

NCFI
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF CHRISTIAN NURSING



Trusting in God's Sovereignty
In the Life and Work of Nursing
/Midwifery

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Trusting in God's sovereignty in the Life and Work of Nursing /Midwifery.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 (NIV and KJV 1960)

Addressed to: Christian Nurses and Midwives worldwide.

Objective:

Recognizing God's sovereignty over every moment and circumstance of life, learning to trust in His absolute control even in the complexity and emotional exhaustion of the professional practice of nursing. This study seeks to guide Christian nurses and midwives toward renewed purpose, resting in the certainty that God orders all times for His glory and our good.

For Participants:

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1. Introduction and context

- Presentation of the book of Ecclesiastes and its relevance to life and profession.
- Relationship between the times described in Ecclesiastes 3 and the daily reality of nursing and midwifery.

2. Reflection on the times of life

- List of the 14 dual situations in life.
- Identify what personal/professional "time" each participant is in.

3. The question of meaning: What is the benefit of striving?

- Application to emotional and professional fatigue: personal assessment of purpose and satisfaction.

4. The answer from the divine perspective

- 4.1 Work : a gift from God .
- 4.2 Vanity vs. fullness in Christ.
- 4.3 The right approach: living for the glory of God .

5. God, the sovereign of time

- Everything is beautiful in its time.
- Eternity in the human heart and the limits of our understanding.
- Joy and goodness as a gift from God.

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- Integrity, respect, unity and love in dealing with patients and colleagues.
- Small gestures of faith in the work routine.
- Eternal hope as sustenance in the most difficult moments.

7. Conclusion and final invitation

- Summary of the central message.

- Final questions for personal reflection .
- Closing prayer.

For Instructors:

1. Introduction and context

The Book of Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon in his old age, is a profound and existential reflection on the meaning of life “under the sun.” Although its tone may seem pessimistic, it is actually a liberating call to live with divine wisdom, depending entirely on God.

For those of us who work in healthcare, especially in nursing and midwifery, this message resonates deeply. Our work places us face-to-face with the entire cycle of life: from birth to death, from the celebration of recovery to the pain of loss. In a single shift, we can experience a roller coaster of emotions that leads us to ask ourselves:

- What "benefit" does my work have?
- Does my work have a true purpose?
- What place does God occupy in my professional life ?

Ecclesiastes doesn't evade these questions. On the contrary, it addresses them honestly and then leads us to the only answer that gives lasting meaning: the sovereignty of God !

2. Reflection on the times of life (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

“Everything has its time, and everything under heaven has its season” (Ecclesiastes 3:1 KJV)

In the first eight verses, Solomon poetically presents fourteen pairs of situations that reflect the dual nature of human life. Some are pleasant, others painful, but all occur within God's appointed time.

Identify the times

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and complete the missing pairs:

1. Time to be born, time to die.
2. Time to plant, time to harvest.
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____

These “times” are not random. They occur by God’s will and at the moment He ordains. In our profession, we live them intensely: one day we assist in a birth (time to be born) and the next we accompany a death (time to die). A shift may include comforting a family member (time to grieve) and celebrating a patient’s discharge (time to laugh).

Personal reflection :

Do you recognize the "time" you are living in today, both personally and professionally?

3. The question of meaning: What is the benefit of striving?

Solomon doesn't stop at mere observation. He asks an uncomfortable question that he repeats throughout the book:

“What does the worker gain from his toil?” (Ecclesiastes 3:9)

Other times the formula is like this:

- “What do people gain from toiling under the sun?” (Ecclesiastes 1:3)
- “What does a man gain from all his labor and all his worry and toil under the sun ?” (Ecclesiastes 2:22)
- “And what good did it do him to work in vain?” (Ecclesiastes 5:16)

This question strikes at the heart of anyone who works in healthcare. After an exhausting day, full of physical and emotional demands , it's natural to wonder : Is all this effort worth it? Is there a purpose that transcends the daily fatigue ?

Personal reflection:

- At the end of a busy day, how do you evaluate what you did?

- Do you feel that your work life has purpose?

Are you satisfied with the results?

4. The answer from a divine perspective

4.1 Work : a gift from God

Solomon offers a perspective that changes everything:

“There is nothing better for a man than to eat, drink, and find enjoyment in his toils.”
(Ecclesiastes 2:24)

“ And I know that it is a gift of God for a man to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all his toil .”
(Ecclesiastes 3:13)

Your work is not just a means to survive, but a gift from God. The ability to serve, to care, to alleviate pain, comes from Him.

The satisfaction you experience when you see a patient recover, when you hold the hand of someone who is scared, when you bring a new life into the world, is a gift that God puts in your heart.

“Who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

4.2 Vanity vs. Fullness in Christ

Solomon declares: “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!” (Ecclesiastes 1:2). But this “vanity” does not refer to life having no value, but that it has no meaning when lived apart from God.

Living to accumulate achievements, recognition, or even "saving lives" as an end in itself ultimately leaves a void. Jesus said it clearly:

“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world if you lose your life?” (Mark 8:36)

4.3 The right approach: living for the glory of God

The apostle Paul expresses it this way:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

It's not about what you can do, it's about what God does through you. Your vocation as a nurse or midwife becomes a ministry when you allow the fruit of the Spirit to flow in your interactions with patients, families, and colleagues.

The invitation is to be salt and light: “ Let your conversation always be pleasant and tasteful” (Colossians 4:6); “ You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven ” (Matthew 5:14,16) .

The true “gain” is not in the visible results, but in being an instrument of God in the time and

place where He has placed you.

“ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last .” (John 15:16)

“ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving . ” (Colossians 3:23-24)

5. God, the sovereign of time (Ecclesiastes 3:11-15)

This passage contains the key that transforms the entire perspective:

5.1 “God has made everything beautiful in its time” (v. 11a)

Every event, every “time” you experience — even the most painful — is within God’s sovereign plan and perfect timing.

Nothing escapes his control or his redemptive purpose.

5.2 “He put the notion of eternity into the human mind” (v. 11b)

God has placed in your heart a longing for something beyond this life.

That desire for justice, for complete healing, for endless comfort, is a sign that you were created for eternity.

5.3 “Even though man doesn’t understand...” (v. 11c)

You don't need to understand everything. Your understanding is limited, but God's wisdom is infinite.

He sees the whole picture; you see only part of it .

5.4 “Rejoice and do good while you live” (vv. 12-13)

The best thing you can do is enjoy life and do good, recognizing that even the capacity to enjoy is a gift from God. It's not hedonism; it's gratitude.

5.5 “Everything God has done will remain forever” (vv. 14-15)

Unlike our temporary works, God's plan is eternal.

He maintains the cycle of time under His sovereign control. Nothing you do in obedience to Him will be in vain.

6. Practical application for nurses and midwives

NCFI values at work

- Integrity and Respect: Each person is in a specific "time". Treat patients and colleagues with dignity, without judging their process.
- Unity and Love: Learn when to speak and when to remain silent. A colleague in a “time to cry”

needs support, not unsolicited advice.

- Equity: She advocates for fair conditions and equitable care. God is no respecter of persons.

6.2 Small gestures of faith in the daily work routine

- When washing your hands: "Lord, prepare my hands and my heart for your purpose in this time."
- When attending to a newborn: Pray silently for its life, marveling at the "time of birth".
- When consoling: Acknowledge the "time to cry" and offer support . Sometimes, remaining silent is the best ministry.
- In fatigue : Cry out to God. He will renew your strength (Isaiah 40:31).

6.3 Eternal hope as sustenance

God " will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or weeping or crying or pain..." (Revelation 21:4)

This is your anchor on the most difficult days in ICU, Oncology , Emergency Room , Ward, Maternity, Medical-Surgical .

One day, the time for mourning and dying will be replaced by an eternity of joy. Your work is part of that story .

7. Conclusion and final invitation

Ecclesiastes 3 is not a call to passivity, but to active trust. It frees you from the burden of having to control every outcome and invites you to rest in God's hands, as the master of time .

Your vocation is sacred because you participate in the same cycles of life over which God is sovereign. You don't need to understand it, just trust in the One who has absolute control over life.

The book closes with enduring wisdom:

“Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all that is required of man. For God will judge every work, good or bad, even those done in secret.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)

Final questions for reflection:

1. What personal or professional "time" are you in today? How is it affecting your faith and your daily practice ?
2. Are there any situations at work where you struggle to see God's sovereignty? How does remembering that "He has made everything beautiful in its time" change your perspective?
3. In what practical ways can you show respect and love to a patient or colleague who is going through a “hard time”?
4. What changes do you need to make to live with more purpose and meaning in your vocation?
5. How can the hope of Revelation 21:4 sustain you after a particularly challenging day?

Closing prayer:

Sovereign Father, master of time and eternity,
Thank you because nothing in our life or profession escapes your loving control.
Help us to trust when we don't understand.
Give us wisdom to discern the times,
and strength to love, serve, and care as you did .
In the name of your son Jesus, Amen.

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