

# Just a Breath | Making Sense of Seasons

## Ecclesiastes 3

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### I. An Uncomfortable Question:

*That which is, already has been; that which is to be,  
already has been...*

—Ecclesiastes 3:15a

*What gain has the worker from his toil?*

—Ecclesiastes 3:9

If life is just a breath and doesn't truly satisfy, how can we make sense of its seasons?  
(verse 9)

### II. An Unsatisfactory Answer:

*For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. 20 All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.*

—Ecclesiastes 3:19-20

Life's seasons make no sense at all if you look around (verses 19-20).

### III. An Unhidden Alternative:

Life's seasons make complete sense if you look up:

1. Life's seasons are ordained by God (verse 10).

*I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.*

—Ecclesiastes 3:10

2. Life's seasons are pleasing to God (verse 11a).

*He has made everything beautiful in its time...*

—Ecclesiastes 3:11a

3. Life's seasons are preparation for eternity with God (verse 11b).

*...Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.*

—Ecclesiastes 3:11b

*...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

—Ephesians 5:25b-27

4. Life's seasons will find their ultimate resolution in God (verse 17).

*I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work.*

—Ecclesiastes 3:17

#### **IV. An Uncomplicated Decision:**

Will you look around or look up? (verses 22, 12-13)

*So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?*

—Ecclesiastes 3:22

*I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; 13 also that*

*everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God’s gift to man.*

*—Ecclesiastes 3:12-13*

*...God seeks what has been driven away*

*—Ecclesiastes 3:15b*

*For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*

*—Luke 19:10*

## **Study Questions**

1. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. What words or phrases from the passage best describe the season of life you’re in right now? What other words, if any, would you add? Prior to this week’s message, how were you feeling about the season you’re in? Has that changed, and – if so – how?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 3:18-22. What strikes you most about the perspective on life’s seasons apart from God that these verses contain? How would you reference the truth of the Gospel in responding to a friend or family member who was thinking this way? Do you ever find yourself looking around instead of up? If so, why do you think that is how do you respond?
3. Read Ecclesiastes 3:9-17. How would you describe the difference between the perspective in this passage and in verses 18-22? Which of the reasons why life’s seasons make complete sense when you look up (ordained by God, pleasing to God, eternity with God, resolution in God) do you find most encouraging and why? Which do you find hardest to embrace and why do you think that is?
4. What are some scriptures that have helped you navigate life’s most difficult seasons? If you’re with a group, take the time to look them up and read them together. Close by spending some time in prayer: (i) thank God for seasons of blessing; (ii) ask him for strength and encouragement in difficult seasons.