

Open It

If you could be an animal, any animal, what animal would you want to be? And why?

Consider It

How does God test man and for what purpose (3:18)?

What do we share in common with animals (3:19-21)?

What should we enjoy (3:22)? Why?

What beastly behavior is observed among humans (3:22 – 4:1)?

What does Solomon conclude about this state of affairs (4:1-3)?

Who is envied for their success (4:4)? And why?

How does Solomon depict contentment (4:6)?

How are we so much more than mere animals?

The Quest for a Meaningful Life

Am I Just an Animal or Something More?

Ecclesiastes 3:18 – 4:6

January 30th & 31st, 2021

3:18 I also said to myself, "As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. ¹⁹ Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. ²⁰ All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. ²¹ Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?" ²² So I saw that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy their work, because that is their lot. For who can bring them to see what will happen after them? Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: ^{4:1} I saw the tears of the oppressed— and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors— and they have no comforter. ² And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive. ³ But better than both is the one who has never been born, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun. ⁴ And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. ⁵ Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves. ⁶ Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.

Ecclesiastes 3:18–4:6 (NIV)

Sermon Proposition

You are an Animal! But oh, so much more than an animal.

As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals.

Ecclesiastes 3:18

You are an Animal! But oh, so much more than an animal.

Live It

Seek the Lord!

Adoration: Offer Praise to God for your freedom in Christ!

Confession: Confess your envy of others, discontentment, grumbling and complaining.

Petition: Pray the **Prayer for Justice** (Micah 6:6-8)

*Almighty God, who created us in your image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.
Arise! O Lord, and awaken your people!*

Book of Common Prayer

You are an Animal! **But oh, so much more than an animal.**

Serve Others!

How will you use your freedom to serve others?

Pray that God will show you someone that needs a helping hand.

Sow Seeds!

How has God taught you to be content with what you have?

Share your testimony with a family member or friend.