

## Time and Chance Part 2

### **Ecclesiastes 9:11-12, 1 Kings 11:1, Psalms 20:7, Ecclesiastes 12:1-13, Ephesians 2:12-13**

Do you ever find yourself having a tough morning...that becomes a tough day...that becomes a tough week? During times like these, the old adage seems to hold true: when it rains, it pours. Not only were you passed up for that promotion you've been counting on for months, but your car finally gave out on the way to the kids' football game. When life seems to conspire against you, it's easy to grow pessimistic—even cynical.

Even King Solomon of the Old Testament struggled with the same hopeless mindset we often slip into today. He exclaimed that negative circumstances catch people "like fish in a net or birds in a trap." Much like we often do, Solomon accepted negative instances as inevitabilities about which he could do nothing.

But that's not the attitude God wants his people to have! God didn't orchestrate creation and give us life just so we could know what it feels like to be powerless, pessimistic, and utterly miserable. Sure, tough times are inevitable and bad things can happen. But God has equipped us with grace for the journey. And when we begin to view grace not only as forgiveness but also as a source of power, we start seeing boundaries as markers of expansion instead of limitation. Destiny becomes Christ-appointed purpose and direction, not some unavoidable fatalistic abstract.

Offering a new spin on Solomon's perspective, Charles Spurgeon wrote, "As a bird cannot exhaust the air in the sky, nor a fish exhaust the water in the sea, neither can we exhaust the grace of God." There's too much air for one bird to fly. There's too much water for one fish to swim. There's too much grace—meaning opportunities, miracles, growth—for a single individual to exhaust.

So what are we to do when tough days, weeks, even months come along? We trust that God will fulfil his promise and turn our troubles into hope. We remember that God is good, even when life is hard. We choose to believe that God's plan for us is more than being netted fish or trapped birds.

### ***Church Highlights***

- Ps Bobbie's Book "The Sisterhood"
- Upcoming 30<sup>th</sup> Hillsong Conference
- Global Colour Your World Conferences

### ***Pray Together***

- Salvations - that people come to know Jesus.
- For Ps Brian and the Team on the "Outcry" Worship tour of USA
- For Ps Bobbie and the global Colour conferences

### ***Nation Builders***

We can make a difference as a connect group by praying for the Nation Builders causes we support and by giving together. Our offering extends the reach of our church locally to reach and influence the world for Jesus.

## Time and Chance Part 2

### **Connection and Action**

*Questions to promote conversation and connection*

#### **Optimist or Pessimist**

- Q Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist?
- Q How does being optimistic or pessimistic affect a person's life?
- Q What's the difference between optimism and faith & hope?

#### **Challenges and Opportunity**

- Q When faced with challenges and difficulty, what things does the Bible encourage us to do to see change?
- Q Like King Solomon, a person of faith can get disillusioned, cynical or sceptical. How do you guard against these attitudes in your daily life as a Christian?

#### **Hope and Grace**

- Q Why is hope such an important thing? What does hope achieve in our lives? How does it affect how we think and feel?
- Q What can we do to cultivate and remain full of hope, even during difficult times?

### **Bible and Belief**

*Questions to help believers develop a biblical world view*

#### **Read Ecclesiastes 9:11-12**

- Q What kind of thinking is framing the author's outlook in this passage?
- Q What can happen to our outlook on life if our thinking and response stops here?
- Q What positive steps can we take to counteract this kind of thinking in our daily lives?

#### **Read Acts 17:22-28**

- Q What does this passage show us about the control God exercises on humanity and his creation?
- Q How can knowing this bring us comfort when we are going through tough times of fear or hopelessness?
- Q From vs 27, what is your understanding of the nearness of God?
- Q What does it mean when it says "In him we live and move and have our being"?

### **Growing Leadership**

*Questions to help people grow as leaders*

#### **Leaders in Hope**

- Q As leaders, we encounter lots of negative things and difficult times. How do you guard against cynicism and pessimism, and remain full of hope?

#### **Leading in Challenging Times**

- Q What negative impact can a difficult time have on a team or group?
- Q What positive impact can a difficult time have on a team?
- Q How do we lead your group or team through such a difficult situation or challenging season?
- Q What qualities do you need as a leader to do this?

#### **A Leader's Legacy**

- Q Ps Brian said: "I want my ceilings to be the next generation's floor" What does he mean by this?
- Q Are there ways you can put this into practice in your sphere of influence?

### **Pastoral Care**

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people through life's challenges
- With their permission, should anyone in your connect group experience sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, or surgeries, please contact our church office: Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500, Newcastle 02 4927 1888, Darwin 08 8932 3280