



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Ecclesiastes Sermon Series
Supports Session: What Time Is It?
Sermon Title: "The Gift of Work"
Passage: Ecclesiastes 3:9-15

Connection to Ecclesiastes 3

Solomon directed the reader to understand that God gives purpose and meaning to every aspect of creation. Believers should know God's work as eternal and should, therefore, take pleasure in their own work as one of God's gifts.

Introduction/Opening

Most of us have grand plans for our retirement years—plans that may include travel, spending more time with family, and hobbies we enjoy. However, if someone talks to a retiree for very long, one of the phrases heard many times is, "I work harder now that I'm retired than I did before." Work is fundamental to our human experience. Even though work can be difficult, it certainly provides meaning, significance, and a sense of contribution and accomplishment in people's lives.

Solomon put work into proper perspective in Ecclesiastes 3:9-15. Solomon acknowledged God's work as eternal and how He does all the work. Even though God's work is eternal, and nothing can be added to it, people must still work and take pleasure in the work God has given them.

Outline

I. Work knowing God is in control (vv. 9-11).

Ultimately, it is not people who make things happen, but instead it is God who brings fruition and beauty to creation (v. 11). Paul echoed the teaching of Solomon, reminding the Ephesians to work with enthusiasm as if the work they were doing was for God Himself (Eph. 6:7) We should recognize our work as good and Christ-honoring, but also recognize it as secondary to the work of God. It is God alone who is in control.

II. Work is a gift (vv. 15-16).

We should be joyful as long as we live (v. 12). God is ultimately in control. If God is not in control, we have good reason to be stressed and anxious about the impact of our work. However, Solomon concluded that believers are to be joyful and do good.

We should "eat, drinks, and enjoy" our work (v. 13). For many individuals, work is drudgery and nothing more than a necessity with little joy or pleasure. However, since the

Lord does the bulk of the work in His creation, then we can work with diligence and a light heart.

Humanity is created and designed to work and create just as the heavenly Father works and creates. Finding satisfaction, meaning, and accomplishment in our work is part of being made in the image of God. Approaching work with excellence “as something done for the Lord and not for people” serves as a witness for believers in the workplace (Col. 3:23).

III. God’s work is eternal (vv. 14-15).

Regardless of how important or profound one’s work may appear to be, no one’s work will endure forever. Eventually, everything made by human hands will come to an end.

However, God’s works are eternal. God’s work is so perfect and complete that nothing can be added to or taken from what He has done. The result of God’s work is that people fear and respect Him.

Solomon understood that people are not able to out-create, out-work, or out-do the Lord. Believers should not understand this as resignation to not pursue excellence but as an encouragement to acknowledge God as Master over all.

Conclusion

It might be a common phrase by retirees to say they work harder now than ever before, and it may be a common feeling among everyone who goes to a job week in and week out to long for the day when they are not required to work. However, we know when we work, we are following a biblical command. Furthermore, we find meaning, value, and satisfaction in that work, not because we are making something 100% new, but because God Himself is in control.

Have you trusted in Christ, who accomplished the greatest work of all on your behalf? The work on the cross is the most valuable and meaningful act in all of human history. We cannot add to the work of the cross, but we are called and commanded to work for the glory of Christ who died and was resurrected. This morning, trust in the powerful work of Christ on the cross, knowing what He has accomplished “will last forever” (v. 14).

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