

**Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:14 Life is a Gift Enjoy It!
True North, Part 10**

Tonight we come to the final chapters in our study of the book of Ecclesiastes.

A) The Theme of this final section{ Life is a gift – ENJOY IT!

B) Solomon is going to lay out four instructions to help us enjoy life in the Lord – living under the Sun!

C) Ch. 11:7-9 Rejoice / Ch.11:10 Remove / Ch.12:1-8 Call to Remember / Ch.12:9-14 Reverence.

D) That is our outlines tonight – so without further ado – begin

#1 Rejoice: 11:7-9

Truly the light is sweet, And it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun;

8 But if a man lives many years, And rejoices in them all, {Let him enjoy them all}

Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming is vanity.

9 Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart,

And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.

“Light is sweet and it pleases the eye to see the Sun. However many years the man may live, let him enjoy them all.”

A) What he’s saying is this — particularly to those of you that are young. You don’t know how many years you have.

B) You can’t decide whether or not you will be long or short on the Earth, because ultimately your days are in the hand of God.

1) What you do **have jurisdiction over however**, is the **quality** of those days.

C) You’re days may be short, but they can full. You’re days may be many and they can be full.

1) But ultimately God knows the number of your days, but you have the possibility of enjoying every one of those days that God would give you.

“But let him remember the days of darkness.” Hey You’re gonna get old.

A) The days of darkness are coming!

B) Here he is simply making a generalization that youth is a time for enjoyment – because Problems arise in your old age.

C) To some people the idea that God wants us to enjoy life – seems like a foreign idea.

1) God is the **cosmic kill Joy – the Cosmic cop** – looking to bust you – the **celestial judge** who is waiting to through the book at you.

D) Nothing could be further from the truth.

What we see in the Bible is that God has made our days for enjoyment. That is the continual theme.

A) That is the drumbeat that keeps rhythm through the book of Ecclesiastes. Enjoy your life with God. **Enjoy your days with God.**

B) Enjoy opportunities in every day of life that God would give you. Solomon learned this from his father, David, who also wrote the book of Psalms, in Chapter 16, Verse 11, he tells us that, **“Joy comes from the right hand of God.”** Psalms 16:11

C) That’s where joy comes from. As well, he learned but ignored in Psalm chapter 37, Verse 4 from his father that we should, **“Delight ourselves in the Lord and that he will give us the desires of our heart.”** Psalm 37:4

D) That’s the goal of our life. Now some of you read that and you say, “Okay that means, if I love God, I get everything I want.

1) I’ll be attractive and tall. I’ll have a new car. I’ll be smart. Handsome. Rich.”

2) No, that’s not what it means.

E) What it means is that as you delight in God, as you enjoy God, as you walk closely with God through Jesus Christ,

1) **God changes your desires.** {Mold with Jesus

Often times the reason that we lack joy is because we’re pursuing the wrong things,

A) Pursuing the wrong things because we have the wrong desires, because we’ve been delighting in the wrong things.

Aa) Ultimately, you become like that which you worship.

1) Whatever you enjoy most is going to be that which causes your desires to exist.

B) If you worship sexuality, you will become perverted. Your desires will be crooked.

1) If you worship money, you will be greedy — **an idolatress** — and your desires will be pursuing of things rather than God

C) But As you and I learn to delight in God, to be satisfied with God, to enjoy God, **God gives us desires, passions, profound convictions,**

1) And he compels us to live our lives freely and passionately in pursuit of those things.

D) Augustine and Luther — two of the great church fathers — they summarized this verse this way. They said, “Love God and do whatever you please.”

E) That’s exactly how God’s people are to live. We should do exactly what we want to do **after** we have been delighting in God.

1) Those desires are from God!

So first of all Solomon wants us to Rejoice – Enjoy this life that God has given by delighting ourselves in Him!

A) Enjoy the Lord, and as you do, you will find that what births in you is **passion, creativity, vision, joy** and excitement and a fear of God that keeps you from being an idiot.

B) That keeps you from just running off and sinning like crazy,

So here’s what we need to do first : enjoy God. But in order to do that there is something that needs to be removed!

#2 Remove V.10 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.

A) The word sorrow in v.10 is translated Anxiety Verse 10, **“So then, banish anxiety from your heart.”** Don’t be depressed.

B) This is amazing to me – that Over two-and-a-half thousand years ago, God, through Solomon, says, “Young people are prone to depression.”

1) Is that still true? “Banish anxiety from your heart.”

C) You’re anxious. One of the most profound and pronounced problems with young people today is just that: depression and anxiety.

D) Some of you struggle with depression. You struggle with anxiety.

1) Now I’m not discounting that for some people there is a legitimate medical cause for certain problems, like depression,

2) But for many people Solomon seems to be attributing a great number of people’s problems to their relationship with God.

E) Depression and Anxiety for many is not a Physical problem but a Spiritual problem.

Philippians 4:6-7

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

So in order to really enjoy life in Christ – you need to put away anxiety – give it to Jesus!

The Third thing that is a part of enjoying our life in the Lord is to #3 Remember

Eccl 12:1-2

**v.1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say,
"I have no pleasure in them" {Getting old stinks}: 2
While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;**

While you are still young – and there is light left – Remember your creator – remember why you are here.

Revelation 4:11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, and for your pleasure they exist and were created."

Now Verses 3–7 Solomon give us one of the most imaginative descriptions of old age and death found anywhere in literature.

A) Bible Students don't agree on all the details of interpretation, but most of them do see here a picture of a house that is falling apart and finally turns to dust.

B) A dwelling place is one biblical metaphor for the human body (Job 4:19; 2 Cor. 5:1–2 [a tent]; 2 Peter 1:13 [a tent]), and taking down a house or tent is a picture of death.

Eccl 12:3-7

3 In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, Your arms and hands and legs tremble.

And the strong men bow down; Your legs, knees, and shoulders weaken and you walk bent over.

When the grinders cease because they are few, You start to lose your teeth /

And those that look through the windows grow dim; eyesight goes

4 When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; hearing starts to fail

When one rises up at the sound of a bird, You wake up with the birds early each morning, and wish you could sleep longer. Uganda – Rooster –

And all the daughters of music are brought low. Start to lose your voice and you can't carry a tune.

5 Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way - Height freak you out – lose equilibrium { Swings -

When the almond tree blossoms, Almond tree blossoms are white- Gray hair

The grasshopper is a burden, You just drag yourself along, like a grasshopper at the close of the summer season.

And desire fails. { You lose sexual desire

For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.

You go to your eternal [long] home and people mourn your death.

That is what all of us have to look forward to – some are a little further along than others.

So again he reminds us V6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Spinal cord

A) Or the golden bowl is broken, - **Brain** The functioning of the brain decreases in its efficiency as one gets older,

B) Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain. The pitcher is the lungs. Harder to breath –

C) Or the wheel broken at the well. The wheel is the heart. It is no longer pumping blood through the body.

D) All of this is a picture of the deterioration of old age leading to death.

1) Life cannot be sustained without the functioning of these organs.

Reality we are all going to get old and die!

A) Comes faster than you think –

B) But REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENS to the believer when He dies!

7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

A) There is no soul sleep. I wish the people who try to use verses from this Book of Ecclesiastes to support their idea of soul sleep would just read on until they get to this verse.

B) The body sleeps, but the spirit, or the soul, returns unto God who gave it.

Let me repeat that the New Testament assures us that to be absent from the body means to be present with the Lord 2 Corinthians 5:8

A) The soul immediately returns to God.

B) This body is just a tabernacle, or a tent, that we live in.

1) It is just the outer covering. The soul goes to be with God.

V.8 His favorite saying: "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity."

Remember: life is empty if you are just living for the here and now.

A) One day you will find that all you have in your hand is a fistful of ashes, and you will have eternity ahead of you.

When as a child, I laughed and wept, Time crept;
When as a youth, I dreamed and talked, Time walked;
When I became a full grown man, Time ran;
When older still I daily grew, Time flew;
Soon I shall find in traveling on, Time gone.

—Author unknown

The psalmist writes: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12), and Wisdom is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eccl 12:9-10 9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. 10 The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright — words of truth.

A) Wisdom is knowledge applied – so wisdom comes through life experience – the application of Knowledge.

B) Some people live their life, but they never learn their lesson, and so their experiences, good and bad, aren't **an enormous** practical benefit to them.

C) That's why some people continually make the same mistakes, or some people make mistakes, don't **redeem the understanding** from the mistake, and because of that, they're a lesser person because of it.

Wisdom comes through life; and as you obtain wisdom, your goal should be as it is for Solomon

A) to **record** what you have learned and then to **teach** that carefully to others in a way that is upright and true, and this is hard.

B) This truly is the hardest part of being a teacher.

1) Some of you aspire to teach. But You can't effectively teach until you have lived something.

C) Otherwise, it's information, not transformation.

D) It's speculation, not revelation. It's conjecture. It's not very helpful.

E) Wisdom that is proven – Knowledge – hey I have lived this and it works – I have been down this road – applied the word – it is true – powerful.

11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

A) That kind of wisdom is like a goad – goad –sharp stick – prick the donkey or the ox –

B) Someone shares wisdom with you from the word and from their experience – it pricks at your heart –
1) Rings in your ear – hard to get away from it.

C) Stephen's sermon to Paul's heart – hard for you to kick against the goads

V.12 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

A) On the surface, verse 12 seems to be a negative view of learning; but such is not the case.

B) The statement is a warning to the student not to go beyond what God has written in His Word.

1) Indeed, there are many books; and studying them can be a wearisome chore. **But don't permit man's books to rob you of God's wisdom.**

C) Don't test God's truth by the "many books" written by men; {wearisome} test men's books by the truth of God's Word.

So a key to enjoying life is to remember your creator – remember that wisdom is found in his word.

#4 Reverence V.13-14

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

If we are going to live a life that counts we must fulfill three obligations – Fear God , Keep his commandments, prepare for final Judgment

Reverence: Being concerned about what God thinks – having a reverence. -

A) The idea of having Reverence for God includes – being in awe of Him

1) Captivated by his holiness – majesty – his power.

B) Revere him – Fall down prostrate – creates a humility in our hearts

C) But love is also tied to the idea of reverence – Ephesians 5:33 a wife is to respect her husband – comes from same idea

1) Respect a reverence that is associated with a loving relationship

D) I remind you that Paul tells us in Eph 5 that marriage is the picture of our relationship with the Lord.

It is that loving reverence that motivates us to keep his commandments

A) To walk in holiness –

B) Motivated by love – {Fear of displeasing

C) All the while there is a sobering reminder that I am going to stand before the Lord one day. – Judgment

D)Believers Judgment rewards – not a judgment of punishment – Already punished Jesus – but my deeds – Gold silver precious Jewels –or wood hay or stubble.

E) Don't know Christ – Deeds – condemn you – lack of belief in Christ