

"REMEMBER GOD IN THE DAYS OF YOUR YOUTH"

Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:1

INTRODUCTION

1. In Ecclesiastes we find the perspective of one who searched for the meaning of life...
 - a. The "Preacher" (Solomon) examined wisdom, riches, and pleasure
 - b. He shared the fruits of his search: what he saw as vanity, and what was good
2. To those who are young, he offered the following exhortations...
 - a. **Rejoice** in your youth - **Ecc 11:9**
 - b. **Remove** sorrow and evil from your youth - **Ecc 11:10**
 - c. **Remember** God in your youth - **Ecc 12:1**
 - d. **Reflect** upon what is coming - **Ecc 12:1**
3. I doubt that many young people would take issue with the first exhortation...
 - a. They gladly rejoice in their youth
 - b. They are happy to let their hearts cheer them, to walk in the ways of their hearts and in the sight of their eyes
4. But the remaining exhortations...?
 - a. To remove sorrow and evil, remember God, reflect upon what is to come?
 - b. Doesn't that take the joy out of youth?

[Not really, and there are several good reasons why we need to **"Remember God In The Days Of Your Youth"**...]

I. YOUTH HAS NO GUARANTEE OF THE FUTURE

A. DEATH IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS...

1. Death frequently strikes those who believe they are invincible
 - a. Accidents
 - b. Disease
 - c. War
 2. In the course of my youth, I saw it happen time and again
 - a. Terry King (17) died of liver cancer
 - b. Tim Heffer (15) dropped dead of a heart attack
 - c. Karen Shower's college roommate did not wake up one morning; her bodily functions simply stopped!
 - d. Two college classmates (20) were killed in car wrecks
 3. Not to be morbid, nor to scare, but to face reality
 - a. No one is promised the future
 - b. Life is truly just a vapor - **Ja 4:14-17**
- **As a recent bumper sticker put it: "Many who plan to repent at the 11th hour, die at 10:30"**

B. THE LORD IS COMING...

1. He is coming in judgment - **2 Pe 3:7,9-11; 2 Th 1:7-9**
 2. There will be "youths" at that time
 - a. Who will not have the benefit of a long life
 - b. Who will not have the time to change
- **Therefore, we ought to prepare for the future (which is a sign of maturity)**

[Even if one is blessed to live a long life, with plenty of time to change, there is another reason to **"Remember God In The Days Of Your Youth"...**]

II. MISSPENT YOUTH CAN CURSE YOUR FUTURE

A. YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW...

1. An important principle of life to remember - **Ga 6:7-8**
2. What you do while young can permanently affect your future
3. Not just your future in eternity, but your future in this life!

B. THE DANGER OF SOWING "WILD OATS"...

1. Sowing the seeds of **rebellion**
 - a. Young people are often inclined to rebel against all forms of authority (parents, teachers, police, etc.)
 - b. Yet God has ordained that we submit to authority - **Ro 13:1-2; 1 Pe 2:13-14**
 - c. Rebellion against authority has caused many young people to spend years in prison
2. Sowing the seeds of **lying**
 - a. Many young people think nothing of lying
 - b. Once you are caught in a lie, your credibility is shattered
 - c. Your word means nothing, you can no longer be trusted
 - d. This has adverse affects on your relationships and your employments
3. Sowing the seeds of **stealing**
 - a. Shoplifting and other such crimes are rampant among many young people
 - b. If caught, others will be suspicious and you will not be given positions of fiscal responsibility
4. Sowing the seeds of **fornication**
 - a. Sex among young people is very popular
 - b. Yet many do not consider the "high price":
 - 1) Sexually transmitted diseases, such as syphilis, AIDs
 - 2) Unwanted pregnancy (often compounded by abortion)
 - 3) Forced marriages, which often lead to divorce
5. Sowing the seeds of **drugs**
 - a. Drugs have great potential for ruining our lives
 - b. What so bad about drugs?
 - 1) Some are illegal, and their use violates Ro 13:1
 - 2) Many are addictive, and their use violates 1 Co 6:12
 - 3) Others are destructive to the body, and their use violates **1 Co 6:19-20**

[It has been said that "Most men spend the first half of their lives making the second half miserable." (La Bruyere) That is why you need to **"Remember God In The Days Of Your Youth."** When you do, then the following can be true...]

III. WELL SPENT YOUTH CAN BLESS YOUR FUTURE

A. COMPARE THE FOOLISH AND WISE CHILD...

1. **The foolish child**
 - a. Doesn't remember God in his youth
 - b. Won't listen to the advice of others
 - c. Has to learn for himself
 - d. Invariably makes a mess out of his life (in health, marriage, or career)
 - e. Spends good portion of life undoing foolish actions of youth
 - f. Suffers from the consequences of his actions

2. **The wise child**

- a. Remembers God in his youth
 - b. Follows God's advice, and that of others
 - c. Learns from the mistakes of others
 - d. Begins life with a solid foundation and good head start
 - e. Able to accomplish more good in life
 - f. Will enjoy pleasurable memories, not bemoan his past
- **What a difference in the quality of life there can be when one makes the right choices while young!**

B. THE WISE CHILD WILL SHOW HIS WISDOM...

- 1. By learning to respect authority now (beginning with parents) **Ep 6:1-3**
 - 2. By learning to control your body (as did Paul) - **1 Co 9:27**
 - 3. By obeying the gospel - **Ga 3:26-27**
 - 4. By growing spiritually, bearing the fruit of the Spirit - **Ga 5:22-24**
 - 5. Thus becoming an example of the believers - **1 Ti 4:12**
- **This is what is involved in remembering God while young**

CONCLUSION

- 1. No one can be "forced" to remember God in their youth...
 - a. We can only point out the dangers when one does not
 - b. We can remind you of the benefits when one does

-- **I hope this lesson will encourage the young person to make the right choice**
- 2. But one thing is certain: God will remember!
 - a. God will bring you into judgment for all that you do - **Ecc 11:9**
 - b. Which is why one should "Fear God and keep His commandments" **Ecc 12:13-14**

You only live once...will you make the right choice to **"Remember God In The Days Of Your Youth"**?