

**Sermon Discussion Questions: May 3, 2026**  
**What Time Is It?**  
**Beyond Vanity: Finding a Solid Purpose in Life (series)**

**Call to Worship: Psalm 31:14-19**

1. Compare this portion of Psalm 31 to Ecclesiastes 3. What wisdom was David successful in passing on to Solomon?
2. Does Psalm 31:19 contradict Ecclesiastes 3:16? Support your answer scripturally.

**Sermon: Ecclesiastes 3**

1. Your friend Bertha the Buddhist would enthusiastically embrace verses 1-8. “Yes!”, she would exclaim, “Wisdom consists of accepting the ebb and flow of life, immersing oneself in the eternal now, holding no regret over the past, and desiring nothing of the future.” How would you respond to her?
2. Pastor Paul encouraged us to try and determine the season of life in which we are in. How might we do that?
3. If we recognize that we are in a season of life that includes a significant amount of suffering, what should be our mindset?
4. The ESV translates the Hebrew word “hebel” as “vanity”. Other translations include: Breath, smoke, evanescent, ephemeral, fleeting, vapor, mist, meaninglessness, elusive, and absurd. State the word you believe best expresses “hebel”, and why you like it.
5. Plato would have loved Pastor Paul's analogy of a man trying to make sense of a movie while viewing the movie through a keyhole. Plato used a similar analogy of people living in a cave, and endeavoring to make sense of life outside while seeing only shadows. Plato's point was the intellectual and emotional difficulty of pursuing knowledge. What was Pastor Paul's point?
6. List two reasons, provided in the sermon, that God leaves us “in the dark”, so to speak, about how day-to-day experiences fit into His divine plan.
7. What evidence do you see in the world at large that God has placed eternity in our hearts?
8. What characteristics do we share with the rest of the animal kingdom, and in what ways do we differ?

9. People of many religious persuasions ache over social injustice, such as the exploitation and abuse of the powerless. What solace does this chapter offer?
10. The question presented in verse 21 is answered clearly in the New Testament. But where is it addressed in the Old Testament?
11. AI Question (🗣️): How can I practice wisdom in choosing what is appropriate “for this time”?

**Prayer Points:**

- Confess your frustration when life doesn’t move at your pace, and ask for the grace to accept the “appointed seasons”.
- Thank God for placing “eternity in our hearts,” which would drive us away from the shadows of this world and toward a deeper dependence on the Jesus Christ.
- Ask for the wisdom to stop striving for the “whole” that you cannot see, and instead receive your daily food, your relationships, and your work as gifts from God’s good hand.