

Youths Urged to Obey the Gospel – Now!

Ecclesiastes 12:1

**“Remember now your Creator
in the days of your youth”**

(A message preached by Daniel E. Parks December 4, 2011
On the occasion of the death of a beloved nephew)

My father is in his ninetieth year. My mother is also well-advanced in age. Each is the last remaining member of the family into which he or she was born. They both have survived not only parents but also all siblings. Almost all their friends of their generation have now departed this earthly life. My father is the oldest minister of Christ in almost every worship service he attends, including conferences attended by many fellow ministers. Both my parents have advanced well beyond their “threescore years and ten”, and have the earthly griefs and sorrows to prove it.

My very aged parents will witness tomorrow the burial of a grandson. He died at the young age of only twenty-nine years, and was a strapping veteran of the Marine Corps.

Not long ago my parents witnessed the burial of another grandson. He died at the tender age of only seventeen years, with what many assumed was a long and successful life before him.

My parents have witnessed also the burial of a son-in-law. He died at the age of forty-eight years, yet full of physical strength and vigor, leaving one of their young daughters in widowhood.

None should be so foolish as to presume we will outlive our parents and grandparents, or generational peers. Indeed, none should be so foolish as to presume we will live past this present hour. Death comes alike to *tender-aged*, *middle-aged*, *very aged*.

And none should be so foolish as to not be prepared for the moment of death. You know you *will* die, but not *when*. And you know it would be best to be ready for that event *now*. Many who are so foolish as to think they will repent at the *midnight* hour have died in the *eleventh* hour. Others who lived into their midnight hour were at that time so demented that they could not remember their own name, much less the gospel preached to them at an earlier time.

I therefore remind you of the exhortation of Solomon: “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth ...” (Ecclesiastes 12:1ff). Your “Creator” will be your Judge at the final day, “For God will bring every work

into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (v.14). He will judge you according to His requirement to “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all [i.e., your whole duty]” (v.11). You must do so by properly reverencing Him and obeying His requirement to repent of your sins and trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation. Do so in your “youth” – and all of us are younger now than we will be tomorrow. The requirement to do so “now” emphasizes the urgency to do so immediately.

This urgency is required throughout Holy Scriptures.

- “God ... *now* commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). This “now” is this present gospel age. God’s *command* to repent is a solemn charge – not a mere invitation – to turn to Him in faith *now*.
- “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). Do not assume that a day of salvation for you will be found after *now*, God’s accepted time.
- “*Today*, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:15). You have no assurance you will hear His voice calling you tomorrow. Come to Christ posthaste!

Do not foolishly trust in any supposed invincibility. Death comes unexpectedly to both old and young (as seen above), both weak and strong, both wicked and righteous (as in Ecclesiastes 9:2), both poor and rich (as in Luke 16:19-22), both failures and successes (see Luke 12:16-20).

Do not foolishly procrastinate regarding obedience to the gospel. This was a grievous error of the Roman procurator Felix. Having heard from a gospel preacher “about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come”, he fearfully answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you” (Acts 24:25). To the best of our knowledge, he never found a time convenient to him, and death found him in a most inconvenient situation. Today – *now* – is the only convenient time!

Obedience to the gospel from youth results in everlasting blessedness and spares from untold miseries. Refusal of the gospel until death results in everlasting misery devoid of blessedness.

If you have not already repented from sin and come to Christ, so to today – *now*! May today be your day of salvation! Be thereby prepared for the moment of death whenever it occurs.