

LifeGroup Questions
Based On: Ecclesiastes 7:1-12
July 3, 2016

Overview:

Sometimes we can read things in the Bible and it can be fairly startling. Ecclesiastes 7:1 is one of those verses that is kind of hard to understand. It reads: “A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.” Most of us have at one time held a newborn baby. Most of us at one time have gone to a funeral. There is a huge difference. One is filled with joy, newness of life, and a sense of wonder. The other is sadness, mourning, and a feeling of tremendous loss. With such obvious differences why would this verse say that the day of your death is better than the day of your birth?

Every tombstone you see is a commentary that has one thing in common. A date of birth followed by a dash and a date of death. It is kind of discouraging that in the end your entire life is summarized by a dash mark. Everything you did, everything you thought, everything you said is captured in this dash. It marks your life. It is your legacy. Over time what people will remember won't be the dates, but the dash. It is your reputation. Will your dash show that you loved your family and honored God?

This is what Solomon is conveying in this verse. If you have put your faith in Jesus and accepted Him as your Savior then your day of death will be better than your day of birth. The Apostle Paul summarized it this way: Philippians 1:21, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know!²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.” What will your dash represent? Your standing before God is more important than what people will remember. If you have accepted Christ then you can say that your day of death will be better than your day of birth.

Bible Study: Ecclesiastes 7:1-12

1. When people see your dash what do you want them to remember? If you could write out your legacy what would it say?
2. Read Proverbs 4:23 and Matthew 7:13-14. We all know that what we say, think, and do will have an impact on our lives. What steps can you take to guard your actions, thoughts, and heart? How do you plan on staying on the narrow path?
3. Read Philippians 1:21-24. Paul states that being with Christ is better than life. Does this mean that Paul did not value life? Why or why not?
4. How do you keep an eternal perspective as you experience the ups and downs of everyday life?
5. Read Ecclesiastes 7:10. In what ways can reflecting on the past have a negative impact on your future?

6. “Death is an evangelist. It helps us to see that there is a great gulf fixed between Creator and creature and places us in a position therefore truly to worship and to repent of our sins.”¹ What impact can living with the end in mind have on your life?
7. 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 states: “⁵⁴When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’ ⁵⁵Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”² Take some time to reflect on these verses. Think about your life. Can you stare down death and say “where is your sting?” Why or why not?

¹ Provan, I. (2001). *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (pp. 147–148). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

² *The New International Version*. (2011). (1 Co 15:54–58). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.