

- ***Read Ecclesiastes 4:1-4*** It really doesn't matter where you look, what you spend your time looking at, or what you are listening to...the current climate of our society is saturated with issues concerning injustice or perceived injustice. My I can't go a full page on Facebook or Twitter without some post concerning the president, kneeling for the anthem, Antifa, protests, or the like. Worst of it all...sports have become overrun with political talking points. The ticker on ESPN can't scroll by without something concerning a protest of some sort. I'll be honest...it is driving me crazy. I just want to watch my sports in peace without being drowned in protests and angry people screaming at one another. Being a sports fan is already hard enough as it is for a Volunteer For Life.
 - But what is driving me more crazy is how some people who profess faith in Jesus Christ are discussing and responding to the hot button issues of the day. If my social media accounts consisted of just people of the world then I should be surprised to see so much of what I see. But sadly, what I see a lot of is disciples who are constantly posting about this issue or that issue, about this protest or that boycott. I'm not saying that we shouldn't give some thought to these issues, but what I am seeing from even Christians is post after post where angry words or poorly stated thoughts are shared and used as weapons against those whom they might disagree with. Again, I'm just really tired of what has become of our society at the moment.
 - So what can we do? What does the Bible teach us about this world, injustice, and how God's people ought to respond? We read just a minute ago from the book of the Preacher, Ecclesiastes. This book about this life under the sun has something to say about injustice as how we ought to respond to it. In the portion we just read, the Preacher acknowledges that there are some in this life who are oppressed and they have no one to comfort them. He goes on to say that the only ones who truly have it good are the dead because they don't have to experienced this oppression or injustice, and those who truly have it well off are those who never live because that is basically the only way to avoid oppression and injustice. These might be difficult words for us to understand or accept, but I hope that what we look at over the next few minutes will help us to see injustice under the sun from a more biblical and godly perspective so that we can know how it is that we ought to live in a climate such as the one we are currently in at this time.
- I. We live in an unchanging and broken world. (Ecclesiastes 1:3-10; 3:1-8)**
- A. Right off the bat at the beginning of this book, the Preacher really puts man in his place by showing that this world is really unchanging for the most part. People and generations come and go, but the basics of how this world operates continues to stay the same. The Preacher specifically mentions the natural processes of the earth in the first chapter, and how nothing man does...no work he can do will change it. *"That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun."* (Ecclesiastes 1:9) Furthermore, let me suggest that chapter three goes on to show us that life isn't just unchanging in how the earth progresses and operates from day to day and year to year, but what we experience as people continues to be the same, as well.
 - B. Notice our second reference of **3:1-8** where the Preacher brings attention to the fact that this life is not singular in regards to the human experience. No single person enjoys only good and positive things in life, but this life is also full of negative experiences that are a result of the broken nature of this world brought on by sin. Yes, we will get to enjoy times of birth, healing, dance, and laughter, but because of sin we will also experience times of death, weeping, and mourning.

- C. These are just the facts of life under the sun. Part of this life will be enjoyable, but we will also experience times of distress and heartache. The Preacher starts his writing establishing that the work of men will change nothing about these facts. Try as they might, this broken world will continue on this broken course. True happiness and blessing will not be experienced until we reach our eternal home with God in heaven.

II. Injustice is a part of life in this broken world. (Ecclesiastes 3:16,17; 4:1-4; 5:8,9)

- A. We will never experience that true joy here on earth because injustice is something that will always be present in a world that is broken and polluted by sin. As the Preacher looks out over this life under the sun, in his wisdom he takes notice that oppression, injustice, and cruelty are a staple of our existence here on earth. In three chapters in a row, we see the Preacher specifically mention the existence of these things, and he doesn't give any sort of solution to these things because like other parts of life, he seems to acknowledge that these things have existed for ages and they will continue to exist.
- B. We can go back all the way back to the beginning and see these things being present. Cain unjustly murdered his brother. The Egyptians treated their slaves with cruelty. The Jews and Gentiles hated each other simply because they were different from one another. God warned the people of Israel that having an earthly king would result in all kinds of oppression...yet they still wanted that king and brought the problems upon themselves. **(I Samuel 8:10-22)** Anytime fallible men, who have their hearts filled with greed and selfishness, are given authority...we can expect for there to be injustice and oppression to follow. All of these things have happened for thousands of years, and they continue to exist even still today.
- C. Now, let me also add that I'm not speaking these things as being present in this life as if we should just ignore them, accept them or participate in any sort of injustice or oppression of others. What I am saying is that we must recognize that evil men are going to do evil things. As long as evil men exist, there will be evil deeds, such as injustice or oppression, present in our lives. As much as we might not want to accept it because we want to have a positive outlook on life, this world will never be fully rid of evil, greed, hatred, injustice, or oppression. Heaven will never exist on this earth because their realm is ruled by Satan. He is the ruler of this world **(II Corinthians 4:4)**, and this world will always be saturated with evil. This is why we look so forward to the next life in heaven.

III. Our time is wasted when we focus so much on something that will always exist in this life. (Ecclesiastes 2:10,11)

- A. Or at least we should be looking forward to the next life in heaven...but sometimes our actions betray our words and claims. We will often say that we are truly first citizens of heaven. **(Philippians 3:20)** We will often sing with great gusto that this world is not our home. We will amen "come, Lord Jesus." However, our actions on a day to day basis will sometimes not line up with these other things at all. Instead of laying up treasures in heaven, we allow ourselves to be consumed with things of this world. We get involved in protests. We get involved in counter protests and boycotts. We spend time, energy, and effort writing out long social media posts, and we pass hours of the day by getting into arguments on social media about why this person or organization is wrong for doing this or that. We get so wrapped up in matters of this life that there is no time, energy, or effort given to greater spirituality. And at the end of all of it...what have we actually accomplished?
- B. Go back with me to chapter two and let's consider what the Preacher had done at some point in his life. He had come to the conclusion within himself that he was going to pursue pleasure and enjoyment. So he set his mind to the pursuit of these temporal things, and he did so to the extent that he excelled far beyond anyone who had come before him in Jerusalem. **(Ecclesiastes 2:9)** Yet...what was his conclusion? In his wisdom, the Preacher recognized that these pursuits were vanity, striving after wind, and there was no true profit for his efforts under the sun.

- C. While they might not be exactly equal because we would see the fight against injustice and oppression as being noble pursuits, the truth is that this is still a pursuit for something that is temporal in nature. Plus, we often go about the fight against such things in a way that shows how disconnected we are from having a true spiritual and eternal perspective. We often give our time to protests, boycotts, and arguments from the standpoint of political or patriotic mindsets, but we don't take the time to consider what spiritual implications might be involved. We can spend our entire lives giving ourselves to these things, but what good is actually accomplished if we go about things in this way? I feel confident in saying that the Preacher would say that it is vanity, striving after wind, and there is no profit under the sun. So what are we to do?

**IV. The only relief to the heartache of injustice is the to turn to God and enjoy His blessings.
(Ecclesiastes 3:11-13)**

- A. When the Preacher realized that man has very little ability to enact major change upon this life or that nothing of a temporal nature brings happiness or satisfaction, he turned to the Lord and focused on Him and taking advantage of the tremendous blessings that has blessed man with. Again, think about how helpless we can feel, and how often we find ourselves feeling as if we are wasting time in pursuit of things in this life...think about how many laws or arguments are made according to human wisdom and how little it changes anything! There must be a better way to change or have an impact on this life? There must be something we can do, right?
- B. Thankfully, there is a better way, and that better way focuses entirely on God, doing things His way, and focusing on and using His blessings and wisdom. God has set eternity in our hearts, and we must always remember and focus on things from an eternal perspective. When we do that, then we will seek to recognize that God has blessed us with the ability help truly transform the hearts of men, and it isn't done through men's wisdom or laws. Transforming the hearts of men is done only through the spread and influence of the Gospel message and the teachings of Jesus.
- C. The Preacher says that there is nothing better than to "rejoice and do good in one's lifetime." Let me ask...what can bring more rejoicing or can be more good than spreading the message of salvation through Jesus and the ability for men to be transformed to be like Jesus? I guarantee you it does more good than protesting. It does far more good than boycotts, and it sure does a whole lot more than laws put forth by government. So many people are looking for relief in a time of turmoil and distress, and I am confident that each person can find relief in Jesus, obedience to His will, and the ability to look to the future with hope because heaven is waiting for them.

In a day when society seems to be turned on its head by the rise of evil and hatred, the good people of this world might begin to lose hope because it seems as if injustice is more prevalent than ever and it just might win. While we might be surrounded by individuals who think the sky is falling, I hope that each of us will be a beacon of hope and resistance against the evil of our day through the spreading of the love of Jesus through the Gospel and the hope that is within each of us. May our faiths burn brightly within us in such a way that others are influenced to live life with joy because they know that injustice as always been present, but that we will one day be rid of it in our home in heaven with God. May He strengthen us to excel through these times as a faithful servant and soldier for His kingdom. ***PRAYER***