

Eternal PERSPECTIVE *Ecclesiastes*

BIBLE TEXT | ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up 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 together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

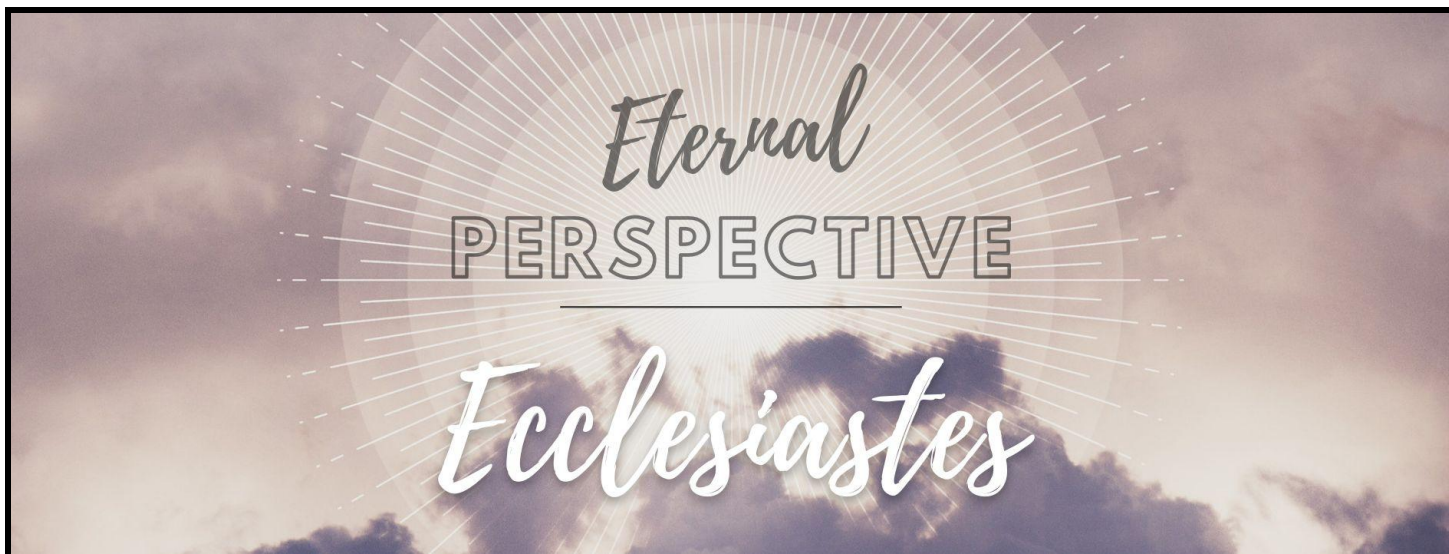
7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace

DEVOTIONAL FOR ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8

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"Turn! Turn! Turn!", also known as or subtitled, "To Everything There Is a Season", is a song written by Peter Seeger in 1959. The lyrics – except for the title, which is repeated throughout the song, and the final two lines – consist of the first eight verses of chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes. The song became an international hit in 1965 when the folk group, the Byrds, released it. The song is one of few in the history of popular music in which a large part is from the Bible. Seeger only wrote six words of the song and the rest were from Ecclesiastes 3.



The song was recorded in several languages and played all over the world. It was intended to be a plea for world peace but most who listened to it had no idea the lyrics were from the Bible. What is even crazier to me is that it went on to be published in an illustrated book. Also, Seeger's handwritten lyrics to the song were among documents donated to New York University by the Communist Party USA in March of 2007.

By now, you are probably wondering why I have included this in my devotional. Well, during my study of this small piece of God's Word, I thought about the bigger picture of God's sovereignty in how He uses all things and all people to spread His Word throughout the world. These verses were written by Solomon during a time of reflection in his life of all he had seen and done. It reminds us of the various seasons of our own lives, that some are good, joyful, and pleasing while others are bad, painful, and very difficult.

But through everything, God is sovereign and uses all of it for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28). God was sovereign when He liberated the Israelites from Egypt (Exodus 7-12). We see His sovereignty in Proverbs 21:1: "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will." We see it in Proverbs 22:28: "For kingship belongs to the Lord; and he rules over the nations." We see it all throughout the book of Jonah, as well as in Matthew 10:29-30, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered." In all of this, God is not just sovereign over the results, but also over every aspect of the process.

With that all said, I find great comfort in Proverbs 16:9, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps," and in Ecclesiastes 2:24, "There is nothing better for a person that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God."

Questions:

1. What season of life are you in and can you see God working? Where do you turn when life is not going the way you think it should?
2. Do you find enjoyment in all the little things in your life?
3. If you are going through a really hard time in your life right now and do not have anyone to talk to, please reach out to pastoralstaff@stonepointchurch.com.