

God's plan part 2

Introduction

We continue with our study on Gods plan for life.

last week see discovered

Its a plan that shows that He is in control of time, of every event, that he intends to impact your heart in so many areas.

Its a plan in which brings joy as a gift to His people

Its a plan which produces the fear of God for His people.

This morning we see Gods plan includes a plan for justice, death and joy despite our difficulties in life.

Its a plan that will ultimately culminate in God's glory.

Passage

Ecclesiastes 3:15–22 ESV

¹⁵ That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

¹⁶ Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness.

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.

¹⁸ I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts.

¹⁹ 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.

²¹ Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?

²² 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?

Proposition

6 parts of Gods plan so that man would find joy in the basics despite life's wicked events

Part 1

1. God's plan has a time for every event vs 1-11
2. God's plan gives joy vs 12-13
3. God's plan produces fear vs 14

Part 2

4. God's plan has accountability vs 15-17
5. God's plan includes death to all vs 18-21
6. God's plan is joy despite ignorance of the future vs 22

4. God's plan has accountability vs 15-17

Ecclesiastes 3:15-17 ESV

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¹⁶ Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there

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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.

In vs 14 the fact that Humans cannot change what God has purposed, planned or did generates the fear of God.

God's plan includes:

- election
- death
- and judgment

These remain unchanged. When Paul just contemplated a part of that plan for his life: judgment for himself it produced fear.

| 2 Corinthians 5:10–11 (ESV)

| ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. ¹¹ Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. ...

*To **fear** God is an attitude of receptivity towards God that is learned by Gods word and actions, and which results people believing, obeying, serving, loving and clinging to God.*

¹⁵ That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been;

Vs 15 provides some concluding thoughts similar to (Ecc 1:9)

Ecclesiastes 1:9 ESV

⁹ What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

Solomon concluded that with Gods plans nothing changes

Man plans tend to change.

We are sinful beings and limited in our understanding.

That's why our plans change.

But not God's.

We see that in the way God allows his people to face trials.

If they fail the trial, God's plan does not change.

He simply brings another trial along until you finally learn the lesson, or grow in Christ likeness in that area God had planned for you.

God's plans and God's character remains unchanging.

Even though God's plans doesn't change, he holds man accountable for their plans, actions, thoughts, emotions and decisions.

Notice the next phrase

and God seeks what has been driven away.

Seeks = desire, try to get something He desires, **require**,

What does God seek, require?

What has been driven away, = be behind, follow after or to persecute, what has been passed by such as time.

God requires your passed history.

NIV states it well.

| Ecclesiastes 3:15 (NIV)

| ...and God will call the past to account.

God will judge how you acted in time.

We operate within the confines of time, but God does not.

God in a sense will call back the past as a witness in judgment.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 ESV

¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

John revealed in Revelations a 2 sets of books , recalling past actions of the unbeliever and whether their names are recorded in the book of life.

Revelation 20:11–15 ESV

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

What this reveals is that God will hold every person accountable for their works done in this world.

Romans 2:6–8 ESV

⁶ He will render to each one according to his works:

⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;

⁸ but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

But if God's plan is unchanging, God controls everything, what about all the things that go wrong, does that not contradict Gods plans.

The events that were produced as a result of the fall in Gen 3

Like:

Injustices

Wickedness

Suffering

How will God fix these things when he calls the past into account?

¹⁶ Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness.

God had instituted Human justice systems to execute justice and bring judicial relief which serves as a restrainer to sin.

But in this life often justice is replaced with wickedness

- Bribery,
- Cases being misfiled
- Mismanagement
- Corrupt judges and court employees.
- Justice is replaced with wickedness.
- Innocent condemned
- Victims further victimized.

And in this life you find righteousness(the acts of conforming to God's ethical standards) being replaced with wicked behavior.

So both justice and right behavior of people is often replaced with wickedness.

Since God governs every event(both the just and the wicked) surely He should make right what had been wrong.

The answer is yes.

Solomon inwardly reflects on the fact that God will bring every person to account, whether your wicked or righteous.

¹⁷ I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked,

Here you find hope and comfort.

Every wicked person will be judged and justice will happen.

They will be punished in accordance with their deeds and response to the gospel.

Gods plan includes a specific time to restore the effects of the fall.

Why will God judge every person.

Because there is also a time in His plan for this matter.

for there is a time for every matter and for every work.

Gods sovereignty over time, and events both good and bad and it includes a time:

- for justice
- for accountability
- for reward
- for punishment.

Application

After death every person will be judged.

Hebrews 9:27 ESV

²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,

Jesus will be your judge.

John 5:22–23 ESV

²² For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,

²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

You will be judged based upon righteousness

Acts 17:31 ESV

³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

You will be judged based upon the gospel and your conscience

Romans 2:15–16 ESV

¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

¹⁶ on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

What determines whether you are right with God ultimately is how you have responded to the gospel.

Christ death on a cross revealed Gods justice in action as he executed His own Son for the sins of the elect.

Reject God justice on the cross, and you will face justice on judgment day.

You will reap what you have sown in this life

You will get what you have been asking for

Justice

How can you change that .

Turn to Jesus Christ.

Rely upon His death and resurrection for forgiveness and salvation

As a believer, know that every injustice you faced in this life, God will ultimately bring justice.

For the suffering you experienced, God will bring comfort

For the sins you experience, God will remove sin in glory.

For every time you obeyed Him, God will reward you eternally

For the unbeliever.

Romans 2:5 ESV

⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

This brings us to the 5 point of the sermon but the 2nd point for today.

5. God's plan includes death to all vs 18-21

Ecclesiastes 3:18-21 ESV

¹⁸ I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts.

¹⁹ 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.

²¹ Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?

vs 18-20 reveals that Part of Gods plan includes death.

Whether your a human or an animal, death has an appointment with you.

Death happens when the Body and soul are separated.

Man has no advantage over animal in relation to death.

Both will die.

Both have the same fate.

The reason is provide: vs 19 , for all is vanity

Both man and beast are transient, transitional, mere vapor like, brief,

limited

Both created from dust and both return to dust.

Solomon draws his readers attention back to the consequences of the fall.

Genesis 3:19 ESV

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

But is this the end matter?

Are we simply destined to dust particles, worm food, dead rotten and forgotten?

Yes for your body,

No for your spirit.

After death the spirit of Man and the spirit of animals transitions.

²¹ Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?

Solomon asks whether there is a difference between man and animal.

He affirms that there is a difference between the two, but he struggles with His confidence about the events of the afterlife.

He struggles with the unknown ability of the after life, not its existence.

The point is yes there is a difference, but the details of that lies in the hands of God, not man.

vs 21 Is a question pointing towards God.

Who knows exactly where the spirit of man or animal goes?

Who is that person? the answer..... God

Application

The core application we need to take from this is:

You must realize, you have an appointment with death.

Are you ready for that day?

None of you here have died and come back?

Do you ever contemplate your death?

Because know this.

Hebrews 9:27 ESV

²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,

Are you ready to meet God face to face?

He determines where your spirit will go.

What will He say to you?

What would you say to Him?

When you contemplate your life, when you think about what you believe and do?

Will Jesus be your refuge or your nightmare.

Psalms 2:12 ESV

¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

We come to the last part of God's plan.

6. God's plan is joy despite ignorance of the future vs 22

Ecclesiastes 3:22 ESV

²² 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?

²² So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot.

So what should be our focus.

Solomon repeats what he had stated previously :(Ecc 2:24,3:12) find joy in your toil.

This is his lot, his fate, his share, his allotment, his portion

God's plan in life for here and now, is to give His people joy in their toil despite their limitations.

Solomon once again goes to a question on identity.

In vs 21 he asked who knows where the spirits of man and beasts go?

He repeats a 2nd question on identity

Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

This question continues to express mans limitations concerning the vagueness of the events in the afterlife as mentioned in vs 21

The grammar implies a question?

It could be rephrased

Who can cause man to see in the afterlife?

If what happens after death to your spirit is vague, who can help you to see what will happen then.

People are limited to this life alone?

Its as if Solomon goes round and round in his reasoning and continues to land at the feet of God.

So what are you left with in this life.

Finding joy in your toil from the Lord.

Essentially ch 3 reveals Gods plan is for a universe that is **ordered and well** made.

Its a universe in which **God controls the timing** of all events.

Even though God knows everything there is elements of the future God keeps to himself.

Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV

²⁹ "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

God's plan includes **joy which is a gift** from God

God's plan includes producing **the fear of the Lord** that moves them to believe and obey Him.

God's plan includes a time to hold all people accountable through judgment.

God's plan includes death for every living being.

God's plan includes joy even in toil for His people.

Application

If we reflect on the question asked

Ecclesiastes 3:9 ESV

⁹ What gain has the worker from his toil?

The answer would be joy, which comes from God as a gift for His people?

Are you one of His people?

Are you using the various means of joy?

His word, His people, His presence

How much is God a part of your schedule?

If God is a distant figure in your life, maybe today is that time to change that.

Maybe you should make those decisions to become grow in studying God's word, using the various opportunities to grow in knowing God and His will and having fellowship with God's people.

Those opportunities for biblestudy @ your homes, sign up for those

Those opportunities for discovering theology, sign up, that's for both the men and women

Those fellowship events that happen join those

Those prayer events before church, join in.

Stop making those excuses.

Ultimately we have a dependent responsibility towards God.

WE depend upon His enable ment

But we have a responsibility to trust and obey Him

Ultimately we were made to glorify Him.

Conclusion

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