

## **Ecclesiastes 11 and 12**

The start of this book Solomon sounds highly negative – “vanity, vanity, all is vanity” was a recurring theme (vanity used 37 times in the book).

Solomon focused on:

- The monotony of life
- The vanity of wisdom
- The futility of wealth
- The certainty of death

However, as Solomon finishes this book he ends up with a vastly different conclusion.

- Life is not monotonous but full of challenges and situations from God.
- Wisdom from God does not explain everything but is valuable to know and follow vs. man’s wisdom without God.
- Wealth does not satisfy but is something that can be enjoyed and employed for God’s glory.
- And although death is certain, we can live our lives fully and make the most of our days.

### **The Outline for Chapters 11 and 12 are as follows**

- 11: 1-6        Life is an Adventure -live by faith
- 11: 7- 12: 8    Life is a Gift – enjoy it
- 12: 9-12        Life is a School – learn your lessons, prepare for eternity
- 12:13-14        Life is Stewardship – have a fear and awe of God and use your days wisely

### **Life is an Adventure**

VS 1-2 Reference to shipping and commerce – sent out your fleet and reward is when it returns. Put your resources into seven or eight options – diversify – do not put all your eggs into one basket.

VS 3-6 The Farmer

- Clouds and Trees
- Ideal circumstances vs. risk
- Way of the wind and the creation of a child – mysteries – faith in God’s ways, not our understanding
- Diligence – get up early and sow the seed and do the work it takes for a harvest
- Do not worry about what you cannot control – weather

## **Life is a Gift to Enjoy**

### VS 7-9 Rejoice

- Take advantage of your youth – they pass quickly and do not return
- Your behavior will be judged
- Not a license to “sow wild oats” (sin) note Romans 6:1-2
- You will age and those days will be limited (darkness)

### VS 10 Remove Things

- Remove sorrow from your heart – regrets, anxieties, inner pains, stresses, unforgiveness
- Remove fleshly desires that bring destruction – temptations and youthful lusts, etc.

VS 12:1-8 Remember God – Solomons version of Matthew 6:23 – seek ye first the kingdom...

VS 1 -2 Lay a good spiritual foundation early in your life; Dark and difficult days will indeed come in life.

### VS 3-7 The Aging House – preparing for your eternal home

- The house is your body – your tent – your dwelling place
- Keepers – arms and legs
- Grinders – teeth
- Windows – vision
- Doors – could be hearing
- Fear – aging and concerns

### VS 8 Vanity, Vanity, all is Vanity

Solomon ends where he began (37 times vanity is used) – that is life is vanity without God

### **VS 9-12 Life is a School – Learn Your Lessons**

- Solomon was wise, he searched things out and he wrote God’s wisdom for his people in proverbs
- His words were orderly, well-crafted, and well thought out
- He did not soften the message or use flattery but weighted his conclusions carefully
- The one Shepherd also inspired his words
- People were goaded (prompted) to learn and what they learned got nailed down (permanently)

### **VS 13-14 Life is a Stewardship – Fear (be in awe) of God**

*The measure of one’s life is not it is duration, but its donation* – (Corrie ten Boom)

What will your “donation” be? What will be the stewardship of your life?

Solomon tells us to do three things

1. Fear God
2. Keep His commandments
3. Prepare for final judgment

***The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas, if you do not fear God, you fear everything else.*** (Oswald Chambers)

Jesus said, “if you love me, you will obey my commandments” (John 14:15) – fear of God brings obedience and peace and a righteous judgment of approval.