Crossroads International Church Dr. Rick Griffith

27 July 2014 Message 4 of 17

NLT 40 Minutes

**In His Time**

Title

***Ecclesiastes 3:1-15***

**Topic:** Time

**Subject:** How do you live when you don’t know God's timing?

**Complement:** Celebrate your ignorance of God’s timing.

**Purpose:** The listeners will rest in God’s perfect time for the thing they are waiting for.

**Meditation:** God’s timelessness

**Reading:** Eccl. 1 reading in http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22eS8acYlKE

**Song:** In His Time

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: [Our timing is flawed.]

#### [Newser](http://www.newser.com/story/191193/man-has-narrowly-escaped-both-malaysia-air-tragedies.html) reports that 29-year-old “Maarten de Jonge is a lucky man—two times over. The Dutch cyclist had a ticket for not only [the 17 July 2014] doomed Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, but also the still-missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Both times, [ABC News](http://abcnews.go.com/International/dutch-cyclist-avoids-tragedy-scheduled-doomed-flights/story?id=24632968" \t "_blank) reports, de Jonge changed his flight at the last minute… Like the rest of us, he lives ignorant of his time to die. I wonder if he’s thinking about this now!

Maarten de Jonge

#### Amazon lost 10% of its share price on Friday. If you knew this was going to happen on Thursday and you had $100,000 in Amazon shares, what would you have done? We all make investment decisions based on incomplete knowledge of God’s timing.

Amazon

#### Of course, none of us know the right time for anything—when to change a flight, buy or sell, how long to wait. We all make decisions based on incomplete information.

### Need: What are you waiting for?

What waiting for?

#### Are you waiting for someone you care about to trust Christ?

Trust Christ?

#### Are you waiting for God to open a door for you—for a job, for a house, for some other new opportunity?

Open doors?

#### How many of you can think of something right now that you are waiting for? Raise your hands if you are waiting on God’s timing on that area. Think about that area as we proceed today!

How many?

### Subject: How do you live when you don’t know God's timing? How do you live your life since you also don’t know the best time for that to happen?

Subject

### Background: We have been studying Solomon’s wisdom on life in Ecclesiastes for the past month. Here we see God’s wisdom in light of our short and ignorant lifespan.

Preview

• 2 ways

• Response

Eccl.   
Series

### Preview: Today we will see two ways that God is perfect and how ignorant people like us should respond.

3:1-15

### Text: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 tells us first how God is perfect in that…

# I. God’s timing is perfect (3:1-8).

MI

[He causes events at the flawless moment.]

1  
(3 slides)

## The Thesis: Every activity has its appointed time (3:1).

### The first Hebrew noun here also refers to “the appointed or designated time for the Jewish feasts (Esth. 9:27, 31) [and] the length of time that Nehemiah set for his absence from Susa (Neh. 2:6).” (See NET Bible notes).

NET Bible

### It means something planned. The obvious intention here is that God has planned the right time for stuff to occur.

## The Proof: God has perfect timing in every activity (3:2-8).

SP

### God has the perfect time for birth and death (3:2a).

2a

#### Most of the time the perfect timing for a birth goes by us completely unnoticed.

#### However, my oldest son was born on the exact day of his grandpa’s 70th birthday, so we named Kurt in honor of Susan’s father. But God’s timing is always perfect.

Ahlstrom

#### David praised God in Psalm 139 that God has numbered our days.

Ps 139

#### When will you die? None of us knows! My wife and I had friends with four teenagers who fear an airplane accident that could kill them both. So Danny and Becky never fly together. They go to the airport together, take separate flights to their destination (they live in Hungary), and meet up at the airport on the other end. Makes sense, right? They see this as being responsible before God as parents.

Two planes

#### The rest of us don’t know any more than Danny and Becky. I can’t predict which plane will crash or which car will spin out of control on the way to the airport—which, I hear, is more dangerous than taking a flight, by the way!

### God has the perfect time to plant and harvest (3:2b).

2b

#### We don’t appreciate the seasons very much here in Singapore where the four seasons are hot, hot and wet, wet and hot, and wet.

SIN “Seasons”

#### Yet God has appointed for most of the world seasons for us to appreciate his timing to plant crops and harvest them.

Seasons

### God has the perfect time to kill and heal (3:3a).

3a

#### I have had to put down the family dog—at God’s appointed time to prevent misery.

#### But it’s the time for Tessa to heal from her nose injury a few years back. Our inability to know God’s timing should cause us to live life with some caution. Tessa was telling me about that at the hospital after her nose surgery last Friday! Living life with abandon can sometimes lead to surgery. So be careful!

Tessa

### God has the perfect time to destroy and build (3:3b).

3b

#### It seems the favorite word here in Singapore is “upgrade.” In my 23 years here, in some places I have seen a building built, torn down a few years later, rebuilt, torn down again, and rebuilt a third time.

#### God called Jeremiah both to destroy and build! The nation had strayed so far from God that the Lord knew the perfect time to destroy it. However, God knew that 70 years later was the perfect time to restore them to their land.

### God has the perfect time to cry and laugh (3:4a).

4a

#### I find it interesting that sometimes in a movie theater here when I want to cry, others laugh. Only God has appointed the proper time to cry or laugh.

#### I love laughter! Swindoll writes, “I heard about a pastor who left the pastorate after 20 years. He decided to become a funeral director. Somebody asked, ‘Why did you do that?’ He answered: ‘Well, I spent about 12 years trying to straighten out John. He never did get straightened out. I spent 14 months trying to straighten out the marriage of the Smith’s, and it never did get straightened out. I spent three years trying to straighten out Susan, and she never did get straightened out. *Now* when I straighten them out, they stay straight” (*Living on the Ragged Edge,* 72).

5a

Funeral Director

### God has the perfect time to grieve and dance (3:4b).

4b

#### We will see later in this book that it is better to go to a funeral than to a party (7:2).

#### Why? We really need both! I’d hate to be a funeral director or to be a banquet coordinator. God provides most of us with balance.

### God has the perfect time to scatter and gather stones (3:5a).

#### I have laid concrete and thrown stones on the ground to provide a good foundation.

#### But at the sixth anniversary of our church, I gathered six stones to represent God’s work each of the six years among us.

6 Stones

### God has the perfect time to embrace and turn away (3:5b).

5b

#### Each Sunday I try to hug each woman here and shake each man’s hand.

#### But I’ve learned in my 30-year marriage that sometimes it is not good to touch at all!

### God has the perfect time to search and give up (3:6a).

6a

#### Ever hear the story of the lady who lost her contact lens hiking up a mountain?[[1]](#footnote-1)

#### “Brenda was a young woman who was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was very scared, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff. In spite of her fear, she put on the gear, took hold of the rope, and started up the face of the rock.

#### Well, she got to a ledge where she could take a breather. As she was resting there, the safety rope snapped against Brenda’s eye and knocked out her contact lens.

#### There she was, on a rock ledge, with hundreds of feet below her and hundreds of feet above her. Of course, she looked and looked and looked, hoping her contact lens had landed on the ledge, but it was just not there.

Rock climber

#### Here she was, far from home, her sight was now blurry. Brenda was desperate and began to get upset. She prayed to the Lord to help her to find it. When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found.

• Looking down

#### Despondent, she sat down with some of the party waiting for them to make it up the face of the cliff. She looked out across the range of mountains and thought of the Bible verse that said: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth …” (2 Chronicles 16:9).

2 Chron. 16:9

#### She thought “Lord, you can see these mountains. You know every stone and leaf and you know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me.  Finally, she walked down the trail to the bottom. A new party of climbers was just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out: “Hey guys! Anybody lose a contact lens?”

#### Well, that would be startling enough, but do you know where the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock, carrying it on his back.  The story gets better. Brenda’s father is a cartoonist.

Ant

#### When she told him the incredible story of the ant, her prayer and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens with the words: “Lord, I don’t know why you want me to carry this thing. I can’t eat it, and it’s awfully heavy. But if that’s what you want me to do, I’ll carry it for you.

• Quote

Cartoon

#### I think it would do some of us good to occasionally say, “God, I don’t know why you want me to carry this load. I can’t see any good in it and it’s awfully heavy. But if you want me to carry it, I will.”

Searching

#### You see, we all have a burden to carry and sometimes we don’t know why. It could be just because we are to be an example to someone else or by answered prayer by being humble before God.”

#### “For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven… a time to search and a time to give up as lost” (3:1, 6a NAU).

#### Are you still searching? Is it time just to give it over the to Lord and even let an ant bring it to you in his good time if God wills it?

### God has the perfect time to keep and toss (3:6b).

6b

#### Susan has been helping her mother sort through everything she owns the past few weeks—and she has tossed quite a bit! On Wednesday she helped her mother make the big move from California to Washington state, which has gone great.

#### I like thinking about the “time to keep,” though. A week from Thursday is the time to once again keep my wife as she returns to Singapore!

### God has the perfect time to tear and mend (3:7a).

7a

#### The Jews would tear their clothes in times of grief.

#### I wonder whether they ever mended them!

### God has the perfect time to be quiet and speak (3:7b).

7b

#### I’ve been critical of Job’s three friends because they criticized him so severely, but you have to credit Job’s friends for sitting with him seven days without saying a word! Some of us are uncomfortable with 10 seconds of silence! We’ve got to be talking.

#### The American president, Abraham Lincoln, presided over the darkest days in US history during the Civil War when brother killed brother. He often did not know what to do or say. One writer says of him, “When he had nothing to say, he said nothing.” But God knows the perfect time to talk to us!

Lincoln

### God has the perfect time to love and hate (3:8a).

8a

#### We ought to hate injustice, prejudice, and sin.

#### The first time young Abraham Lincoln saw a slave for sale on the block, he recoiled within. He said, “There was a rising hatred inside of me against slavery, and I swore if someday I could do something about it, I *would* do something about it.” He hated slavery with a passion! There’s a time to hate, there’s a time to love (Swindoll, 76).

Lincoln & Slave

### God has the perfect time for war and peace (3:8b).

8b

#### Is there a time for war? Should we defend the helpless being massacred? In the last two weeks, thousands of Christians have fled Mosul, Iraq. Wouldn’t it be right to defend them?

#### Ultimately, Jesus is the Prince of peace and he will bring peace finally to this earth.

MPI

(So we don’t know the best timing for events, but God’s timing is perfect. Actually, in a broader sense, the passage continues on to say that…)

# II. God’s ways are perfect (3:9-11).

MP

9

10

[Our best has limited success but God does everything right.]

## Our work isn’t rewarded enough but it is from God (3:9-10).

### Man's work has no value in and of itself (3:9).

### God gives man work to occupy his time (3:10).

### Adrielle told our home group about friends who moved into a rich neighborhood. None of their neighbors had ever worked a day in their lives! The wealth had all just been given to them. One was so bored she went to work just to have something to do!

### The NAU has a more literal translation: “I have seen the task which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves.” God helps us prevent boredom through work! However…

• NAU

## God's work (and timing) is perfect yet inscrutable (3:11).

11a

### God makes all things beautiful ("appropriate," "proper"; cf. 5:18) in their time (3:11a). This is well said in the 1978 chorus “In His Time” [read].

In His Time (5 slides)

### God has placed a longing in man to know how he and his activities relate to eternity (3:11b).

#### Don Richardson records in his book *Eternity in Their Hearts*, that Lenin and Marx thought the work of Edward B. Tylor (“the father of anthropology”) would finally destroy religion. Tylor wanted to show that belief in God was not innate but foisted upon us by the religionists. Richardson writes… (cover flap)

Tylor

#### “The theory, according to scientific procedure, needed to be tested and confirmed by anthropological field research.

#### “So, around the turn of the century, scores of young anthropologists fanned out around the globe for that very purpose. Expecting to find that ‘primitive’ cultures were uniformly devoid of monotheistic beliefs, they were shocked to discover hundreds of examples of belief in one true God!

Primitive Culture

#### “In a fascinating series of documented stories, from the Santal people in India to the educated philosophers of ancient Athens, Don Richardson relates incredible examples of how the concept of a supreme God has existed for centuries in hundreds of cultures throughout the world.”

11b

Don Richardson

### God reserves the right to withhold His sovereign, eternal plan from man's knowledge (3:11c).

11b-c

#### Children ask the most profound questions about eternity, God, and meaning.

Little girl

#### Animals never do that. God hasn’t put eternity into the hearts of animals.

II

I

(So, in light of God’s perfect timing and ways, what should we do?)

# III. Enjoy life and fear God (3:12-15).

MP

[Appreciate your livelihood and stand in awe of the LORD.]

Balloons

## Enjoy the money you earn as God’s gift to you (3:12-13).

12

13

### Don’t take for granted the privilege of eating a hearty meal.

### It is great advice to live well, laugh often and love much!

Live • Laugh • Love

## Fear God since His work is amazing (3:14-15).

14a

### God's work is eternal so man should fear Him (3:14a).

14b

### God’s work is unchangeable (3:14b).

### God's work is recycled (3:15).

15

#### God repeats his work in the past (3:15a).

#### God will repeat his past work in the future (3:15b).

Sum up?

(How can we sum up this entire passage in a sentence?)

# Conclusion

### Celebrate your ignorance of God’s timing (MI).

MI

### Main Points

Key Points

#### God’s timing is perfect (3:1-8).

• Timing

#### God’s ways are perfect (3:9-11).

• Enjoy & Fear

• Ways

#### Enjoy life and fear God (3:12-15).

### What are you waiting for? Rest in God’s perfect time for it!

What waiting?

#### God controls time, so wait on his timing for you.

Wait

#### Memorize 3:1, “There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every 1event under heaven” (NAU).

Memorize

#### Keep a journal as evidence of your trust in God’s perfect timing. I love to tell God in my journal that I am trusting him with my uncertain future. Years later I read these knowing how he answered!

Journal

### The night before my wedding, my best friend Albert asked me if I was sure that it was God’s will that I get married. I told him, “No… I have heard stories of either the bride or groom getting killed in a car accident on the way to their wedding! But I will be sure tomorrow night that God wants me to *stay* married! And he will want me to make the best of it and serve Him.”

• Dissolve

Wedding

### What time is it? It’s time to come to terms with eternity! Admit your morality and trust Jesus with your life.

What time?  
• Now

Mortality

### Prayer

Black

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Solomon began by saying that all of life is *hebel*, or fleeting (1:1-11).

### Then he warned us about the futile nature of our pursuits, including the quest for wisdom and work (Eccl. 1–2).

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Now we see that time is itself in God’s hands.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### Solomon has already seen a fair measure of time, given that he likely wrote this at the end of his life.

# Questions

### What does it mean that all of life has an appointed time (1)?

### Is Solomon saying that work has no meaning at all (9)?

### Why does God burden us with work (10)?

### Is *everything (really everything?)* eventually beautiful (11)? Does this mean Satan, demons, evil, etc. will someday be beautiful?!

### In what sense do we have “eternity in our hearts”?

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

God makes everything appropriate at the right time—so trust Him.

God has his best time for everything, but we don’t know when that will be—so enjoy life now.

# Possible Illustrations

### The night before I got married, my best friend Albert asked me if I was sure that it was God’s will that I get married.

“Brenda was a young woman who was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was very scared, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff. In spite of her fear, she put on the gear, took hold of the rope, and started up the face of the rock.

Well, she got to a ledge where she could take a breather. As she was resting there, the safety rope snapped against Brenda’s eye and knocked out her contact lens.

There she was, on a rock ledge, with hundreds of feet below her and hundreds of feet above her. Of course, she looked and looked and looked, hoping her contact lens had landed on the ledge, but it was just not there.

Here she was, far from home, her sight was now blurry. Brenda was desperate and began to get upset. She prayed to the Lord to help her to find it. When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found.

Despondent, she sat down with some of the party waiting for them to make it up the face of the cliff. She looked out across the range of mountains and thought of the Bible verse that said: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth …” (2 Chronicles 16:9).

She thought “Lord, you can see these mountains. You know every stone and leaf and you know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me.  Finally, she walked down the trail to the bottom. A new party of climbers was just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out: “Hey guys! Anybody lose a contact lens?”

Well, that would be startling enough, but do you know where the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock, carrying it on his back.  The story gets better. Brenda’s father is a cartoonist.

When she told him the incredible story of the ant, her prayer and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens with the words: “Lord, I don’t know why you want me to carry this thing. I can’t eat it, and it’s awfully heavy. But if that’s what you want me to do, I’ll carry it for you.”

I think it would do some of us good to occasionally say, “God, I don’t know why you want me to carry this load. I can’t see any good in it and it’s awfully heavy. But if you want me to carry it, I will.”

# Possible Applications

### Text

**In His Time**

***Ecclesiastes 3:1-15***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The way people should respond to our ignorance of God's timing and His inscrutable purposes is to rejoice in his labor now and fear Him (3:1-15).

# I. The way that God designs life is by arranging the best time for every activity to occur (3:1-8).

## Thesis: Every activity has its appointed time (3:1).

## Proof: God has perfect timing in every activity (3:2-8).

### God has the perfect time for birth and death (3:2a).

2a

### God has the perfect time to plant and harvest (3:2b).

2b

### God has the perfect time to kill and heal (3:3a).

3a

Two planes

Tessa

3b

### God has the perfect time to destroy and build (3:3b).

### God has the perfect time to cry and laugh (3:4a).

4a

### God has the perfect time to grieve and dance (3:4b).

4b

### God has the perfect time to scatter and gather stones (3:5a).

### God has the perfect time to embrace and turn away (3:5b).

5b

### God has the perfect time to search and give up (3:6a).

### God has the perfect time to keep and toss (3:6b).

### God has the perfect time to tear and mend (3:7a).

### God has the perfect time to be quiet and speak (3:7b).

### God has the perfect time to love and hate (3:8a).

### God has the perfect time for war and peace (3:8b).

# II. The way man’s work differs from God’s work is that it lacks profit in contrast to God's inscrutable but perfect work (3:9-11).

## Man's work isn’t rewarded enough but it is from God (3:9-10).

### Man's work has no value in and of itself (3:9).

### God gives man work to occupy his time (3:10).

## God's work (and timing) is perfect yet inscrutable (3:11).

### God makes all things beautiful ("appropriate," "proper"; cf. 5:18) in their time (3:11a).

### God has placed a longing in man to know how he and his activities relate to eternity (3:11b).

### God reserves the right to withhold His sovereign, eternal plan from man's knowledge (3:11c).

# III. The response people should have to ignorance of God's timing and His inscrutable purposes is to rejoice in the fruits of their labor and fear Him (3:12-15).

## People should enjoy the money they earn as the gift of God (3:12-13).

## People should fear God since is work is amazing (3:14-15).

### God's work is eternal so man should fear Him (3:14a).

### God’s work is unchangeable (3:14b).

### God's work is recycled (3:15).

#### God repeats his work in the past (3:15a).

#### God will repeat his past work in the future (3:15b).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will rest in God’s perfect time for the thing they are waiting for.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: [Our timing is flawed.]

### Need: What are you waiting for?

### Subject: How do you live when you don’t know God's timing?

### Background: We have been studying Solomon’s wisdom on life in Ecclesiastes for the past month. Here we see God’s wisdom in light of our short and ignorant lifespan.

### Preview: Today we will see in Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 two ways that God is perfect and how ignorant people like us should respond.

### Text: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 tells us first that…

# I. God’s timing is perfect (3:1-8).

## Thesis: Every activity has its appointed time (3:1).

## Proof: God has perfect timing in every activity (3:2-8).

# II. God’s ways are perfect (3:9-11).

## Our work isn’t rewarded enough but it is from God (3:9-10).

### Man's work has no value in and of itself (3:9).

### God gives man work to occupy his time (3:10).

## God's work (and timing) is perfect yet inscrutable (3:11).

### God makes all things beautiful ("appropriate," "proper"; cf. 5:18) in their time (3:11a).

### God has placed a longing in man to know how he and his activities relate to eternity (3:11b).

### God reserves the right to withhold His sovereign, eternal plan from man's knowledge (3:11c).

# III. Enjoy life and fear God (3:12-15).

## Enjoy the money you earn as God’s gift to you (3:12-13).

## Fear God since His work is amazing (3:14-15).

### God's work is eternal so man should fear Him (3:14a).

### God’s work is unchangeable (3:14b).

### God's work is recycled (3:15).

#### God repeats his work in the past (3:15a).

#### God will repeat his past work in the future (3:15b).

# Conclusion

### Celebrate your ignorance of God’s timing (Main Idea).

### Main Points

### What are you waiting for? Rest in God’s perfect time for that to happen!

#### God controls time, so wait on his timing for you.

#### Memorize 3:1.

#### Keep a journal as evidence of your trust in God’s perfect timing.

**Subject:** Time is part of God's sovereign, eternal, and immutable plan

**Complement:** in which man works meaninglessly so that he should fear God.

**Main Idea:** God controls time, so wait on his timing for you

**Introduction**

1.What is time? (Webster defines "time" as "the measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues.")

2.Why is time important? (Because it is irretrievable.)

3.Today we will see how time relates to the sovereign and inscrutable plan of God, and what our proper response should be.

**I.Every activity on earth has its appropriate time (3:1-8).**

\*Does this stanza strike you as optimistic, pessimistic, fatalistic, realistic, or a combination of these?

A.Thesis: Every event/activity has its appointed time (3:1).

B.Thesis Illustrated (3:2-8).

1.This is a poem of 14 opposites suggesting completeness and totality.

\*What type of contrast is common to all of these pairs of opposites?

2.The poem is comprised of polar opposites/extremes: constructive vs. destructive, beginning vs. ending.

\*How does the first pair (3:2a) introduce the whole list?

(Solomon turns his attention from viewing time from God's sovereign perspective to seeing how time relates to both man's and God's work…)

**II.Our work is meaningless but God's work is inscrutable (3:9-11).**

A.Our work is meaningless (3:9-10).

1.Our work has no value in and of itself (3:9).

2.God gives us work to occupy our time (3:10).

B.God's work (and timing) is perfect yet inscrutable (3:11)..

1.God makes all things beautiful ("appropriate," "proper"; cf. 5:18) in their time (3:11a).

\*What in man makes him different from the rest of the created beings?

2.God has placed a longing in man to know how he and his activities relate to eternity (3:11b).

3.God reserves the right to withhold His sovereign, eternal plan from man's knowledge (3:11c).

(In light of the fact that man can never fully understand God's plan, Solomon precedes to give us some practical advice how to deal with these perplexities…)

**III.Since God's actions are eternal and immutable we should rejoice in our labor now and fear Him (3:12-15).**

A.We should enjoy life as the gift of God (3:12-13).

\*Write your own definition of what it means to "fear God." What does this mean?

B.We should fear God (3:14-15).

1.God's work is eternal (3:14a).

2.God's work is unalterable (3:14b, 15).

a.Man can't change God's work in the past (3:15a).

b.Man can't change God's work in the future (3:15b).

c.God's control is seen in His repeating events of the past (3:15c).

**Conclusion:**

God controls time, so wait on his timing for you.

1.God has all of time in control. Let's wait upon Him for His timing.

"God is never late, though He often delays."

2.What is there in your life in which you need to recognize His perfect timing?

a.Do you need to trust God for your job future (occupation, placement, security)?

b.Are you waiting on God's timing to start a family?

c.Is your retirement planning in perspective?

d.How can you trust Him for future financial provisions?

3."In His Time" captures the thought of this passage beautifully.



**Rick Griffith**

27 July 2014

Message 4 of 17

**In His Time**

***Ecclesiastes 3:1-15***

# Introduction

### What are you waiting for?

### How do you live when you don’t know God's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

# I. God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is perfect (3:1-8).

## Thesis: Every activity has its appointed time (3:1).

## Proof: God has perfect timing in every activity (3:2-8).

# II. God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are perfect (3:9-11).

## Our work isn’t rewarded enough but it is from God (3:9-10).

### Screen Shot 2014-07-27 at 10.27.11 am.pngMan's work has no value in and of itself (3:9).

### God gives man work to occupy his time (3:10).

## God's work (and timing) is perfect yet inscrutable (3:11).

### God makes all things beautiful ("appropriate," "proper"; cf. 5:18) in their time (3:11a).

### God has placed a longing in man to know how he and his activities relate to eternity (3:11b).

### God reserves the right to withhold His sovereign, eternal plan from man's knowledge (3:11c).

# III. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ life and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God (3:12-15).

## Enjoy the money you earn as God’s gift to you (3:12-13).

## Fear God since His work is amazing (3:14-15).

### God's work is eternal so man should fear Him (3:14a).

### God’s work is unchangeable (3:14b).

### God's work is recycled (3:15).

#### God repeats his work in the past (3:15a).

#### God will repeat his past work in the future (3:15b).

# Conclusion

### Celebrate your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God’s timing (Main Idea).

### What are you waiting for? Rest in God’s perfect time for that to happen!

#### God controls time, so wait on his timing for you.

#### Memorize 3:1.

#### Keep a journal as evidence of your trust in God’s perfect timing.

**Thought Questions**

1. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 aloud. What is the point of these 14 contrasts?

Text

Text

Text

Text

1. What does it mean that God has “put eternity into man’s hearts”?

Text

Text

Text

Text

1. What are you waiting for in your life? How does God want you to respond?

Text

Text

1. Elisabeth Elliott, *Keep a Quiet Heart* (Vine Books, 1995), p. 119 in her chapter entitled “Lost and Found.” It features Brenda Foltz of Princeton, MN, who maintains this happened on her first rock-climbing experience. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)