

## **2131 - BE POSITIVE & REJOICE - Ecc 11.1-10**

Sol starts this chapter with one of his **more positive** statements - **investing** resources in many places! *Cast your bread upon the waters for you **WILL find it** after many days [1]! Give a portion to **seven**, even to **eight** [1,2]* ‘The Message’: ‘Be **generous**: Invest in acts of charity. Charity yields high returns’! You are **not** wasting your time doing a lot of good. ‘Don’t do 7 good things, do 8’! [2]

What Sol is really saying is: Do as much good as you can! In the **long run** its rewarding! You **will** find blessing! Theodore Roosevelt: ‘Do what you can; where you are; with what you have’! You see, life on earth was **meant** to be **good**! Our world is great place to be in. A place with hope, happiness, blessing! But **man ruined** life on earth, but the earth still **retains** much of its original goodness and Christ has come to **redeem** it to its original blessing. Despite Paris Attack, the world **is much better** than it was 2,000 and 300 years ago!

Remember God created life **for** His pleasure and joy and *He saw it was good*. So He created **people** with the **express purpose** of **them** enjoying it **with Him**! Not in **isolation from Him**! God by **nature** is **happy and good - and kind**! The whole idea of God making mankind, was that **mankind** would be happy **for ever and ever**! That was the big idea behind God creating man and planting him in the Beautiful Garden on the earth and endowed him with **creativity**!

God **had given** man the **opportunity** to **seal** for himself the enjoyment and blessings of the ‘perfect’ world he was put in!! **That** of course is **how** the world all went wrong! Man **distrusted** God as the Source of all the goodness he enjoyed and **transferred** his **allegiance** to an **unknown/untested** source of so called ‘wisdom’!!

It was ‘wisdom’ that turned out to be **folly** of the greatest kind. That **choice** of Adam was the **worst and most fatal** tragedy of all time & history! Every tragedy in the world can trace its **source** back to that one event - even, dare I say, the **Paris Terrorist Attacks** on Friday night and all the **horrendous evils** that are going on today in **human wickedness AND natural disasters** like **earthquakes/tsunamis**! Because **man’s SIN** was the **reason** why the **GROUND** was **cursed**!

Listen to God's Word: *And to Adam He said 'Because YOU have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree...cursed is the GROUND because of YOU'* [Gen 3:17]! The ground is in **disorder!** Tectonic plates were not created to bring disaster! There is **distortion/corruption** in the earth - the earth does not function as it was originally created. Thus weeds, nettles now, but not there initially! **Man** is to **blame** for all **tragedies, disorders, sorrows!**

Thankfully it is **not** Hollande, Merkel, Cameron or Obama that has **ultimate control!** Sol has shown that although man is still foolish - God is **still in control.** God is still **administering kindness** to man! At **exceptional times** God uses His Almighty power **in judgment!** *God is angry with the sinner every day* yet He **holds back!** There are still **laws** in the universe which are **reliable** that **we** can **depend** on. *If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth, and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there it shall lie*[3] The **law of gravity** still operates and for a reason!

So, Sol is **promoting** kindness and generosity saying that it yields **rewards.** He is calling on us not to be **negative** in our outlook - yes, there is the **possibility** things may go wrong - yes, there are **clouds** but if we **observe** every **possibility** of trouble, nothing will be done!

We must sow and plant and do as much good as we can. *as we have opportunity let us do good to all men and especially to those who are of the household of faith* [Gal:6:10] No one is wasting their time doing good, especially assisting God's people! \*Everyone can tell of their **own lost opportunities!** We have all said 'If I was **young again,** I would...' That's **admitting** I had an opportunity...missed it!

Paul in Rom 2:4 reminds his readers that *God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance,* but goes on to warn them of **storing up wrath** for God's Day of Judgment. Well, Paul indicates that we can also **store up blessings** for that Day! *to those who by patience in well-doing ... eternal life* [Rom 2:5-7] **That** is what Sol is saying 'Store up' good works for a great reward - do as much good as you can, for blessings in heaven are **related** to our works on earth! We are saved by **faith** but are judged by works! \*Sol **bolsters up** his point by reminding us that God also works in a **mysterious** way

when He does marvellous things *As you do **not know** the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, **SO** you do **not know** the **work of God** who makes everything* [5] God may be doing something great when you don't know - [So] *In the morning sow your seed and in the evening withhold not your hand* [5,6] Its simple really - 'The more **shots** at **goal**, the more likely to **score**'!

'Any good that I can do, I must do it now - for I shall not pass this way again'! Sol now tells us to do it **NOW**! And he particularly mentions when we are **YOUNG! Rejoice O young man in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth** [9] Sol is all for enjoying oneself - even in our **youth** - and that is **just as God intended** - in our **youth** as well as in old age! **Enjoy** what is around *Light is sweet and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun*[7]

Now not many of us can remember **Helen Shapiro's** song 'Don't Treat me Like a Child' in the 60s which had a line: 'The **best years** of my life I know are those when I am **young**; And since **I'm sure** that this is so; Gonna have **my fun**'!! And so, 'Gonna be my **own advisor**; Cause my mind's **my own**'!! It was typical of the new liberality of the 60s! Helen is a Jewess and became a Christian and some of us heard her in Perth some years ago! So, being Jewish she may well have been familiar with these words of Solomon.

Sol would have **AGREED** that our best years could indeed be when we are young! - **IF** we know God! '*...LET your **HEART cheer** you in your **youth. WALK** in the ways of your **HEART** and the sight of your eyes* [9] Now the **heart** is the '**seat**' of the soul where God would sit if He were King! Whoever is our 'King' reigns in our soul As Paul put it *You are **slaves** of the one you **obey**, either of sin which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness* [Rom 6]

Sol does **not** think youthfulness is sinfulness - we **can enjoy** youth the way **God intended young people** to enjoy God in life! There **ARE** some things which can **ONLY** be enjoyed in a youthful body and mind! Good things! Things God would approve of! **Sport**! Those occupations that require **energy** and perseverance, etc

Now of course Sol's **understanding** of 'fun', 'enjoyment', 'best

years' would be very **MUCH DIFFERENT** from Helen's and the young people in the 60s! But Sol **experienced BOTH** 'types' of fun - the godly and the ungodly version of it! So he **IS** qualified to give his judgment on which is best! He has already told us to **Rejoice with the wife of your youth** [Pro 5:18] and now just **Rejoice in your youth** [9]

I do not think Sol is being sarcastic and ironic as if to say 'Yes, yes, go on, and enjoy ourselves in any way you like, but remember God will **jolly well** call you to task for enjoying your youthful pleasures'. No, there **ARE blessings** of youth!! Sol is saying God will you give a **fair** and **honest** judgment when that time comes. Sol is **not warning** against youth, but **advising** and **encouraging** young people to enjoy **God's** gifts **designed** for youthfulness. But, like everything else, at any age, never forget you have to give account to God for our lives. Sol is speaking against **IDOLISING** the state of youth!

Sol is so **positive** here that he even tells us to **get rid** of any **negative** thoughts about enjoying our youth. But of course we need to enjoy it in **faith** - faith in **God's** **goodness** and **not** in **selfish gratification!** Youth is a time when **selfish** gratification is at its most **powerful!** The **fleshly** sins are **more dominating** when we are young! There **IS** a strength and energy in youth which we **cannot** enjoy in **old age!**

You see, there are many people who **DREAD** getting old! They **CAN'T COPE** with the **thought** of getting old and being **unable** to **enjoy** life! But that is because of the life they lived in **the past** and their **unbelief** in God! This is where **Xnity shines!** Xn pleasures are **timeless**, they are **spiritual** - not **necessarily connected** to youthfulness! They can be enjoyed when young **and** old at all ages - from childhood to **dotage!** The very nature of Xn joy is an abstract pleasure tied to the **soul** of man - not his body! For **UNBELIEVERS** there is **no future** - everything is **running down**, fading away! But for the **Xn** the **future** is bright, **best is yet to be!** Sol: *the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* There is brightness and lightness and Sol says *Light is sweet* [7]! Jesus *I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows Me...will have the light of life!* [J8:12] And Paul said *Christ Jesus... brought life and immortality to light thru the gospel* [2 Tim 1:10]