

Remnant Life Church
May 19, 2019
The Precious Value of Time
Eccl 3:1-8

Very few people enjoy or are comfortable talking about death although much has been written and said about it -

- The ancient Greek philosopher Marcus Aurelius said, “It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live.”
- “Dying is like getting audited by the IRS – something that only happens to other people – until it happens to you.” – Anon
- Woody Allen – “I am not afraid of death; I just don’t want to be there when it happens.”
- **Prov 14:27** - *The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.*

Jeremiah 1:5 - *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.*

READ – **Eccl 3:1-8**

1. Both of these passages have to do with the sovereignty of God
 - Sovereignty – supreme power; controlling influence
 - Nearly 300 times the word sovereign is used to describe God
2. When used by man the focus of the meaning changes
 - With man, who lives with a sin nature, it is about control, loss of freedom, and restrictions
3. When describing the nature of God, it is an act of love, gentleness, and freedom

And within the sovereignty of God is the concept of time

- * Time is not our own although we treat it as if it is
- * Only God knows the time that we have been given for our lives to be lived
- * God and God alone knows the moment of our birth and the moment of our death

But what you **believe** about death and eternity will determine **how** you live

What do we know of death?

- It is the cessation of life
- This shell of our existence, the body, stops functioning
- There are only 2 ways to view death
 - It is the end of consciousness
 - It is a continuation into the next life
- Death is all around us every moment of our lives
 - We just choose not to think of it that way
 - Plants die, insects, even people but as long we don’t witness it or experience the loss personally we tend not to think about it

- And for good reason!
 - It is not healthy to be preoccupied with death!
 - This is the very way that satan attacks the minds of our young people
 - Making death, the undead, and all of the garbage coming out of Hollywood
 - The slasher movie genre was at its height in the late 70's to mid 80's
 - It was the beginning of a desensitization to death that has brought it to the point of little to no effect
 - The best-selling video games have always and continue to have death as an intricate part of the plot
 - It has trained our children to think death is just something that happens and then you press the reset button
 - And we shake our heads and wonder why we hear about shootings all the time
 - A mass-shooting is defined as a minimum of 4 people being shot, at one location, at roughly the same time
 - In the first 4 months of the this year (only to May 19) there have been 124 such incidents, killing 129 people, while wounding 468 others
 - Yet we go on allowing our children and young people to become exposed to this through TV, movies, books, and games
- But death is not something we should fixate on, especially as a Christian!
 - We serve a God of life not of death
 - Jesus said, *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.* **John 10:10**
 - The thief is satan and it is his desire to steal life from everything of God's creation

1. Death is Certain

- a. *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."* **Gen 2:16-17**
- b. *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.* **Gen 3:19**
- c. No one – regardless of who they are, what they have, what they think, or what they believe, can escape physical death

2. When death occurs, the body and the soul (or spirit) separate

- a. This is why we say goodbye to those who go on before us
- b. That which we had relationship with (the body) is no more but the spirit lives on and is what is now in God's presence
- c. Will we have consciousness in that spirit? – Absolutely
- d. Jesus talks often with His disciples about being with Him in heaven
 - i. Using terms that are about life in heaven
 - ii. **John 14:1-3** - *Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not*

so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

3. Why is death feared?
 - a. First, death is a curse brought on by sin
 - i. **Romans 5:12** – *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned*
 - b. Second, death represents the end of things that matter the most to people
 - i. Achievement, accomplishment, advancement, accumulation
 - ii. It is about the loss of fellowship and relationships
 - iii. It goes against the very survival instinct God placed in each one of us to cherish life

4. BUT...death should carry no fear for the Christian
 - a. We have talked about fear
 - b. The Bible instructs us to not be afraid over 160 times
 - c. What is it that keeps fear from occupying our lives?
 - i. Love – God’s love
 - ii. **I John 4:18** - *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*
 - d. We are also promised to be with God in paradise
 - i. **Luke 23:43** – Jesus promised the thief on the cross

And so, when a life comes to an end what should be foremost in our minds?

- Gratitude – for the time that God gave to us with them
- Rejoicing – that a brother or sister has been promoted and is now looking on the face of Jesus without the physical restrictions of this body
- Comfort – all their earthly troubles are done
- Assurance – of being reunited with them

Again, God’s time is set for each of us - don’t waste a moment of it robbed by the trivial things that just don’t matter

- Be grateful for one another
- Rejoice in the relationships that God has blessed you with
- Family/Friends – treasure the time that we have with those who mean the most
- Value one another because the time we have is very precious