

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Everything Beautiful In Its Time

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Looking at a leafless tree in the middle of July might cause concern. But seeing the same tree drop all its leaves in the middle of December, one might describe the scene as beautiful. It is the time for trees to not have their leaves. They are beautiful for they are in rhythm with the season. The leafless tree in July is out of sync with what is expected in the season and conjures up sadness, not beauty.

Solomon writes, “*He hath made everything beautiful in its time; also He hath set eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end*” (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We feel comfortable looking at changes if they fit our eye as the seasons come and go. But we need to look further out in life than just the four seasons and grasp and embrace the beauty of changes as God sees it.

The inspired preacher, Solomon, has just declared in the beginning of chapter 3 that there is a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to weep, and a time to laugh... a time for war, and a time for peace (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8). I immediately see beauty in birth, laughing, and peace; but is death, weeping and war something of beauty? God says, “yes,” for all

these events occur under God’s watchful providential care.

There is a beauty of relying on God’s care through the difficult times over which we have no control. We cannot control the events or our birth or death. From God’s broader perspective, they are beautiful for they are part of the seasonal change that we should acknowledge as we look beyond the more limited horizon of summer and winter. We must learn to see the beauty of not only birth, but also of death through the eyes of God who has placed both before us.

God has made everything beautiful in its time to exercise us. The exercise of war, hate, weeping, tearing down, and scattering can be difficult and exhausting. But God has placed them in the seasons of life to draw us closer to Him for we realize we have not the power to bear under them alone, as our efforts to to avoid them fail. We submit to them in travail by embracing God and seeing the beauty of that process.

Solomon says, “*I have seen the travail which God hath given the sons of men to be exercised therewith*” (Ecclesiastes 3:10). One minute one is planting a tree with great expectations, the next

minute, one is cutting it down. One minute a gardener is gently pressing seed into the ground for a beautiful floral garden; the next minute, he or she is plucking up dead flowers that have served their time. On the surface, the lack of permanent gain can be frustrating. It is like the travail of a hamster in a cage: we are running hard on our little treadmill of life, and not getting anywhere. What beauty is there in frustrating travail? The beauty lies in acknowledging our dependance upon our Creator.

God has created us with a desire that looks out further from fleeting moments of time. He has placed “eternity” in our hearts, but through experience we cannot even determine with certainty what will happen to us an hour from now, or tomorrow. Will it be a day of gathering or scattering? Or, will it be a time for embracing or refraining from embracing? We do not know. Our moment of time may be enduring the effects of a destructive hurricane that has popped up in the Gulf and headed our way. What we do know is that God is sitting in eternity, ruling over His universe. We can always embrace Him and rely on His promises to prevail, as we experience the changes. This is what makes everything beautiful in its time!