

CONCLUSION

In Jeremiah 29:11, the goodness and sovereignty of God converge in beautiful encouragement, “‘For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ saith the Lord, ‘Thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected [or hopeful] end.’” So, while life may elude us, the future evade us, and our plans reap the consequences, we have the confidence of knowing that our God is good and sovereign, and we can rest in that assurance.

Book:	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>
Series:	<i>Two Ways to Live: Under the Sun or In the Fear of God</i>
Lesson 5:	<i>The Futility of Life, Part 4</i>
Text:	Ecclesiastes 3:1-15
Date:	Sunday, February 10, 2013
Next Lesson:	Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16

INTRODUCTION

In Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, life was portrayed as a repetitious and pointless cycle. In 3:1-8, life is pictured as an endless back-and-forth of activity. Derek Kidner meditates on these verses and concludes that it presents humanity as “dancing to a tune, but not of our own making.” These verses deal with our perception of and planning for the future, and remind us that even our best planning may go haywire, because we may not pick the “right time.” And so it is that our perception of and planning for the future further substantiates that **life merely lived “under the sun” is futile**. But, that’s not the only way to live. This passage, like our discussion on labor in 2:18-26, guides us out of the one worldview and into the other. We will be confronted with the elusiveness of life, but we can follow the guidance of this passage to avoid pointlessness and discover peace, even as we plan. This text guides us via three progressive reflections.

EVERY ACTIVITY HAS AN _____ TIME (vv. 1-8).

1. *The timing can seem _____.*

2. *The timing can seem _____.*

3. *The timing can seem* _____.

4. *The timing can seem* _____.

THAT APPOINTED TIME _____ US (vv. 9-11).

1. *Our plans are* _____ (vv. 9-10).

2. *God's plans are* _____ (v. 11a).

3. *God's plans are* _____ (v. 11b).

Application:

THIS TENSION IS SOLVED BY _____ (vv. 12-15).

1. *Trust God's* _____ (vv. 12-13).

a. *By heartily* _____ *God's will* (v. 12)

b. *By gratefully* _____ *God's gifts* (v. 13)

Application:

2. *Trust God's* _____ (vv. 14-15).

a. *God's sovereignty is* _____ (v. 14a).

a. *God's sovereignty is* _____ (v. 14b).

a. *God's sovereignty is* _____ (vv. 14c-15).

Application: