

Ecclesiastes 2:18 - 3:15

Discourse I:

Wisdom, Folly, and Labor

Part B: “Labor Is Emptiness”

Study by Jason Labonte

I. Review

A. Theme: Life under the sun is emptiness.

B. Discourse I: Part A: Wisdom is better than folly, but both are emptiness.

II. The Discourse Continued

A. Koheleth’s Despair (2:18-21)

1. The fruit of one’s labor is only temporary.
2. Both the wise and the foolish must leave their possessions and works behind to others.

B. Question: What is the profit of labor? (2:22-23)

C. Answer: (2:24-26)

1. We must seek to find good in our labor.
2. We cannot do this without God.

D. Time and Labor

1. A List of Opposites (3:1-8)
2. Question Restated: What is the profit of labor? (3:9)
3. Answer Restated: (3:10-13)
 - i. Every task (in 2-8) is made beautiful/good by God in its appropriate time...
 - ii. ...Which may only be understandable from an eternal perspective.
 - iii. Therefore, we must...
 - a. ...Rejoice in this gift,...
 - b. ...Do good, and...
 - c. ...Look for the good of what we do.
4. God’s works, however, are eternal, unchangeable, and good. (3:14-15)

III. Application & Discussion

- A. Is Koheleth just being selfish in 2:18-23? Or is life truly unfair (“a great evil” in v. 21)?**
- B. How can we apply 2:24 to our own works? What does it mean to see good in our labor?**
- C. What is 2:26 saying? Are sinners meant to work to bring blessings to the righteous?**
- D. Do we have an eternal perspective on life?**
- E. Do we see ourselves as tools of God’s works? Do we rejoice in this?**