Introduction: Every day we are bombarded with advertisements telling us how to have success and happiness.
  o We are always on the search for the better life.
  o How do we break the monotony of life?
  o That is the question we will find answered in Ecclesiastes 3.

* Solomon is looking at life “under the sun,” and he concludes that it is all “vanity.” (1:1-3)
  o He gives us four reasons:
    1) The monotony of life
    2) The vanity of man’s wisdom
    3) The emptiness of worldly pleasure
    4) The certainty of death

* He now takes a closer look at the monotony of life and discovers three factors God uses to keep our lives from becoming monotonous and meaningless.

I. God is in Control of the Times and Seasons of our Lives (v.v. 1-8)

* (v. 1) Solomon saw that there is an appropriate time and season for all of life’s experiences.
  o Sadly, many live by the philosophy of “fatalism” or “pessimism.”
  o G. Campbell Morgan - “It is only when the soul looks out upon circumstances from the standpoint of fellowship with God and knowledge of Him, that it can be optimistic.”
  o Don’t try to understand God by your circumstances; understand your circumstances by God!

* (v.v. 2-8) There are fourteen contrasting times and seasons of life.

1) The Bible teaches the providence of God.
   a. Not “fate” but “faith” in God’s love and care.
   b. Matthew 6
2) Psalm 139:16- “Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your Book before one of them came to be.”
3) The key is seeing God in every season of life!
a. Illustration- Job 1:21- “And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed by the name of the LORD.”

4) God knows the way that you take.
   a. Remember, God’s plan is perfect!
   b. It’s not what we planned, but our Father knows best.

* The Divine Weaver-
   My life is but a weaving between the Lord and me;
   I cannot choose the colours He worketh steadily.
   Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow
   And I in foolish pride,
   Forget that He seeth the upper,
   And I the under side.
   Not till the loom is silent
   And the shuttles cease to fly,
   Shall God unroll the canvas
   And explain the reason why.
   The dark threads are as needful
   In the Weaver’s skillful hand,
   As the threads of gold and silver
   In the pattern He has planned.

II. God Has Put Eternity in our Hearts (v.v. 9-14)

* (v. 9) Solomon repeated the same question he opened with in Ecclesiastes 1:3- “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?”
  o He’s asking again in Ecclesiastes 3:9- “What’s the use?” “Is life really worth it?”
  o The problem (v. 10) “Life is hard”
  o Yes, life can be hard, but note three things to remember:
    1) Your life is a gift from God (v. 10)
       a. If we accept life as a gift and thank God for it, we will better handle the burdens that come our way. But, if we grudgingly turn from God, we will miss the gracious gifts God wants us to enjoy.
       b. Illustration- Acts 16- Paul and Silas- Songs in the night
       c. Philippians 4:4- “Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, rejoice…”
    2) God has put eternity in your heart (v. 11)
       a. (v.11) “God makes everything beautiful in His time”
          i. Illustration- Romans 8:28
       b. We (humans) were made for God (v. 11)
          i. (v. 11) “He has put eternity into man’s heart”
ii. We are greater than the mundane and temporal.

iii. Illustration- Jesus said in Matthew 4:4- “Man shall not live by bread alone…”

iv. There is a “beyond” in all of us.

3) God brings joy to life now! (v.v. 12-14)
   a. G.K. Chesterton’s Orthodoxy- “He talks about this thing we call joy in knowing Christ. He points out that for the Christian, joy is central and sorrow is peripheral. That is because life’s fundamental questions are answered and only the peripheral ones are not. But for the one who does not know Christ, sorrow is central and joy is peripheral, because the peripheral questions may be answered but the fundamental ones are not.”
   b. (v.12) “rejoice”
   c. (v. 12) “do good”
   d. (v. 13) “enjoy life”
   e. (v. 14) “fear God”
   f. Acts 16
   g. Philippians 4:4

III. God Will Judge All Men (v.v. 15-22)

1) He saw the “injustice” (v. 16)
2) He saw that “God will right all wrongs” (v. 17)
3) He saw that “men die the same as the beasts (v.v. 18-21)
   a. Illustration- Ruth Graham- “End of construction, thank you for your patience.”

CONCLUSION

* To break the monotony of life, remember:
   1) God has a purpose and plan for your life.
   2) Had made you for eternity.
   3) God will bring you to judgment.
   a. (v. 11) “God will make everything beautiful in His time”