

# HOW TO LIVE A BETTER LIFE

*October 27, 2019*

## I. INTRODUCTION/REVIEW

A Sunday drive slows you down enough to think about what drives you.

Does your Sunday drive drive your Monday?

How to Live a Better Life

## II. FOUR RULES FOR LIVING A BETTER LIFE

### 1. *Keep A Good Name*

*A. Think about your reputation.*

**Ecclesiastes 7:1** A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

*B. Think about your legacy.*

**Ecclesiastes 7:9 (NLT)** Control your temper, for anger labels you a fool.

- Your coffin tells a bigger story than your crib.

*C. Think about your eternity.*

**Ecclesiastes 7:1** A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

**Philippians 1:21-23** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 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! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

**Ecclesiastes 7:2-4** It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart. Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.

### 2. *Don't Waste the Hard Times*

**Ecclesiastes 7:2-4 (NLT)** Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. After all, everyone dies— so the living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for sadness has a

refining influence on us. A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.

**Ecclesiastes 7:14** When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future.

### *A. Dying teaches us how to live.*

**Ecclesiastes 7:3** Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart.

**Proverbs 17:22** A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

### *B. Struggle teaches us how to thrive.*

#### **1. Easy is not always better.**

**Ecclesiastes 7:4 (NLT)** A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.

#### **2. Fun is not always better.**

**Romans 5:3-5** Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

**James 1:2-4** Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

- Don't run from your hard times.

*Good timber does not grow with ease:  
The stronger wind, the stronger trees;  
The further sky, the greater length;  
The more the storm, the more the strength.  
By sun and cold, by rain and snow,  
In trees and men good timbers grow.*

— **Douglas Mollach**

- Hard times with deep roots make stronger souls.
- It is better to form your character in the tough times than just to ease your burden.

## ***3. Stay Teachable***

**Ecclesiastes 7:5-6** It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person than to listen to the song of fools. Like the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of fools. This too is meaningless.

**Ecclesiastes 4:13** Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to heed a warning.

*A. Personal pride can keep us from being teachable.*

- Do not let your knowledge keep you from wisdom.

**Ecclesiastes 7:11-12** Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it.

**Ecclesiastes 7:5-6** It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person than to listen to the song of fools. Like the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of fools. This too is meaningless.

*B. The wrong people can keep us from being teachable.*

**1. Story of Rehoboam**

**1 Kings 12:3-4** So they sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Rehoboam and said to him: “Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you.”

**1 Kings 12:6-7** Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime. “How would you advise me to answer these people?” he asked. They replied, “If today you will be a servant to these people and serve them and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your servants.”

**1 Kings 12:8-11** But Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. He asked them, “What is your advice? How should we answer these people who say to me, ‘Lighten the yoke your father put on us?’” The young men who had grown up with him replied, “These people have said to you, ‘Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but make our yoke lighter.’ Now tell them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions.’”

**1 Kings 12:16** When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, they answered the king: “What share do we have in David, what part in Jesse's son? To your tents, Israel! Look after your own house, David!” So the Israelites went home.

**2. Do not let your wisdom come from fools.**

- If the advice makes you prideful, it is probably not wisdom.

**Ecclesiastes 7:16-18** Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise— why destroy yourself? Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool— why die before your time? It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.

- If the advice puts others down, it is probably not wisdom.

## ***4. Live with the End in Mind***

**Ecclesiastes 7:8** The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.

### ***A. Three attitudes that are fatal to your future.***

#### **1. Pessimism**

- Don't say it is over until it is done.

#### **2. Nostalgia**

**Ecclesiastes 7:10** Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?" For it is not wise to ask such questions.

- Treasure your memories and reflect on God's goodness.
- These are the good old days.
- May our memories never be greater than our dreams.

**Ephesians 5:15-16** Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

**Ecclesiastes 7:8** The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.

#### **3. Impatience**

- It may be wise to slow down in order to speed up.
- Faster is not always better.

### ***B. It is better to take the long view.***

### ***C. It is better to trust God***

**Psalms 37:3-6** Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.