

One Day At A Time

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 March 2018

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] that portion of scripture that we read. Ecclesiastes chapter 9. And if we just read again at the beginning, verse 1. Ecclesiastes 9 at verse 1, where Solomon says, But all this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God.

Whether it is love or hate, man does not know. Both are before him. It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice.

As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath. And so on.

Now I'm sure we've all heard or we've all used the phrase, just take one day at a time.

Or take each day as it comes. And you often hear those phrases, or we use those well-known phrases, when we're confronted with the realities of life.

Whether it's dealing with an illness, or we're confronting pain, or we're experiencing loneliness, or we've been confronted with the loss of a loved one.

[1 : 22] All these realities of life, they often, they cause us to look at life differently. And they often result in us trying to deal with life, and all the sorrows of life, differently.

Because when these unexpected events take place in your life, you're often made to realize that you can't just rush through life. And that you just have to take life one day at a time.

You just have to take each day as it comes. And you have to live each day realizing that every day of your life, it's appointed by the Lord.

Every day is ordained by the Lord. All your circumstances, and all your situations, they're all under His care, and His command. And what's more, is that every day of your life, as Moses reminded us, it is numbered by the Lord.

And you have to just take one day at a time. You have to just take each day as it comes. Because everything is in the hands of the Lord. And you know, that's what Solomon is preaching about here in chapter 9.

[2 : 29] Because Ecclesiastes, as you know, it was a sermon that King Solomon preached near the end of his life. And in his sermon, Solomon is looking back over his own life, and he's preaching from experience.

He's preaching about what he learned in his life. And what Solomon learned is that life, and all that it has, he says it's all vanity.

It's all vanity if you're living your life without God. And that's how Solomon opened his sermon. He just said to us, vanity of vanities, saith the preacher. Vanity of vanities.

All is vanity. You're living your life in vain if you're living your life without God. And the thrust of Solomon's sermon is to see that your life is not about glorifying and enjoying yourself.

Your life is about glorifying and enjoying God. And Solomon says that the only way to glorify and enjoy God is to live your life with Jesus as your saviour.

[3 : 32] And when you live your life with Jesus as your saviour, you'll live with an eternal perspective. And when you have an eternal perspective on life, and when you live with that eternal perspective, you'll see that everything in life is in the hands of the Lord.

And that's what Solomon is referring to here in the opening verse of this chapter. Because he says that when he laid everything to heart, when he examined everything around him and all that he'd been through in life, when he saw everything, he said, I saw it in the hands of the Lord.

And he says that we're just to take one day at a time, we're to take each day as it comes, by living each day with an eternal perspective. He says you're to live every day knowing that the Lord is sovereign and that everything is appointed by him.

But you know, as Solomon reflects upon the fact that everything in your life is in the hands of the Lord, he speaks about things in this chapter that are relevant to everyone.

They're relevant to everyone, whatever continent we live in and whatever century we live in. Solomon says that these things are relevant to everyone. And they're relevant to us here today because what Solomon speaks about in this chapter is the reality of death, the reason for life, and the resolution for eternity.

[5 : 00] And that, without doubt, is relevant to all of us here. The reality of death, the reason for life, and the resolution for eternity. So we'll just go through this and we'll look first of all at the reality of death.

Where Solomon says in verse 2, it is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice.

As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the same event happens to all.

And in this opening section, Solomon reminds us that we're to take each day as it comes, and we're to take one day at a time, because the reality is death will come to all of us.

Now, before we accuse Solomon of being morbid or preaching this message of doom and gloom, we have to remember that Solomon is speaking about a reality. It's a sad reality.

[6 : 09] It's a painful reality. But it's a reality nonetheless. And the reality of death is something that we see and we're confronted with all the time. We're confronted with it in our homes, in our families, in our neighbourhood, in our communities, in our villages.

The reality of death is something that has been with us since the fall. And as someone once said, the world is becoming an increasingly bigger cemetery.

And we, the mourners, are just going about the streets. Death is a reality. And we've all seen it. And we've all seen what death does. We've all seen how death affects us.

How it changes our lives. How it alters our relationships. How it changes friendships. How it tears apart families. Death is a reality. It affects all of us.

And Solomon is saying, it will come to all of us. And it comes to us because the day of our death has been appointed by the Lord. That's what the writer to the Hebrews reminds us as well.

[7 : 13] It's appointed unto man once to die. And after that, the judgment. And as you know, this appointment that's in the hands of the Lord, it's an appointment that we will not miss.

We might miss our doctor's appointments and our dentist appointments and our hospital appointments. But Solomon is reminding us here, we will not miss the appointed, our appointed day of death. And what Solomon is saying is that we need to take one day at a time and just take each day as it comes because the reality is death will come to all of us.

And you know, this is what Solomon, what Moses was referring to in Psalm 90. He said, all our days, they pass on to an end. He says, all our years are just like a tale that is told.

And for some people, says Moses, they live until they're the three score and ten. Others, if they're blessed, they will live until they're four score. Some will live to the four score and ten.

But he says, the end still comes. The reality of death still hits. And so Moses goes on to say in Psalm 90, who knows the power of God?

[8 : 27] Who knows if we will see 70 or 80 or 90? Who knows if you'll even see tomorrow? Who knows what tomorrow will bring? You just need to take one day at a time and just take each day as it comes.

And like Solomon, Moses was saying that the reality of death, it should teach us to number our days and apply our hearts to wisdom. The reality of death should urge us to live our life with Jesus as our Savior.

The reality of death, it should warn you to live your life with an eternal perspective. Because when you have an eternal perspective on life, you will then see that you're on borrowed time.

When you have an eternal perspective, you'll see that you're on borrowed time. And my friend, it's because we're on borrowed time that Solomon says to us here that death will come to all of us.

Because as you know only too well, death is no respecter of persons. It doesn't ask you how old you are. Death doesn't ask you if you have a family or if you have children.

[9 : 37] Death doesn't ask you what your bank balance is. Death doesn't ask you if you're in a position of power. It doesn't ask you if you're famous. It doesn't even ask you if you're religious. My

friend, death doesn't ask you sometimes if you're ready.

Death just takes. And you know my friend, I cannot stress to you enough the reality of death and that death is an enemy. It's the last enemy. It's a fierce enemy because death is no respecter of persons.

That's what Solomon says in verse 2. It's the same for all. Since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to whom who sacrifices and whom who does not sacrifice.

Then he says in verse 3, This is an evil in all that is done under the sun so that the same event happens to all. He says death is a reality because it comes to all of us.

And you know Solomon, he doesn't say all this because he's this morbid preacher and he loves talking about things that are all doom and gloom. Solomon doesn't say this because he just wants to depress you. He's saying this because you need to see that your death is the most certain reality in your life.

[10:59] And with these words, Solomon is warning you. He's encouraging you. He's pleading with you. He's challenging you. He's challenging you to live your life with an eternal perspective by confessing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Because my friend, the reality is we're taking nothing with us. The Bible reminds us again and again, from the dust you came to the dust you shall return.

Naked you came into the world. Naked you will return thither. My friend, we only have one chance at this. We only have one shot at life.

So you have to get it right first time. And the only way to get it right is to seek the Lord with all your heart and to commit your life to Him.

And yet the problem many of you have is that you know all this. You know all this. You've seen it again and again. I don't know how many times you've stood over a grave and seen the reality of death.

[12:12] You know what I'm saying is true. You know what I'm saying concerns you. But sadly you ignore it. You put death as far away from you as possible.

And you distract yourself. You busy yourself. You fill your life with work and all these other things. But my friend, you cannot outrun death. You can't do it.

Because death is a reality. But you know I love I love Solomon's sermon because what he gives to us in the face of death is hope.

He says in verse 4 But he who is joined with all the living has hope. For a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die but the dead know nothing.

And they have no more reward for the memory of them is forgotten. And Solomon's point here is that yes the reality of death is true. But you still have hope.

[13:19] As someone who's still living you have hope. As someone who's who has breath in their lungs and a heart that beats and a mind that is conscious you still have hope.

Today you are still on mercy's ground. You have hope. And your hope today is that even though the enemy of death comes to steal, kill and destroy Jesus says I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.

My friend you have hope because even though the wages of sin is death as we said to the children the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In face of the reality of death Solomon says you have hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But my friend the question is what will you do with the offer of hope?

What do you do every week with the offer of hope? You know that death is a reality and you know that without Christ as your saviour you know that hell will be a reality.

[14:32] But today thank God you're still on mercy's ground. Thank God you've been spared until the 4th of March. Today you're still on mercy's ground.

Today today you still have hope. Today you still have the promise of eternal life by trusting in Jesus Christ. And looking at it my friend this seems like a no-brainer.

This seems so obvious to us. So don't put it off one moment longer. You come.

You come. You ask Jesus to save you. You confess him to be your Lord. You take one day at a time and take each day as it comes and walk with this Jesus as your Lord and as your saviour.

You come. Because death is a reality. But today you have hope. And so Solomon has reflected he's reflecting upon everything that is in the Lord's hands and he's considered the reality of death.

[15 : 47] But then secondly he considers the reason for life. He considers the reason for life. You look at verse 7. He says go eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a merry heart.

For God has already approved what you do. Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. Enjoy life with a wife whom you love all the days of your vain life that he has given to you under the sun.

Because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. Whatever your hand finds to do do it with your might. For there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in the grave to which you are going.

He talks about the reason for life. And so Solomon he's considered everything that's in the Lord's hand and he's presented to us the reality of death but then the reason for life. And what Solomon discovered was that life is a gift from God.

All the blessings which we receive in this life they are gifts from God. And they're to be enjoyed. Solomon says life is to be enjoyed. But it's to be enjoyed with the right perspective.

[16 : 57] Life is to be enjoyed by glorifying and enjoying God. Life is to be enjoyed by living with Jesus as your saviour. Life is to be enjoyed by living with an eternal perspective.

By looking to the Lord. Being thankful to the Lord for all that he has given to you. But you know the point that I believe that Solomon is making is that life is to be enjoyed one day at a time.

Life is to be enjoyed by just taking each day as it comes. Because we can often find life difficult or we can find life hard to deal with when our plans don't happen.

When things don't go according to our plan. And of course there's nothing wrong with making plans. There's nothing wrong with looking to the future. So long as it's done with the right perspective.

An eternal perspective. And you know the Apostle James in the New Testament he reminds us about living one day at a time with an eternal perspective.

[18 : 00] He says you who say today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit. Then he says but you do not know what tomorrow will bring.

What is your life? Your life is a vapour that appears for a little while and vanishes. Therefore instead he says you ought to say if the Lord wills we will do this or that.

And James' point is that we're to acknowledge the hand of the Lord in our lives and we're to acknowledge that our lives are in the hand of the Lord every day.

Because we don't know what tomorrow will bring. And we're to see that every day is appointed by the Lord. And what happens throughout our day it's all appointed by the Lord.

It's all in the Lord's hand. And so we're to take just one day at a time by committing ourselves into the hands of the Lord. And you know that's why it's always good to begin your day by reading the Bible and praying.

[19 : 05] It's good to begin the day by maybe reading a little bit of God's word and then committing yourself into the hands of the Lord by prayer. And we should just take one day at a time walking with the Lord looking to him for help and guidance.

And as we said of course it's not wrong to plan or to make plans so long as these plans are committed into the hands and into the will of the Lord. And you know with this we can see that Solomon is reminding us that we have a reason for life because life is to be enjoyed and it's to be enjoyed one day at a time.

Life is to be enjoyed just taking each day as it comes by looking to the Lord and being thankful to the Lord for all that he's given to you. And that's what Solomon says in verse 7 he says go eat your bread with joy drink your wine with a merry heart for God has already approved what you do.

Then he says in verse 8 let your garments be always white let not oil be lacking on your head. And you know what Solomon is saying is that we're to enjoy the gifts that God has given to us.

We're to enjoy these blessings of food and drink and be thankful for them we're to acknowledge the Lord and all these things that come from his hand because eating and drinking that's they're symbols that are used throughout the Bible to indicate the abundance of blessing that comes from the Lord's hand.

[20 : 31] But then Solomon says in verse 8 he says let your garments be always white. Now his point isn't a spiritual one he's not talking about the danger of spoiling your garments by the world although that will be true.

What Solomon is saying is that you have no reason to dress in a filthy manner and be unkempt and unclean because the Lord has provided clothing for you.

He's given you an abundance of blessings. He's given you food and drink and clothing. Everything has come from his hand and you have so much says Solomon that you should not let oil be lacking on your head.

and the symbol of oil on the head we're familiar with it because it's mentioned in Psalm 23 my head thou dost with oil anoint and my cup overflows.

And what we have to see is that anointing the head with oil was a symbol of blessing a symbol of wealth and David even confessed in Psalm 23 that his head was continually anointed by the good shepherd because David had received from the hand of the good shepherd in abundance.

[21 : 42] And so anointing the head with oil it's a symbol of blessing it's a symbol of wealth and that's what Solomon is saying here let not oil be lacking on your head. And his point is that we're to see everything see everything that you have as from the hand of the Lord acknowledge him for your provisions acknowledge the Lord for your home acknowledge him for your wealth for your car your job your pension your fridge and your cupboards that are full acknowledge the Lord for it all because he has given it to you it's from his hand and then Solomon he makes it all very personal he says in verse 9 enjoy life with a wife whom you love and of course Solomon doesn't mean that you can only enjoy life if you're married but what he is saying is that you should be thankful for your wife you should be thankful for the helpmate that the Lord has given to you just like he gave

Adam a helpmate in the person of Eve she was a gift she's a gift from God that's what Solomon is saying you know the truth is dare I say it we can often take our wives for granted we can fail to acknowledge them as we should and yet Solomon reminds us here enjoy life with a wife whom you love enjoy every day as it comes with a wife whom you love take one day at a time and enjoy it with a wife whom you love and Solomon is saying here enjoy your wife be thankful for her acknowledge her love her look after her take care of her she's a gift to you she's from the very hand of God himself but the same is also true for wives you have to enjoy your husband you have to love your husband you have to be thankful for your husband but my friend the reason Solomon raises this point of enjoying life with your spouse and enjoying all these blessings of food and drink and clothing and wealth and enjoying your spouse the point he makes about the spouse is that he's reminding us here we're to enjoy life with our spouse one day at a time because they will not always be there they will not always be there enjoy life with your spouse just taking each day as it comes because they will not always be there you know our vows to our spouse they are vows in which God has joined us together and we're to let no other party separate us what God hath joined together let no man put asunder

God has joined us together with our spouse therefore it's only God who has the right to separate us he has the right to separate us from our spouse and you know I always find it so solemn presenting vows to a couple on their wedding day it's until God shall separate us by death God has joined us together and he will separate us by death and you know this is what Solomon reminds us in verse 10 he says whatever your hand finds to do do it with your might for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in the grave to which you are going and Solomon says he says all this to remind us that everything you have in life it's from the Lord's hand your food your drink your clothing your wealth your home your car your health your wife your children your husband everything you have is from the hand of the Lord therefore you're to enjoy life and you're to enjoy all its blessings but you're to enjoy life with the right perspective with an eternal perspective you're to enjoy life by glorifying and enjoying

God you're to enjoy life living every day of your life with Jesus as your saviour by and then by looking to the Lord and being thankful to the Lord for all that he's given to you we're to take one day at a time just looking to the Lord and being thankful to the Lord because as Solomon says at the end of verse 10 we're all going to the grave we're to enjoy life while we're here because we're all heading towards eternity and that brings us to consider lastly the resolution for eternity Solomon is reflecting upon everything that is from the Lord's hand and he's considered the reality of death the reason for life but then lastly and more briefly Solomon considers the resolution for eternity the resolution for eternity he says in verse 11 again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong nor bread to the wise nor riches to the intelligent nor favour to those with knowledge but time and chance happen to them all for man does not know his time like fish that are taken in an evil net and like birds that are caught in a snare so the children of man are snared at an

evil time when it suddenly falls upon them and so as Solomon has considered that everything is in the

the Lord's hand he reminds you in these verses that there's nothing in this life that will stop you leaving the scene of time and entering eternity because as Solomon says it doesn't matter how fast you are it doesn't matter how strong you are it doesn't matter how rich you are it doesn't matter how wise you are it doesn't matter how knowledgeable you are he says there is nothing and there is no one that will stop you leaving the scene of time and entering eternity because as Solomon has already said at the beginning of the chapter death will come to all of us therefore you should enjoy life take each day as it comes by living your life with this eternal perspective because you just don't know when you will leave the scene of time and enter eternity and this is what Solomon says time and chance happen to all and with this Solomon he's just stating the obvious but it's something we often overlook something we forget something we just ignore that we're creatures of time we're governed by time we're limited by time your life is only for a time it's not forever there's a time limit and if there's a time limit there will be a cut off point and my friend do I need to remind you today your time is running out your time is running out and there will come a point in your life when your time finally runs out and everything you've ever known in this life it will come to an end and you will enter the great eternity but where you will spend eternity either in heaven or in hell that all depends upon what you do in time it depends upon what you do in time time and chance he says happen to us all time limits us but chance or you could say providence our providence the things that happen in our lives all the seasons of our life he says they're all in the hands of the lord and that's what Solomon is saying your times are in the lord's hand and so is your life you don't know what tomorrow will bring therefore you need to take one day at a time trusting in

[29 : 51] Jesus as your saviour for time and for eternity because you just don't know when your time will come to an end and that's what Solomon says in verse 12 for man does not know his time like fish that are taken in an evil net and like birds that are caught in a snare so the children of man are snared at an evil time when it suddenly falls upon them you just don't know when your time will come you don't know where you are in the queue for eternity you don't know when you'll be taken out of the scene of time and into eternity to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account and you know Solomon is reminding you today that your life could be like the fish the fish that's just swimming along enjoying life but then the fish is suddenly caught in the net plucked out of the scene of time into eternity or he says your life could be like the bird the bird that's free flying in the air doing as it pleases going to wherever it wants to go then suddenly the snare catches it pulls it from the scene of time into eternity and what

Solomon is saying is that your death could be so quick and so sudden that you're not expecting it and you're not even prepared for it and without a moment's notice he says you could be snatched out of the scene of time and taken into eternity my friend not everybody has a deathbed conversion there's only one experience of it in the bible and it's the thief on the cross that means these events are few and far between so don't wait until your deathbed before you commit your life to the lord you have to be ready at a moment's notice where you might be taken out of the scene of time and into eternity oh my friend to be ready to be ready when death calls and judgment comes my friend is it not obvious to you that if you don't know what tomorrow will bring and if your days and your times are in lord's hand then you shouldn't wait one moment longer as a stranger to grace and to god because you just don't know we just don't know if we'll be here next week you just don't know when death will leave you and judgment will find you and eternity will hold you the seasons of your life are unpredictable you don't know what's around the corner we say it all the time we don't know what the future holds but Solomon is reminding us today we know the one who holds the future and everything is in his hands and his point is that you should resolve today to seek the lord and prepare for eternity because that's the way you can the only way you can truly enjoy life the only way to truly enjoy life is to have peace in your heart and to have

Jesus as your savior and to live each day as it comes each day that the lord grants you to live it with an eternal perspective my unconverted friend please listen to me please listen take Solomon's advice and take it to heart because he has presented to you this morning the reality of death he has presented to you the reason for life and he's presented to you a resolution for eternity and that resolution it's crucial it's absolutely crucial because seeking the lord with all your heart confessing Jesus as your lord and savior and committing your life to him that resolution it's the difference between eternal life and eternal death it's the difference between eternal peace and eternal

punishment it's a difference between eternal delight and eternal damnation it's a difference between an eternity in heaven and an eternity in hell my friend take one day at a time but take each day as it comes peace with jesus as your savior take solomon's advice the reality of death the reason for life and the resolution for eternity may the lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray oh lord our gracious god we give thanks to thee for for the great reminder that here we have no continuing city but thy word reminds us that for those in christ for those who have confessed jesus as their lord and savior we await the one that is to come a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is god and lord we plead for those who are still in desert's pathless way with no city found to rest that the lord would come that they would not wait one moment longer but that they would commit themselves to this christ who loved them and gave himself for them that they would seek the lord while he's to be found and call upon him while he is near all lord have mercy upon us we pray speak to us we ask and lord continue with us and go before us for jesus sake amen we're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of psalm 31 psalm 31 that's on page 242 psalm 31 we're singing verses 14 down to the verse 16 and how the psalmist he's reminding himself or he's confessing to the lord that his time is completely in the lord's hand he says in verse 14 but as for me o lord my trust upon thee

I did lay and I to thee thou art my god did confidently say my times are holy in thine hand do thou deliver me from their hands that mine enemies and persecutors be thy countenance to shine do thou upon thy servant make unto me give salvation for thy great mercy's sake we'll sing these verses in conclusion of psalm 31 to god's praise but as for me o lord my trust upon me I did lay and I to thee thou art my god did confident every same my times are holy in thine hand taking han who do will hoping it hank o'er

I countenance to shine to Thee upon Thy servant maid.

[39 : 07] And to begin salvation for Thy great mercy stay.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.