

Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

First RPC Durham

I. It Is Good to Know the Vanity of Life (11:7-8, 12:8).

- A.** Exposition of the Text (11:7-8)
- B.** Why is this light sweet?
 - 1) Because we have tasted the bitterness of darkness, the light is sweet to us.
 - 2) Because we see by the light what a gift everything is.
 - 3) Because understanding is better than ignorance.
 - 4) Because acceptance of truth is better than refusal of reality.
- C.** Uses from the Text
 - 1) Read the whole Bible, not just the 'nice' bits.
 - 2) Be a student of your own experience and wisdom of others.
 - 3) Respond rightly to life (1 Sam 2:2; Eccl 3:4, 12:8)

II. Glorify God in Your Youth (11:9-12:1).

- A.** Youth should be something sweet (11:9a) — Whereas age is marked by gravity, youth is marked by levity. Consider (1) Childhood; (2) Young Adults; (3) The time before Middle Age
- B.** Righteousness must be instructed in the conscience from the earliest days, which will be tested and proved throughout youth (11:9b; 2 Tim 3:14-15)
 - 1) With increase in age comes increase of responsibility, and with the increase of responsibility the increase of freedom.
 - 2) Remember that youth is not an excuse for sinning.
- C.** Youth ought to enjoy good health and few cares (11:10)
- D.** Remember God in all you do (12:1)
- E.** Do not despise your youth, but do not remain a child (12:1b) —
 - 1) Be content.
 - 2) Do not despise your authorities.
 - 3) Grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in maturity of common life (1 Cor 13:11)

III. Glorify God in Your Old Age (12:2-7).

- A.** In the Dignity of Old Age
- B.** In the Decline of Old Age (12:2-5)
 - 1) When the light of the mind becomes dim (12:2a)

- 2) When there is sickness upon sickness (12:2b)
- 3) The shaking of the hands (12:3a)
- 4) The back and legs bent over with age (12:3b)
- 5) The losing of teeth and trouble eating (12:3c)
- 6) The losing of eyesight (12:3d)
- 7) The losing of hearing (12:4a)
- 8) The slurring and struggle of speech (12:4b)
- 9) Sleeplessness and waking up through the night at every little thing (12:4c)
- 10) The struggle to breathe, let alone enjoy singing (12:4d)
- 11) The fear of falling because of the weakness of legs and unsteadiness of feet (12:5a-b)
- 12) The hair has become white, a crown of glory (12:5c) Pr 16:31
- C.** In the Discouragement of Old Age
 - 1) Physical Discouragement (12:5d)
 - 2) Emotional Discouragement (12:5e-g)
- D.** In the Death of Old Age (12:6-7)
 - 1) *[Remember your Creator] before . . .* (12:6) —
 - a) The Preciousness of Life
 - b) Characteristics of Death: (i) Unnatural; (ii) Sudden; (iii) Irrevocable
 - c) *Use, Remember God in your dying days.*
 - 2) The Curse of Death (12:7a; Gen 3:19)
 - 3) The Hope of Christ (12:7b; 1 Cor 15:55-56)
- E.** Uses from the Text
 - 1) To Youth
 - a) Watch, consider the ways of those who go before you.
 - b) Prepare
 - 2) To those of Middle-Age
 - a) Accept what lies ahead of you.
 - b) Persevere in your duties now.
 - 3) To those of Old Age
 - a) Take Courage
 - b) Take Comfort: (i) Finish the race in faith (Psa 49:7, 15); (ii) The Word of God is true; He will bring you to glory (Phil 1:6); (iii) There is unspeakable joy forever which awaits those die in the Lord (2 Cor 5:8; 1 Thes 4:13-14, 16-18).