



TITLE: Remember The Key

ICE BREAKER: What's been your favorite age thus far in life? Why?

BIG IDEA: What you remember unlocks God's plan for your life.

MAIN SCRIPTURE:

Ecclesiastes 11:7 -12:8.

Light is sweet,

and it pleases the eyes to see the sun.

8 However many years anyone may live,
let them enjoy them all.

But let them remember the days of darkness,
for there will be many.

Everything to come is meaningless.

9 You who are young, be happy while you are young,
and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth.

Follow the ways of your heart

and whatever your eyes see,

but know that for all these things

God will bring you into judgment.

10 So then, banish anxiety from your heart
and cast off the troubles of your body,
for youth and vigor are meaningless.

Remember your Creator

in the days of your youth,

before the days of trouble come

and the years approach when you will say,

"I find no pleasure in them"—

2 before the sun and the light

and the moon and the stars grow dark,

and the clouds return after the rain;

3 when the keepers of the house tremble,

and the strong men stoop,

when the grinders cease because they are few,

and those looking through the windows grow dim;

4 when the doors to the street are closed

and the sound of grinding fades;

when people rise up at the sound of birds,

but all their songs grow faint;

5 when people are afraid of heights

and of dangers in the streets;

when the almond tree blossoms
and the grasshopper drags itself along
and desire no longer is stirred.
Then people go to their eternal home
and mourners go about the streets.

6 Remember him—before the silver cord is severed,
and the golden bowl is broken;
before the pitcher is shattered at the spring,
and the wheel broken at the well,
7 and the dust returns to the ground it came from,
and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

8 “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher.
“Everything is meaningless!”

OPENING THOUGHTS: As Solomon begins to conclude his letter he gives advice applicable to everyone but focused on young people (you decide what young is). He does this by emphasizing what they must continually REMEMBER as they age. He admonishes them to live life to the full in the present BUT to keep remembering what's ahead in the future. He says, "Listen the clock of life is ticking"! He then uses powerful imagery to describe what old age can be like (12:1b-5a). Then states the reality of death both in terms of seriousness but also celebration as we go to our "eternal home".

"Remember" has two primary meanings - 1) to recall the past, 2) to call to mind, to focus on, to give attention to. Solomon says, You need to keep a few keys front and center in your thinking and living or you will miss the life God designed you for. Life without these keys is meaningless and empty.

MAIN POINTS:

5 Keys We Must Remember:

1. Remember the Goodness in Life

11:8 However many years anyone may live, let them enjoy them all.

Are you fully awake to all the goodness God has blessed us with?

2. Remember Your Judge

11:9 ...but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

Are you living like God is watching and has an opinion that matters forever?

3. Remember Your Creator

12:1 Remember your Creator in the days of your youth,

Is your identity shaped by the truth that you are the exquisite creation of God himself?

4. Remember Your Calendar

12:1 ...in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, I find no pleasure in them.

Are you staying aware of the brevity of life so you make your days count for eternity?

5. Remember Your True Home

12:5 ...Then people go to their eternal home and mourners go about the streets.

12:7 "and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Are you living for heaven or earth? Is your home in heaven lightening every burden of life's journey?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. 11:9 tells young people to enjoy life but there is one phrase in the verse which sets boundaries on how they enjoy life...what is that phrase and what does it mean to you?
2. 12:7 explains both our mortality and immortality. Where does it underline mortality? What words underline immortality?
3. Although Christians age the same way physically that non-Christians do, what is the dramatic difference that brightens aging for Christians?
4. What would the impact be if we lived more and more like this life was a brief "earth visitation" and heaven was our "forever destination"?
5. How are you investing in eternity?

CHALLENGE: Will you remember to live life fully and joyfully for God because of who you are in Him and where you are headed forever?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Father, I rejoice in who you are! You are the good gift-giver! You give me so many good things to enjoy in life. You are my Creator! I am your child! I am created by you and saved by the death and resurrection of your son, Jesus. I want to live in the reverence and reality of your presence knowing you are watching my life to reward me forever. Help me to keep my eye on the calendar of my life so that I may number my days and invest every day for your kingdom's sake. Thank you that though my body may fail me as I age, my soul and spirit can grow richer and healthier all the days of my life. I thank you that my true home is in your presence forever. In Jesus name, Amen!