

## **“How To Use Well The Gift of Time”**

**January 31, 2006 \* Ecclesiastes 3**

### **I. Lessons from King Solomon**

**A. What do we know about Solomon?**

**Started his reign well, asking God for wisdom to govern but later on he compromised his faith with serious backsliding. After he recovered and “found his way back home”, he wrote Ecclesiastes to share the lessons he learned.**

**B. Why is listening to this wise man a wise thing to do?**

**Rather than duplicate all the mistakes he made, we can read his warnings and avoid the potholes he fell into. Solomon wants to steer us clear of living a ruined, wasted life.**

### **II. 4 Truths About Using Time Well**

**Truth 1 – Remember that life is a gift from God.**

**A. Why are we here?**

**Only because of God’s sovereign will.**

**B. Why is it important to know this?**

**Because it keeps us from losing our way in life. The “path to life” is narrow, and like any narrow trail, it is easy to fall off one side or the other.**

**C. People who forget life is God’s gift to us fall into one of two errors:**

**Arrogance or Despair**

**Truth 2 – Remember that life is a trust.**

**A. When you are given something in trust, what is assumed?**

**That you will take care of it, and when it comes to giving it back to its rightful owner, it will be better off than when it was first given us.**

**B. What does God give us to put to use?**

**A certain amount of time, and the raw materials of our bodies and minds and talents.**

**C. How Bill Murray is like King Solomon:**

**In the movie “Groundhog Day”, Murray gets stuck reliving the same day over and over. So he uses the time to experiment with different approaches to life, hoping find meaning somewhere. But he ultimately ends in despair until he learns how to love.**

**D. If I’m stuck in life, what should I remember?**

**That life is a trust given to me by God. And that I can’t stuff other things inside my heart expecting to find happiness when only God will do.**

**Truth #3 – Remember that life comes in seasons.**

**A. What is a season?**

**It’s a period of time characterized by particular circumstances, opportunities and limitations.**

**B. Another thing to keep in mind about seasons:**

**Seasons can be predicted and prepared for.**

**C. Lessons from Thomas Cole’s famous paintings, ‘The Voyage of Life’:**

**1. Childhood**

**2. Youth**

**3. Manhood**

**4. Old Age**

**Truth #4 – Remember that earthly life is short, but spiritual life is eternal.**

*A. What are we to “fix our eyes” on?*

**“For we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen.” (2 Cor.4:17)**

*B. Why do some only fix their eyes on this life?*

**Because we never see eternity – all we ever see, hear, taste and touch is this life.**

*C. What happens though when we fix our eyes only on eternity?*

**We can’t be so “heavenly minded that we’re no earthly good” either. When my daughter was ten I made a momentous decision to put limits on my work hours at church so that she wouldn’t grow up despising God and the church. It’s a good thing I did too, because those years flew by – and now that she is 20 and in college, I can be glad for making that choice.**

*D. Though these years on earth are short, they are momentous, they echo in eternity.*

**What do I need to give more thought to today?**