



HOW TO FACE A NEW YEAR

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

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Stuart Briscoe

The end of a year and the beginning of a new year confront us with the passage of time. We know time is limited and we know it is a gift, but we do not always know what to do with it. Ecclesiastes explores this issue.

I. Expressing Pessimism and Meaninglessness.

- A. The writer looks for life's meaning in the world of his day.
 - 1. Pessimism.
 - 2. "Meaningless! Meaningless!" *Ecclesiastes 1:2*
- B. He explores and experiences life to its full.
 - 1. Nature. *Ecclesiastes 1:4-8*
 - 2. History. *Ecclesiastes 1:9-11*
 - 3. Philosophy. *Ecclesiastes 1:12-18*
 - 4. Wealth. *Ecclesiastes 2:1-11*
 - 5. Religion. *Ecclesiastes 2:12-23*

II. Realizing the God Factor

- A. He is not totally disillusioned with life.
- B. There is the God factor to consider. *Ecclesiastes 2:24-26*
- C. But why did God lay such "a heavy burden on men"? *Ecclesiastes 1:13*
- D. He didn't! *Ecclesiastes 7:29; Genesis 2:9; 3:1-4*

III. Embracing Our Times and Seasons

- A. "He has made everything beautiful in its time." *Ecclesiastes 3:11*
- B. Our "times and seasons" are from Him. *Ecclesiastes 3:1*
- C. Start with "A time to be born and a time to die?" *Ecclesiastes 3:2*
- D. Fill in the gaps with events and happenings—good, bad, and indifferent.

IV. Relating Rightly to Him. *Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*

- A. Does this mean we check out on life?
- B. Or does everything in life become an expression devotion to the Creator? *Ecclesiastes 3:12-14*
- C. It's your decision!

V. Living Life to the Full

- A. Big question: How does Ecclesiastes square with New Testament teaching?
 - 1. Frustration. *Romans 8:20*
 - 2. Emptiness "under the sun." *1 John 2:15-17*
 - 3. Redemption, renewal, and hope. *Revelation 21:1-5*
- B. An expression of the kingdom of which Jesus is the King. *Matthew 6:25-34*