your sermon again. My conclusion is once again, EXCELLENT! Thank you very much!

Good Story about the rich man. Bro Rod, we must learn to rule money and not let it rule us. The Word of God says the love of money is also the root of evil. Thanks for the reminder God Bless!

V. Anticipate giving an account of my time to God.

Ecclesiastes 3:17 I told myself, "God is going to judge the righteous and the evil alike, because every thing, every action, will happen at its own set time."

Why will God judge us on the way we use our time? Because time is life. Some say time is money. Maybe. But time is life! Time is the most precious commodity of all.

Money is a renewable resource, but you can't get more time!

Killing time is killing life. Don't KILL time, FILL time. Waiting on the doctor and reading as you wait isn't KILLING time, it is FILLING time -- if what you read is expanding your mind and helping you. And recreation isn't necessarily killing time if it is renewing your mind, body and spirit.

A ninety-four-year-old man was sitting impatiently at the doctor's office. He kept asking the receptionist if he could see the doctor. Finally, she asked him, "What in the world would a man your age have to do today anyhow???" He answered calmly but firmly: "A man MY AGE can't afford to waste a single minute!"

How about you -- can you waste a single minute??

Romans 14:12 Every one of us, then, will have to give an account to God.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Christians will not be judged for their sins. Jesus already paid for them. But you will be evaluated on your service, apparently, so that you can be rewarded accordingly.

So let us recommend Four questions:

1. What can I learn from this moment?
2. What good can I do in this moment?
3. What can I enjoy in this moment?
4. How can I trust God in this moment?

ARM's Websites

www.arm.org www.abarc.org www.raphahouse.org

"Remain faithful unto death .." Rev. 2:10B

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