

Ecclesiastes (Quality: Good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 1900

Preacher: Farley, J John (1903-1980)

[0 : 00] The book of Ecclesiastes, a part of chapter 3, part of the third chapter in the book of Ecclesiastes.

To everything there is a season and a time, a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to break down and a time to build up, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to get and a time to lose, a time to keep and a time to cast away, a time to rend and a time to sow, a time to keep silence and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time of war and a time of peace.

What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he labours? I have seen the travel which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

He hath made everything beautiful in his time. Also he hath set the world in their hearts, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

I know that there is no good in them but for a man to rejoice and to do good in his life, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour.

[2 : 38] It is the gift of God. I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.

And God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been.

And God requireth that which is past. You will have noticed that the times mentioned are of general application to the whole of the human race.

We are all concerned in these various times at some part of our life or other, with but very few exceptions. To everything there is a season.

We have to prove this in the matter of that which we depend upon for our living. There is a time to sow. There is a time to reap.

[3 : 53] There is a time to plant. A time to plant. A time to plant. A time to plant. A time to plant. A time to plant. A time of fruit. A time of blossoming.

A time of fruit-bearing. A time of maturing. And of gathering in. And all these times have a spiritual significance.

If grace be given us, and the spirit of discernment to see what these scriptures set before us. The Lord help us to be much concerned as to our personal sowing.

To be much concerned and watchful as to what is produced by our sowing. To be much in prayer concerning the ripening of that which we have sowed.

For there are some very solemn things in the word of God concerning sowing. And that which a man soweth actually also reap is certain. So may the Lord help us to be very watchful in all this.

[5 : 00] But my thoughts, I would rather they were directed to some time. Times which are not specifically mentioned in here. And which certainly do not concern the whole of the human rights.

Where God has made a solemn choice of a certain people. There is a time for them to be called by grace. And I believe that this evening, this particular time, will be a matter of some concern to each other.

I certainly hope so. Do we not wish to have this time firmly confirmed in our minds that this time has passed over us?

We have reached, gone by this time. There has been this work within us which is of divine origin. Being divine, it will proceed under the divine care.

As in nature, we are dependent upon two main things with others. Shining of the sun.

[6 : 09] And the precious moistenings of the showers. So we shall live to prove in matters spiritual. There is this equivalent in our experience.

Times when we feel the warmth of the sun. And is there not a response to it? Isn't there a springing forth and an opening up?

And an enlargement of heart within when we feel the sweet rays of that glorious sun of righteousness. Only for a little while. And when we get dried and parched, and we do often, do we not?

How we relish those showers, refreshing which the Lord has promised he will give. So there are these times to which the children of God come.

And they then realize that through much mercy, the words of the psalmist are true. I wanted to bring this word before you this evening.

[7 : 15] I'm glad it's come to mind. Because I believe each of us as we journey on will be very pleased to know that this is so. Especially if the Lord will confirm it from time to time.

The word, of course, is my times are in thy hands. How we would desire to be assured of this. In a gracious sense, I mean.

We all know that our times, as regards to what I read, the time to be born and the time to die, are in the hands of God. This is a general application. But the children of God have times in between those times, don't they?

And it is these times they want to feel are in the hands of God. Those times that he causes them to pass through. Times which are mentioned in that hymn.

I won't go into it now, but you've all sung it. I'm sure enough times to know that the hymn writer mentions some wonderful experiences there. Times to prove this.

[8 : 22] Times to find that. Times to feel this, that, and the other. There are the times we want to feel are in the Lord's hands. And especially, of course, that one time to which my thoughts would be directed now.

Since it bounds crossed, we've lost another of our people. And therefore, there is this uppermost, I suppose, in my mind at the moment. The time to die.

We want to know that this is not only in the hands of God in a general way. Although I hope we believe that there is an appointed time for man upon the earth.

But how we want to feel that there is a gracious preparation for that time. And that this matter, as it concerns us, is in the hands of that wise God.

That he has appointed this time for us. And not only this, but that he is now preparing us for it. You see, there's so much in the word of God which indicates that the children of God will pass through trying experiences.

[9 : 31] I have in mind at the moment, very briefly, the experience of Joseph again. We read that until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him.

And you will have passed doubtless along this way in your experiences in some measure. In so far as the Lord saw fit, and for the reason which he had in mind, the purpose he wished to bring to pass, there will be this trial of any word he has given until the time comes for him to perform.

Well, what a mercy it is that the dependence of the people of God as they journey on is strictly in the hands of him to whom the psalmist referred in these words.

I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me. It's sweet to feel that one's times, however dark they might be at the moment, or intricate, or trying, or complicated, distressing, even keenly afflicted, or containing losses.

The Lord knows just what times we're passing through or are passing over us at the present time. Do seek grace. May we each seek grace.

[10 : 57] Remember that even these trying times are in his hand. It will help us to bear them patiently if we can feel that there is nothing occurring to us other than he is appointed.

Spetson doesn't mean just some. It doesn't mean at the beginning when they feel warm only. No, it's still the same when it's their fortune to pass through darks and paths and bear the cross and no affliction and trial and every temptation for him.

But all these times are in the hand of God and under his control. There's only one more time that I wish to refer to at the moment. We read of a set time.

A set time to favor. It's the favor of Zion. Therefore, this might be referred to as a time of grace because the favor of God is grace.

And if God has, that we believe he has various set times to favor various portions of Zion, I believe it will be our concern this evening, if we are rightly exercised, to seek that the set time to favor us may soon appear again, if it's will.

[12 : 29] I wouldn't be unmindful of or unthankful for every evidence that there has been a time of favor already. But I believe we should not rest on our lees in this or sit down with folded hands contented and say, well, we need trouble no further.

I feel I am doing my duty or would desire to in this respect if I remind you that we would seek to ask the Lord for yet another set time to favor us.

That is what we desire if we seek the welfare of Zion and the welfare of Jaira. And I believe we do well to seek the welfare of Jaira.

And as we gather this evening for prayer, I hope the Lord will direct us each in prayer, whether it be publicly and audibly or secretly and silently, among our petitions, that we earnestly seek for the set time to favor Zion.

There was one other that I decided to just drop a hint of. It's a word of caution, there it be. Although the word of God does contain this, I believe it's a word that should be used with great care.

[13 : 51] I should feel that one would need to be under the special influence of the Spirit and be graciously led before one said it. And this is the word. It is time for the Lord to work.

Father, who really knows that? We might feel that it is. We might feel that it is time for him now to work.

But there is a certain aspect of it in which we might correctly use that with a right motive. If we acknowledge that vain is the help of man in a certain particular or in some matter that is present concerning us, then you might rightly say it's time for thee to undertake.

I believe the psalmist Asaph reached this time in a practical way when he said, Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel. I can't manage my affairs.

They've got out of hand and I believe he felt he'd sinned himself beyond all hope of recovery apart from the mercy of God. So he said, Thou shalt guide me.

[15 : 04] It's time for thee to take over. One might humbly say that and reverently too without being guilty of in any way dictating to God. That is what I wish to caution again.

I believe it's extremely dangerous to seek to dictate to God. You may suffocate, but not dictate. I hope I've said nothing on that.