



Study Guide – Ecclesiastes Session 2

Week Commencing 20th January 2019

Please read Ecclesiastes Chapters 3&4

Please read **Ecclesiastes 3.1-14; Psalm 31.14-15**

Verse 11 says, *“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no-one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end”*

1. How is this a burden to us? How does the illustration of the near-sighted person looking at the giant tapestry help illustrate our burden?
2. How might the beauty of the gift of God, given in its time and season, be overlooked as we try to fathom out what God is doing in the puzzles of life?
3. Augustine said, *“You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they can find peace in you.”* How do our answers to questions 1 and 2 help us understand how to live at peace with God in our daily ups and downs of our lives?
4. **Ecclesiastes 3.14** tells us that God's works – in season, and with enduring permanence – are done so that as people witness them, they “will fear him.” Please read also **Isaiah 55.6-9 and Proverbs 9.10**. What kind of ‘fear’ response is God looking for, and why is this response vital for us gaining a deeper wisdom?

Please read **Ecclesiastes 3.15-17; 4.1**

5. Derek Kidner asks the brutally honest and challenging question as we read this section, *“If the Teacher's gloom strikes us as excessive at this point, we may need to ask the question of ourselves, does our more cheerful outlook on the suffering of our fellow human beings spring from hope or complacency.”* What do you think?
6. In this section, why is the Teacher's realisation that God has set a time for judgement and accountability reassuring to him? Do you feel the same way?