

eternity has been put in our hearts (**Ecc. 3:11**)

**MAIN IDEA: God is working us all toward eternity.** How? Here are three things He is doing.

**I. First, He uses evil people for His good purposes. (7-10)**

- A. He is sovereign... holding all things together (**Col 1:17**), working His plan (**Eph. 1:11**)
- B. He restricts where the devil works
  - 1. on earth & in heavenly places (Eph. 6:12)
  - 2. later solely on earth (**Rev. 12:9**, possibly beginning Great Tribulation --*Stamp*)
  - 3. captive during millennial reign
  - 4. released to earth again
- C. He uses the devil in his rage to test people
  - 1. will we live by our sinful nature?
  - 2. or will we live surrendered to Jesus?
  - 3. majority choose their "own way"

**EX:** People living under Jesus' reign will still have sinful nature. Devil released to test which way they will go—after sinful nature & pride & rebellion or submitted to Jesus.

**ILLUSTRATION:**

**II. Second, He uses Jesus as the dividing line for eternity**

- A. people can live "with" Jesus & still rebel...millennial reign; children raised in church; people in a Christian society
- B. everyone must choose between "my way" & "His way"
- C. environment doesn't determine who is saved
  - 1. people from worst environments are saved
  - 2. people from best reject Him

**ILLUSTRATION:**

**III. Finally, He takes into account what we do (12, 15)**

**NOTE:** believe that people born during the millennial reign who do trust in Jesus will stand before the Great White Throne for judgment and will enter His presence (heaven).

- A. many rely on "just believing"
  - 1. living as they want
  - 2. trusting God's goodness—His grace
  - 3. forgetting that Jesus will reject some who call Him Lord (**Matt. 7:21-23**)
- B. others trust in their works
  - 1. I'm not as bad as those people...
  - 2. I've done all these things to be a good person
- C. but God wants us to fully understand the place of works
  - 1. works cannot save us: (12)

**FACT:** The lost are judged by their works because they wouldn't trust Him; their works are never enough. (**Eph 2:8-9**)

- 2. we are saved by faith that *has works as proof* (**James 2:18, 26; Matthew 25:31-46**)
- 3. thus we are left with this: What we believe & do based on our belief determines our eternity
  - I do what I want...live apart from Jesus
  - I submit to Jesus, so I do what He wants

**ILLUSTRATION:**

**CONCLUSION:**

**ALTAR:** Where am I at? Am I fully submitted and living for Jesus in every way, or do I live as I want, and think He understands? Have I chosen Him—*really* chosen Him? Am I angry at Him because of something I or someone I love has suffered?

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