

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOV 30TH-DEC 1ST, 2019 // BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

MOVEMENT (ECCLESIASTES 11:1-6)

THIS SECTION FOCUSES ON WISE INVESTMENTS

Though money can be an uncomfortable topic, Solomon encourages us to be wise with how we use our finances.

- We can take calculated risks at times, but **we must make sure we are always faithful to God first**. We must also be providing for those we take care of.

WE SHOULD BE WISE SO WE CAN ALSO GIVE

V2 seems to promote not only saving, but giving to others. The priority of generosity and benevolence is constant throughout scripture.

- Js 2:16 says, "What good is it to say, 'Stay warm and be fed,' but you don't give what the body needs?" **Of course souls come first, but the church is to help those in need physically.**

"THE PLACE WHERE THE TREE FALLS, IT WILL LIE."

Because of uncertainties in life, many of us want to take full control of everything in our lives. But even though we should prepare and be wise, we cannot help that sometimes unexpected "trees" fall.

- **This is why God has to be our ultimate source of hope and trust. Only He can give true security.**

WATCHING THE WIND AND THE CLOUDS

We cannot just sit still in this life and wait for things to fall into place. Many people refuse to act until everything is in perfect order. This kind of passivity can be dangerous.

- This is both practical and spiritual. It is impossible to get ahead without movement, and **it is impossible to grow without diligence.**

IF WE DON'T PLANT, NOTHING GROWS

We cannot just sit still in this life and wait for things to fall into place. Many people refuse to act until everything is in perfect order. This kind of passivity can be dangerous.

- We often get angry at God for not making things happen, **but if we never plant spiritual seeds with Him, we cannot expect something to grow.**

GOD PRODUCES, BUT WE MUST PLANT

Solomon highlights our ignorance with respect to how much God does and wants to do in our lives if we will just partner with Him. **We are so quick to give up when we don't see instant results, but the biblical response is to trust and be patient.**

- **God's timing is always perfect. It is hard, but we must trust Him!**

IT ALL GOES BACK TO BALANCE

V6 is taking a shot at workaholism. **Though we're to "sow [our] seeds" and work to the best of our abilities, we must also rest and trust in the sovereignty of God.**

- Ecc. 4:6 tells us that "Better one handful with rest than two handfuls with effort and a pursuit of the wind." **We must strive for balance.**
- **1 Corinthians 3:6 (CSB)**

THE YOUNG (ECCLESIASTES 11:7-12:1)

WE MUST APPROACH THIS PART WITH WISDOM

The reason **reading the Bible in whole books is vital** is because when we just randomly pull passages out, we can greatly misinterpret them or even believe the Bible contradicts itself.

- Ecclesiastes demands a wide lens to ensure that we get the true meaning of Solomon's advice.

ENJOYING THE TIME WE HAVE

Often times in the Bible, night is depicted as the end, evil, or a time of sadness or fear. Day is often used to show life, vitality, joy, and youth.

- Solomon is encouraging us to take advantage of every stage in our lives, but to remember that "darkness" (death) will be coming.

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY IGNORE THEIR MORTALITY

Ecclesiastes makes it clear that very few people, either young or old, think about the brevity of their lives. **Either people live like there will be no end, or they focus so much on death that they are in constant fear.**

- Neither of these are God's will. **We're to be aware of our brief lives, but not fear because we have a hope in Him.**

WALK IN THE WAYS OF OUR HEARTS?

Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is the most deceitful part of us and not to follow it. Why does Solomon tell us differently? This is where study and context come into play.

- When we continue to read, we see that Solomon balances his statement with the accountability of our actions.

WE WILL HAVE TO ANSWER FOR OUR CHOICES

Young people should enjoy their youth, but know that when they live out of the bounds of God's design, there are both present and eternal consequences for that.

- **Not only will we be held accountable for our actions (commission), but also for our inactions (omission). We must avoid evil AND do good.**

"REMOVE SORROW FROM YOUR HEART..."

This is an ironic statement in light of our time. Solomon tells us to lean into God in our youth so we can "put away pain from our flesh, because youth and the prime of our life are fleeting."

- **We're a generation that is more self-focused than ever, yet we slide further into despair and depression.**
- Between 2009 and 2017, rates of depression ages 14 to 17 increased by more than 60%. The increases were nearly as steep among those ages 12 to 13 (47%) and 18 to 21 (46%), and rates roughly doubled among those ages 20 to 21. In 2017 more than one in eight Americans ages 12 to 25 experienced a major depressive episode. **Time, March 14th 2019**
- Only 10% of 18-29 year olds in the United States attend service at least once a month and trust completely in the Bible as the authority in their lives. **Faith for Exiles and Barna Research Group.**

12:1 IS THE KEY TO ECCLESIASTES!

It is imperative in all stages of life, but even more important as early as possible, to "remember [our] Creator...Before the days of adversity come."

- This is not a passive statement. This means **we must take action and choose to be as close to God as possible, as early as possible.**

IS OUR WAY WORKING?

- We often blame God, but in reality we are the ones responsible for planting and watering the seeds of this life.
- If we are honest, has our way of living given us the results that we want? What about what we truly need?
- We tend to over complicate it, but it simply comes down to if we trust and follow Jesus, or if we don't.
- **To truly follow Him means we give Him everything;** our finances, family, time, and our best efforts.

HOW ARE WE PREPARING THE SOIL?

- Do we work to find balance in our lives?
- Are we responsible with the resources God has given us?
- Do we take the time to enjoy our days?
- **Do we invest in our relationship with the only One that can truly make things grow?**