

# God Balances Life Beautifully

Why is there a downside to every upside and vice versa?

Ecclesiastes 3.1–13

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Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Aaron Glider – No Suggestions

## **Prelude:**

### **I. According to Solomon, looking at life only from under the sun, we conclude**

A. everything is vanity.

B. It is all grasping for the wind.

1. All labor proves profitless in the end, because

2. we all die.

a) Most of what we achieved we do not pass on, because

(1) current generations do not learn from previous generations and

(2) succeeding generations shall not learn from present generations.

b) Why then do we labor so much during our days under the sun?

### **II. Regardless of who you are and of what you do, you still die.**

A. The wise and the foolish both alike die.

1. Why then be wise?

2. Why work?

a) We know it is the gift of God for us

(1) to work and

(2) to enjoy life.

b) Man and his ways are like the earth, as Solomon depicted in 1.4–7.

(1) The sun rises and the sun goes down.

(2) The wind blows in one direction, then another.

(3) The rivers run into the sea, only to return to the beginning again.

B. Like the earth, the generations of man repeat themselves.

- C. Yet, I think we all know instinctively,
1. that there is a season for everything of man's and
  2. there is a purpose for every time in human history.

**Persuasion:**

**I. Ecclesiastes 3.1–8 • Everything Has a Season**

- 1 To everything there is a season,  
A time for every purpose under heaven:**
- 2 A time to be born,  
And a time to die;  
A time to plant,  
And a time to pluck what is planted;**
- 3 A time to kill,  
And a time to heal;  
A time to break down,  
And a time to build up;**
- 4 A time to weep,  
And a time to laugh;  
A time to mourn,  
And a time to dance;**
- 5 A time to cast away stones,  
And a time to gather stones;  
A time to embrace,  
And a time to refrain from embracing;**
- 6 A time to gain,  
And a time to lose;  
A time to keep,  
And a time to throw away;**
- 7 A time to tear,  
And a time to sew;  
A time to keep silence,  
And a time to speak;**
- 8 A time to love,  
And a time to hate;  
A time of war,  
And a time of peace.**

- A. Yes, *The Byrds* in 1965 created a number 1 hit song,
1. using these eight verses from the Old King James Version.

2. See the back page of the bulletin for more information.
- B. God balances life beautifully.
1. For every up, there is a corresponding down.
  2. For every down, there is a corresponding up.
    - a) For every positive, there is a counter negative.
    - b) For every negative, there is a counter positive.
- C. Life is both mountains and valleys.
1. Life has victories and
  2. life has depressions.
- D. Life does not always go
1. the way we want it to go, and
  2. sometimes it does.
    - a) Life can be pleasant and
    - b) sometimes it can be harsh.
- E. Some old things need replacing.
1. Later the replacement becomes old.
  2. The cycle starts again.
- F. Nothing under the sun lasts forever.
1. Good things do not last forever on the earth.
  2. Evil things do not last forever either.
- G. Warren Wiersbe said:
- “When life is especially difficult, we are prone to see only one side of the situation.”**
- *Bible Commentary: Old Testament*, p. 438)**
1. But there is another side.

2. I remind myself of Ecclesiastes 3 all the time and
  - a) doing so blesses me greatly,
  - b) keeping me from losing hope and
  - c) building patience in my soul.

H. Never forget

1. that God controls life under the sun and
2. that he keeps things balanced.
  - a) Solomon will say more about this later in Ecclesiastes, but
    - (1) since he did not say it here,
    - (2) I will wait until he brings it up again.
3. Psalm 30.11–12

**11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,  
12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.  
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.**

4. In Isaiah 22.12–13, Israel did not learn the right timing:

**12 And in that day the Lord GOD of hosts  
Called for weeping and for mourning,  
For baldness and for girding with sackcloth.  
13 But instead, joy and gladness,  
Slaying oxen and killing sheep,  
Eating meat and drinking wine:  
“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”**

5. Nehemiah 8.9 shows the opposite direction:

**9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and  
the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is  
holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep.” For all the people  
wept, when they heard the words of the Law.**

- I. Remembering the words of Solomon and of Job
  1. will help you find meaning in life
  2. by knowing and accepting the balances of life.
    - a) Job 1.21

**21 “Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
And naked shall I return there.  
The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away;  
Blessed be the name of the LORD.”**

- b) Job 2.9–10

**9 Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” 10 But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**

**– Job 2.9–10**

## **II. Ecclesiastes 3.9–10 • Our God-Given Labor**

**9 What profit has the worker from that in which he labors? 10 I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied.**

### A. Considering

1. that everything has its season and
2. that every purpose has its time,
  - a) what profit does the worker have from all the labor he puts out?
  - b) Where do his things and his purpose fit in?

### B. Solomon stated in verse 10,

1. the God-given task with which he wants us occupied.
2. He wants us to work.
  - a) Did not someone say that an idle mind is the devil’s workshop?

- b) God created you with the ability to work.
- 3. Therefore, work and you shall enjoy life.
  - a) First Thessalonians 4.11–12

**11 ...aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, 12 that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.**

- b) Acts 20.35

**35 “I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”**

- C. However, do not think that life under the sun completes our purpose.
  - 1. There is something greater and Solomon hinted at it in 2.24–26.
  - 2. He hinted at it in 3.10.

### **III. Ecclesiastes 3.11 • God Made Beauty**

**11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.**

- A. God made everything beautiful in its appropriate time.
  - 1. Do not think of labor as evil, because
  - 2. God created us for labor.
    - a) Good things come from our labor.
    - b) Work and you shall see God’s balance and beauty in our lives.
- B. The life-events of 3.1–8 centered on the activities of earth.
  - 1. God wants us occupied with our lives under the sun, but
  - 2. he also did something else when he made us.

- a) He put eternity in our hearts.
  - b) We know that there is more to our existence than work on the earth.
- C. Think about it.
- 1. Look at the magnificent things you and the rest of humanity can do.
  - 2. It goes beyond whatever work occupies you.
    - a) Can we say that our purpose is merely
    - b) to work, collect a paycheck, retire, then die?
- D. We know God that put us here.
- 1. He put eternity in our hearts, because
  - 2. he himself is eternal and
    - a) he wants our minds to go to the eternal.
      - (1) While living under the sun,
      - (2) he wants our minds to go above the sun.
    - b) He wants us to contemplate what we cannot fully contemplate.
      - (1) He put the idea of eternity in our hearts, but then showed
      - (2) that no one can find out God's work from beginning to end.

#### **IV. Ecclesiastes 3.12–13 • What We Know**

**12 I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, 13 and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.**

- A. Yes, consider eternity, but
- 1. do not let that excuse you from living life
  - 2. to the fullest on the earth.
    - a) Rejoice and do good things on earth.
    - b) Eat, drink, and enjoy good that all your labor brings to you.
- B. God gives that to us.

1. Solomon made us look at God and eternity
2. by using what we do on earth.
  - a) Our awesome capabilities make us think that we have been created.
  - b) He obviously wants us to enjoy life.

**Exhortation:**

**I. Solomon said in 3.11 that God, “has made everything beautiful in its time.”**

- A. Yet, some of the things the preacher/king listed in verses 1–8
- B. were times of suffering.

1. How can those times be beautiful?
  - a) The downside of life can produce beautiful things in us.
  - b) He will address that more later in chapter 7.
2. However, think on the words of Isaiah and Paul,
  - a) Isaiah 61.3

**3     “To console those who mourn in Zion,  
To give them beauty for ashes,  
The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
That they may be called trees of righteousness,  
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”**

- b) Romans 8.28

**28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**

- C. Even as

1. the seed does not compare to the flower in beauty and as
2. the caterpillar does not match up to the butterfly,
  - a) so God works in us through the negatives of life
  - b) to create something beautiful in us.

3. We do not currently compare to what we shall be.

**18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

**– Romans 8.18**

## **II. Life goes from one extreme to another.**

- A. Do not despair because you cannot see the purpose for all that happens.
- B. God, not the government, the weather, or other powerful forces, controls all.
  1. Even as the wonders of summer end,
    - a) we know we have to have autumn, winter, and spring,
    - b) before we experience summer again,
  2. so are all the cycles of life.

## **III. Just make sure that you and God know one another.**