

Ecclesiastes 12

Wisdom belongs to the Lord

I. Remember your Creator

1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth...

- **Starting line of Faith:** In the beginning God...
- **Next:** In the beginning God created...

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- **God is our Creator**

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- **We are created from dust...**

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

- God is our Creator and Creator of ALL things
- **Creation demands decision...** Believe in God the Creator or Deny God as Creator
 1. God is to be **Believed** in because of Creation
 2. God is to be **Praised** because He is Creator
 3. God is to be **Worshipped** because He Created all things

Romans 1:18 ... the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools...

Lessons from Romans 1:18-22

- God's wrath will be poured out on those who [willingly] suppress the truth v18
- God has made Himself known to all men v19 [seeing is believing?]

John 1:9 [Jesus is] the true Light which gives light to **every man** coming into the world.

- God has clearly made Himself known to all men in/through Creation v20...
 1. **His Attributes:** Beauty, Order, Goodness
 2. **His Eternal Power:** Planets, Earth Systems, Procreation
 3. **Godhead:** Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- **In light of Creation...**All men are without excuse for un-belief v20b
- Those who deny God as revealed by Creation will be judged because they...
 4. **Knew God** as revealed in/by Creation [obvious] v21
 5. **Suppressed the truth** [Called Ungodly/Unrighteous for this willful act] v18
 6. **Did not give God glory** for what is clearly seen everywhere/all the time
 7. **Ungrateful** for the magnificent beauty/provisions He created for them
 - a) Became futile/empty/vain in their thoughts
 - b) Foolish hearts were darkened

...v22 **Professing to be wise, they became fools**

- God is to be **believed** because of Creation
- God is to be **praised** because He is Creator

Revelation 4:11 [Elders in heaven] "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And **by Your will they exist and were created.**"

Judgments in Revelation are poured out on man for denying God as Creator...

- God is to be **worshipped** because created all things...

Revelation 4:7 [Angel preaching the Everlasting Gospel] saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.**"

The very existence of Creation demands our response...
Choice to believe or not believe **"In the beginning God created..."**

- **Solomon: Remember your Creator** In the days of your youth...

1b [Remember your Creator]...Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them"...

- **Difficult days:** Old age.
- 2nd Law of Thermodynamics/Law of Entropy: **Everything including man:**
 1. Gradual state of decline
 2. From order to disorder/chaos... nullifying false theory of evolution
- I have no pleasure in them: Aches and Pains of growing old

2 [Remember your Creator]...While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain...

- Beginning of a series of allegories for aging
 1. Enjoy the sights in the sky day and night... while you can
 2. Before clouds: Cataracts?

3 [Remember your Creator before]...the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;4

When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low;
When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low.

- Keeper of house tremble: Arms and hands
- Strong men bow down: Legs and knees
- Grinders cease: Teeth lost
- View out window dim/Doors shut in streets: Eyes
- Sound of grinding low: Ears
- Startled at sound of a bird: Easily awakened
- Daughters of music brought low: Music less appreciated

5 [**Remember your Creator before**] ...afraid of height, And of terrors in the way;
When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails...

- **Remember your Creator while young...**
 1. Heights and Terrors in the way: Easily worried/troubled/upset
 2. When the almond tree blossoms: Hair becomes white
 3. Burden of grasshopper: Small things become a burden
 4. No longer interested in sexual intimacy [1000 wives?]

5b...For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.

- **Eternal Home:** Thank you Solomon.
- **Last of Solomon's Journal Entries:** Eternity/Light/Wisdom to end of Book

6 **Remember your Creator** before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken,
Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well.

- **Allegory of Dying**
 1. Silver cord loosed and Golden bowl broken:
 - a) Silver and Gold: Value of Life
 - b) Loosed and Broken as death comes
 2. Pitcher shattered at fountain and Wheel broken at well
 - a) Pieces that cannot be put together again
 - b) One shot at this life...don't waste it...Redeem the time

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

- Body [Shell/Tent] to the ground
- Spirit presented to God who gave it

Remember your Creator now; in the end we will stand in judgment before God

8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity."

- Back to the beginning in Ecclesiastes 1:2 All is vanity
- Different tone? Life under the sun is fleeting... **so live for the eternal**

SUMMARY: Remember your Creator: Life without acknowledging our Creator is empty

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth...

II. Man's All

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.

- **Moreover:** Lit. "What I say next will override the fact that "All is vanity"
 1. I [Solomon] am wise
 2. I am going to conclude with important truths
 3. I have not been speaking randomly or without purpose
 4. I have sought God to "Set in order many proverbs"

The Book of Ecclesiastes is the Word of God

- **God expects us to be thinking people; use our brains**
 1. God is audacious trusting us with this book and to "read it appropriately"
 2. Trust us to discern when Solomon is ranting and when he is authoritative
- Solomon was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write this book

Solomon concludes: Still teaching us wisdom with Words "set in order" by the Holy Spirit

**Because of the curse and our sin...Life is empty and fleeting
...but more than that** [moreover] **there is a way to do this right!**

10 The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright—words of truth. 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

- **Word of God:**
 1. **Acceptable:** Pleasurable, delightful
 2. **Upright:** What is right, what ought to be done
 3. **True:** Sure, faithful
- Words of God is are like well-driven driven nails

...given by one Shepherd.

- 66 Books/40 Different authors/Three continents/Thousands of Years
- **Given by one Shepherd:** Jesus the Great Shepherd
- Authored by the Holy Spirit of God. God's message to man

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.

- **Accept my Admonishment:** Warn, teach, shine, send out light, be light, be shining
 1. Writing of instructional books will never end
 2. Looking for answers in the writings of men is tiring
 - a) What is true and what is not true?
 - b) Eating the meat spitting out the bones

"We grow addicted to research itself, in love with our own hard questions. An answer would spoil everything." [Kidner]

- Trust the Word of God for answers/direction

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God [God-breathed], and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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

- Fear God and keep His commandments...
 1. **This is Man's All** or "This is the whole duty of man"
 2. Literally: For this is "Adam" [man]

Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of "Man"

- **Fear God:** Realization God is our omnipresent Judge, always with us keeping us
 1. A good thing

The fear of God is the death of every other fear; like a mighty lion, it chases all other fears before it. [Spurgeon]

- **Keep God's commands:** Do what God says
 1. First and only place in Ecclesiastes where "commands of God are mentioned"

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

Fear God/Obey God/Judged by God?

Worldlings may well be afraid, for they have an angry God above them, a guilty conscience within them, and a yawning hell beneath them; but we who rest in Jesus are saved from all these through rich mercy. [Spurgeon]

- **What are we to do?**
 1. Make a commitment to Jesus to keep the entire law?
 2. Make a promise to Jesus to obey Him no matter what?
 3. Be good enough to be deemed righteous at Judgment? Or...
 4. Fall so in love with Jesus that:
 - a) Doing what he approves of makes us giddy
 - b) Doing what he disapproves of makes us sick
- Those who fear God show it by keeping his commands

Psalm 103:17 ...the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, 18 To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

- We fear God by keeping His commands
- We keep all God's commands as we **love one another**

Matthew 22:35 ...a lawyer, asked [Jesus] a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

- **Always God's heart...**

Leviticus 19:17 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. 18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: **I am the Lord.**

- Narrowed down to one command in Galatians...

Galatians 5:14 ...all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- We demonstrate our fear God by **keeping His commands**
- We keep God's commands as we **love one another**
- Because we love one another we have **no fear the judgment of God**

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time. **If we love one another**, God abides in us, and His love has been **perfected in us**. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 17 Love has been **perfected** among us in this: that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment**; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but **perfect love casts out fear**, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that **he who loves God must love his brother also.**

- **Lessons from 1 John 4:12-21**
 1. **If we love** one another Gods love is perfected [complete] in us v12
 2. If God's love is perfected in us by loving one another
 - a. Bold at the judgment v17
 - b. **Because:** As Jesus is [love] so we loved in our time on earth v17
 3. If we are not loving one another we will fear dying/judgment v18
 4. We cannot hate our brother/sister and love God at the same time v20
 5. He who loves God must love his brother also v 21

This one will live in freedom...without fear of Judgment because they are keeping God's Law completely.

- **Lessons from John 15:1-12** Glorify God by Loving Others
 1. Abide in Me and you will bear good fruit v4
 2. Good fruit glorifies the Father v8
 3. Abide in Me by abiding in My love v9
 4. Abide in My love by keeping My commands v10
 5. This is My commandment that you love one another v12

Thus loving one another glorifies God!

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

- What about enjoying God forever?
- When God's desire for us to love becomes our desire we experience joy...

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
4 Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.
6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

- Desire of our heart should be to love one another. To be perfected in love

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

- Closer we are to Jesus the more we will love as He does...

Matthew 11:28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Mans all: Love one another