

**ECCLESIASTES SERIES TWELVE**  
**REMEMBER ME**  
**DR. ROGER BARRIER**  
**7/1/2007**  
**ECCLESIASTES 11:7-12:7**  
**S-1730**

♥SLIDE #: Wisdom Literature: A first grade twist on old proverbs.

•SLIDE #: Don't bite the hand that...looks dirty.

•SLIDE #: Strike while the ...bug is close.

•SLIDE #: You can't teach an old dog...math.

•SLIDE #: Better to be safe than to ...punch a fifth grader.

•SLIDE #: Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and...you have to blow your nose.

Remember that in the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon, the king of Israel, trying to find wisdom and meaning in life.

Not "meaningless:" He concludes that it is all like the morning mist—a vanishing vapor.

•SLIDE #: Principle One: Ecclesiastes 11:8: "However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all."

•SLIDE #: Principle Two: Ecclesiastes 12:1: "Remember your creator in the days of your youth."

•SLIDE #: The Lesson: Remembering our creator is the key to the enjoyment of life.

"REMEMBERING GOD" is a phrase used hundreds of time in the Bible to describe a lifestyle of interaction with Jesus Christ.

Just before David died, he gave instructions to the young boy about the importance of remembering God (1 Chronicles 28:5-10).

•SLIDE #: Josephus tells us that Solomon was 12 years old when he became king.

•SLIDE #: 1 CHRONICLES 28:8-10: "So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel ... and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, .... "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father,

SLIDE #: and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you.

Solomon failed to follow his father's advice! He went on a search for life's meaning and significance all on his own—without God. No joy: just misery.

OVERVIEW SEARCH IN CHAPTERS 2-5.

Solomon is writing at the end of his life—death is near—evaluating his life,—plenty of parties but they did not bring any lasting satisfaction.

After years of suffering and misery, Solomon sums up his observations of what is important in life.

Three times Solomon returns to this conclusion in this book of wisdom literature. Notice the injunction to enjoy life.

♥SLIDE #: ECCLESIASTES 3:12-14: “Be happy and enjoy life.”

♥SLIDE #: ECCLESIASTES 5:18-19: “Be happy and enjoy life.”

Enjoy life because time is passing away—placed in the context of a meaningful relationship of “remembering God.”

He emphasizes the same truth in our passage for this morning.

Let me overview this entire passage of Ecclesiastes 11-12 for you.

♥SLIDE #: Enjoy Life Now—READ ECCLESIASTES 11:8.

♥SLIDE #: Because Good Health, Vigor And Youth Do Not Last Forever. Death Is On The Way.

♥SLIDE #: Enjoy Life—How? By “Remembering” God READ ECCLESIASTES 12:

♥SLIDE #: ENJOY LIFE NOW—BECAUSE GOOD HEALTH, VIGOR AND YOUTH DO NOT LAST FOREVER (Ecclesiastes 11:8-12:7).

Stop Wasting Time! Happiness Is For Today!

READ ECCLESIASTES 11:8.

Stop Wasting Time! Happiness Is For Today! We are not to put it on hold until we finally gain and achieve some far-off goal or destination.

“But, I’m waiting until I have all the things I’ve always wanted. When that happens, I’ll be happy.”

“But, I’m waiting for a person who will fulfill my life.”

“But, I’m waiting until I have achieved my goals and realized my dreams.”

Solomon would say, “You are wasting time! None of these hold water. You had best stop waiting and enjoy it now.

“The Odyssey”

Homer writes of the Trojan Wars 800 years before Christ.

Odysseus been to fight the Trojan Wars and offended Poseidon and is having trouble getting home.

Crosses the River Styx: “I just want to get home.”

Hades in the underworld: “The answer is right in front of your face. It’s the journey.”

You had best enjoy today. It is your last chance for today.

“Country songs: All kinds of advice: “Don’t come home a drinking with lovin’ on your mind.

“Looking for love in all the wrong places.”

♥SLIDE # Build your life on the right foundation. Money, sex, and power have yet to bring ultimate

happiness to anyone and you will not be the exception.  
Remember Jesus Christ.

♥SLIDE #: We should enjoy life now because good health, vigor and youth do not last forever.  
Darkness and death are on the way.

READ Ecclesiastes 12:1: “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.’”

When you are young you believe that these days will never come.  
Story Walnut Hill and thinking about the year 2000. I will be 50. It will never get here. One day it did.

Pompei

♥SLIDE #: Solomon wrote a POEM to describe the “dark days” of life approaching death.

Julie said NO: I said motivation to enjoy life and health now.

♥SLIDE #: Ecclesiastes 12:2: “Before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dim.”  
*Cataracts and failing eyesight. Irisis reduce from 7mm to 5mm.*

Ecclesiastes 12:2: “And the clouds return after the rain.”

*It’s a picture of gloom.*

Ecclesiastes 12:3: “When the keepers of the house tremble and the strong men stoop.”

*Our bodily “house” is built on two strong pillars - our legs. They are referred to here as “mighty men”. Ultimately even the mighty men stoop.*

♥SLIDE #: Ecclesiastes 12:3: “when the grinders cease because they are few.”

*You don’t need a course in Hebrew to interpret that one! Solomon is referring to our teeth.*

Ecclesiastes 12:4: “When the doors to the street are closed and the sound of the grinding fades.”

*Hearing fails*

Ecclesiastes 12:4: “When men rise up at the sound of birds but all their songs grow faint.”

*The slightest noise terminates our sleep. We used to be able to sleep through a locomotive roaring by outside the window. Now all it takes is the peck, peck, peck of a woodpecker. Vocal cords which once were clear and on-key are no longer in that condition.*

♥SLIDE #: Ecclesiastes 12:5: “When men are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets.

*The older we get, the more overprotective we become. Winter visitor drivers.*

Ecclesiastes 12:5: “When the almond tree blossoms.

*Have you ever seen an orchard of almond trees in full bloom? It’s beautiful - a silver gray appearance. Solomon is painting a word picture of graying hair. Take away all the hair color in this room and it would like an almond grove in bloom.*

Ecclesiastes 12:5: “And the grasshopper drags himself along.”

*We’re gonna get there, but it will take a little longer.*

Ecclesiastes 12:4: “And desire is no longer stirred.”

*Talking here about sexual desire. Encouragingly, this one appears at the end of the list. Impotence is one of the last plagues of growing older. That is relieving, huh guys?*

*T.B. Matson, 80 year-old seminary professor was asked, “At what age do you stop being sexually tempted by women?” “You’ll have to ask someone older than me.”*

♥SLIDE #: Ecclesiastes 12:5: “Then man goes to his eternal home and mourners go about in the streets.”

Ecclesiastes 12:6: Remember Him when? Before, “the silver cord is broken... the golden bowl is crushed.”

*I think he's referring to a stroke, that terrible moment when that little clot makes its way into the "golden bowl" and lodges up there in the brain. And all of a sudden we're not able to reach to that radio knob or television switch and turn it on and off. We want to. We know our head wants it to happen, but we can't move that part of our body anymore. Why? "The golden bowl is crushed."*

Then, the ultimate: "... the pitcher by the well is shattered." *That signifies the heart. It's the tragic scene of heart failure. And the whole circulatory system becomes shattered. Isn't that an eloquent way to put it? Eloquent or not, it's reality.*

If all we could look forward to in life were grey hairs and fewer teeth, then I'd call that a bleak future. But Solomon does not stop there.

Ecclesiastes 12:7: "The spirit returns to God."  
*The cycle is not totally meaningless!*

♥SLIDE #: DEATH is an open door to a new life.

Life ends as a majestic commencement into what existence is all about. Death simply allows us entrance.

♥SLIDE #: ENJOY LIFE HOW? BY "REMEMBERING" GOD

READ Ecclesiastes 12:1: "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth."

Circle this verse: He doesn't say, "Remember" meaning, "Don't forget Him".

It's not like a reminder you write with lipstick on the mirror of your bathroom, "Remember your coat, school books, lunch—as you leave the house for the car—remember God!" It's not that kind of remembrance.

"Remember your Creator when you are young," means to act decisively on behalf of the living God. This means that we realize *He is the one essential ingredient we need for a truly happy lifestyle.*

♥SLIDE #: Let me illustrate this: Bronwyn at top of ski lift

Like is like going down a ski run - how do you navigate safely and carefully to the bottom and not end up with your head in the snow?

Great anticipation, top of hill, impatient with first lesson. Left early before he told them how to stop.

♥SLIDE #: Bronwyn at bottom with skis in air

Skiers skied by dropping mittens, boot, poles, board.

Youth: At the top of the run. Bron forgot to ask the ski instructor how to stop. Get an instructor. That's that the Bible is for - so you won't crash and burn.

People have all sorts of words of good advice about living a joy-filled life.

♥SLIDE #: There is a wonderful fable about how to have enjoyment and happiness in life. It is about a young orphan girl who had no family and no one to love her.

One day, feeling exceptionally sad and lonely, she was walking through a meadow when she noticed a small butterfly caught unmercifully in a thornbush. The more the butterfly struggled to free itself, the deeper the thorns cut into its fragile body. The young orphan girl carefully released the butterfly from its captivity. Instead of flying away, the little butterfly changed into a

beautiful fairy. The young girl rubbed her eyes in disbelief.

“For your wonderful kindness,” the good fairy said to the girl, “I will grant you any wish you would like.”

The little girl thought for a moment and then replied, “I want to be happy!”

The fairy said, “Very well,” and leaned toward her and whispered in her ear. Then the good fairy vanished.

As the little girl grew up, there was no one in the land as happy as she. Everyone asked her the secret of her happiness. She would only smile and answer, “The secret of my happiness is that I listened to a good fairy when I was a little girl.”

When she was very old and on her deathbed, the neighbors all rallied around her, afraid that her fabulous secret of happiness would die with her. “Tell us, please,” they begged. “Tell us what the good fairy said.”

The lovely old woman simply smiled and said, “She told me that everyone, no matter how secure they seemed, no matter how old or young, how rich or poor, had need of me.”

Now that is a beautiful story and it contains much truth.

But that is not at all Solomon’s message.

♥SLIDE #: Solomon says that the key to a life of enjoyment is based on the concept of “Remembering God. Living in lock step with Him.”

♥SLIDE #: illustrate with newly released movie: Evan almighty—which is a contemporary rendering of the life of Noah.

Noah was the only one who lived a life of “remembering God.”

We can learn from him.

Evan just elected congressman. Come home; kids are ready for promised hike: “I get to sponsor a bill. He is so excited. Kids stop jumping and playing—know dad is going to put them off again.

VIDEO: EVAN ALMIGHTY CLIP ONE.

Wedding vows: I promise to love honor, cherish and make you 5<sup>th</sup> in my life. Many of us have forgotten.

Remember your wife! Remember your children! He forgot.

Loyalty (wedding) vows to Christ: Some of have made Christ fifth in our lives. We have forgotten Him—forgetting God—living on our own terms—makes life much harder to enjoy.

♥SLIDE #: “Remembering God” implies that He has a built-in purpose for all of us.

God and Evan are overlooking the valley filled with subdivisions where Evan lives. God is showing him what it looked like when He created it.

Evan: “Why did you pick me?”

Because you wanted to change the world. So do I.”

VIDEO: EVAN ALMIGHTY CLIP TWO.

“I know the plans I have for you!” He created a great plan for us that fits like a glove (*teleios*).

God knew Evan’s name. He knows us personally as well—and the desires of our hearts.

Our creator has a name for us—it is written on a white stone in heaven—it is our destiny.

Did you have a nickname growing up?

God has sealed orders for each of our lives. Much of life's delight is opening the envelope and following His plan.

God has sealed orders for your life. Enjoyment comes in living them out as we interact with Jesus Christ.

♥SLIDE #: "Remembering God"—living on edge, living by faith is an adventure. It may be scary but it is never boring.

Evan explaining to wife about his call from God. "I'm building an ark.  
"You're Noah?! You are scaring me! Please stop. Boys need a father. I need my husband."

VIDEO: Evan Almighty CLIP THREE.

Caleb was taking the land—conquering enemies  
Paul was traversing the world—escaping in baskets  
Sarah couldn't see her varicose veins for her pregnant tummy

They were living the risky life of faith adventure

♥SLIDE #: "Remembering God"—locked in step with Him—carrying out His purpose—underlies the life of true enjoyment.

Evan accepts the call and is building the ark.  
Wife: Kids, come with me, we are going to mother's.  
"Dad, we are not leaving, we like the new dad much better than the old one.  
Video of three sons and wife and animals working happily together to build the ark.

VIDEO: Evan Almighty CLIP FOUR.

♥SLIDE #: *No one need miss the joy of life—no matter how old or young we are (Ecclesiastes 11:8).*