

Title: Seek the Sweet Light, the Pleasant Son

Text: Ecclesiastes 11: 7-12: 1

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Ecclesiastes 11: 7: Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: 8: But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity. 9: Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. 10: Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity. 12: 1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

Here is a word to all of us—especially to those who are young.

Proposition: The wisest thing we can do with our lives—especially beginning in our youth—is to prepare for the day when we shall die and meet God in judgment.

To do so we must: Seek THE Sweet Light, THE Pleasant Son.

I. FIRST, A WORD TO AWAKEN US TO OUR NEED—Ecclesiastes 11: 7: Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:

The “light” and “sun” spoken of here is a metaphor of a life of many years full of good days. Everyone wants a life of many years walking in the sunshine of good days. This is the light and the sun that most seek. We do not like a life of storms and raging waves. We graduate from high school and continue education because we seek a good job and a nice home, to provide ourselves security in this life. Everyone wants a life that can be compared to sweet light and a life of walking in the sunshine.

Think of things in life that we seek with great zeal; think of how many things in life for which we make much preparation, things which take much coordinating and things we go after with all our strength; they are things we seek because they are good for us, good for our families and so on.

Yet, when is the last time we sought spiritual things with that same kind of zeal. Do we teach our children the word of God on a daily basis with that same kind of dedication? Do we seek to promote the gospel or speak about Christ to our perishing neighbors with that same heart with which we seek carnal security in this life? Why do we act as if this carnal light and carnal security is so important? It is not the most important thing.

Indeed, natural light and life, the natural sun, is sweet and pleasant. Above all, light and life are most vital for natural life. Light was the first thing God made when he created the world. The eye to behold light is one of the first members formed in the body in the womb. Indeed, the light of the sun is sweet and pleasant thing to behold; indeed to have life you need light and we need life to behold light. So indeed, it is sweet to have natural light. It is pleasant to be alive to behold the light of the sun. There is no disputing this truth.

Still, there is something we must all remember. After natural light and natural life, darkness and death shall soon come—**Ecclesiastes 11: 8: But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity.**

Notice this key word “if”—**Ecclesiastes 11: 8:...if a man live many years, and [if a man] rejoice in them all.** Few live many years. Even fewer rejoice in them all.

Psalm 39:5: Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth.

Hold up your hand. Note the space across your four fingers. That is a handbreadth. God has made your days as short as your four fingers are broad. If you are a young person then that may not have much impact on you. While young we anticipate many things for which we must wait. It makes time seem to pass slowly. But think of the summer break, in between school classes, when you want time to last forever. In the blink of an eye summer is over. Your life is that summer break. In a moment, your life will be over—“and after this the judgment.” (Heb 9: 27)

But let’s suppose you do have a long life and great ease—do not let the thought of that lull you into a false sense of security. Some live many years—in 30 or 40 years they have a relatively easy life. Therefore they think it will always be this way.

Yet, God says to remember that even in these best days of your life, days of darkness shall come. Note there is no “if” in this second statement, “for they shall be.” And notice—“they shall be many.” The days of our life, and the good times, may not be many but the days of darkness shall be many.

First, he describes it in the next chapter as our bodies growing old. “The keepers of the house shall tremble”—our head and hands shall tremble with age. “Strong men shall bow themselves”—the man once strong enough to carry great weights shall be bent over with age, unable to even lift his own weight. “The grinders shall cease”—the teeth shall be few. “The windows be darkened”—the eye shall grow dim.” Now, if you spend your life living for your carnal senses—touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing—what shall you have when your senses are gone? Some here are not yet 20 years old. I know people who have been in that shape for 40 years, since their 60’s. They lived as long in that shape as they did in the energy of their youth. Remember, the dark days shall soon come.

Secondly, there is another kind of darkness. Our bodies must lie in death, in the darkness of the grave. For most, unless Christ returns soon after we die, those days will be many more than the days of our living in the light above ground.

Thirdly, there is the darkness which shall come in the end of this world. Scripture speaks of a day when the sun shall be darkened black as sackcloth and the moon shall not give her light but shall become as blood, the stars shall fall from heaven, every mountain and island shall be moved out of its place, and the heaven shall depart as a scroll. (Rev 6: 12-16)

Fourthly, there is the darkness called “outer darkness.” (Mt 22: 13) We have no idea what that will be like but it will be a terrible darkness which lasts for all eternity where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

When this darkness—of the flesh, of this life, of the heavens and earth—comes then we shall find **“all is vanity.”** This is not all there is. But if you spend these days living for all things earthy then you shall find that it was all in vain. You shall have spent your life living for nothing.

So it is good for us to remember after these days of light and life come those days of darkness and death. It will help you not to be lifted up with pride, not to be fooled into a false carnal security, not to be carried away to a life of indecency. Those days will come with much less terror if we prepare for those days today.

II. SECONDLY, THE HOLY SPIRIT ANSWERS AN OBJECTION THAT HE KNOWS THE YOUNG MAN WILL MAKE.

The young man hears this warning and his answer is: then I will rejoice in my youth; I will let my heart cheer me; I will walk in the ways of my heart; I will walk in the sight of my eyes; I will live it up while I can! He says, "MY WILL SHALL BE MY ONLY LAW WHETHER IT IS GOD'S WILL OR NOT!"

The very fact that this would be the answer of the natural man to the first warning is convincing enough that your ways are wrong—they are not God's ways.

Proverbs 14:12: There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

Illustration: A young man contacted me over 3 years ago with questions about Christ. Eventually, he broke contact. Last week, he wrote again. He told me he had decided "to follow no religion but his conscience." But now he has met a religious girl. So he has questions for me. I wrote him back hoping God will bless these words to wake him up. I told him that he sounds as lost as when I spoke with him before. But Christ did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Go learn what that means. That is Christ's word. I told him to follow his idol god. But I am telling you that a man who follows no religion but his conscience has a fool for a guide.

So the Holy Spirit of God answers that objection with a bit of irony—**Ecclesiastes 11: 9: Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.**

The man who desires to live his life seeking only to gratify the lusts of his flesh may find that God will give him his desires. But know, God will deal with you, even in this life. For instance, God gives you advantages but instead of using them to seek God, you use them to sin against him, to fulfill your own pleasure. Then you glory in how good your life has been, glory in your accomplishment—when you could do nothing except God give it! But know this: God promises to turn that which you glory in, into shame.

Hosea 4: 7: As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.

The greatest check against such a vain ideas is eternal judgment: **Ecclesiastes 11: 9: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.** There is a judgment to come for everyone.

Hebrews 9:27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Put it out of your mind—bury your head in the sand—but we must all face God in judgment. And if you put these things out of your mind, if you go on living life only for self, realize that you are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. When you meet God outside of Christ, God shall judge you for all the carnal and sensual pleasures that you sold your soul to enjoy in this life.

Illustration: "Preacher, you always take away my joy! I have plenty of time to consider those things." I know a man who, when he was a little boy, went everywhere with his father listening to his father preach the gospel. But as he got older he used to say that very thing every time his father would try to speak to him about the gospel, he would say, "you always take away my joy! I have plenty of time to consider those things." Now, his father is with the Lord and that man is old, the age his father was then. His health is bad; he does not have many more days on this earth. Still, when anyone speaks to him about the gospel, he says

the same thing he did when he was a young man, same excuse he has been making all these years. He has never prepared to die and meet God in judgment. Will you repeat that man's mistake?

III. HEAR AS THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US A WORD WE SHOULD HEED TODAY—A WORD WE WILL HEED IF HE WORKS EFFECTUALLY IN OUR HEARTS--Ecclesiastes 11: 10: Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart,

When sinners—especially young people—hear the truth, you hear this message taking away what you love most: your fleshly lusts and carnal senses. Since the gospel is humbling and mortifying, you hate it in your flesh. Your heart boils up in pride. You become angry because this message crosses and contradicts you. But God commands you, “Put that away. And heed this word, now!”

Not only that, God also says—**Ecclesiastes 11: 10: and put away evil from thy flesh.** It means turn from the flesh itself, put away fleshly ideas, put away your sinful lusts.

2 Timothy 2:22: Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

These two commands are the same as God commanding you to repent: from the enmity of your heart and from the evil deeds of your flesh.

Here is why: **Ecclesiastes 11: 10:...for childhood and youth are vanity.** We are sinners by conception. Therefore, all things that you presently hold dear are vanity. Childhood and youth—along with all the things you naturally hold dear—is uncertain, unsatisfying and shall not last! Even this whole whole world is vanity.

Illustration: Flowers on Melinda's table. Now they are withering and shall soon vanish away

Isaiah 40: 6: The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: 7: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. 8: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

IV. SO THEN THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US THIS MOST IMPORTANT COMMAND—I PRAY HE MAKE IT EFFECTUAL IN YOUR HEARTS NOW—Ecclesiastes 12: 1: Remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

He began by saying, “Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” But there is something far more sweet than natural life and natural light; it is spiritual life and spiritual light—Christ the Life and Christ the Light. There is something far more pleasant and far more important than “the light of the s.u.n”. It is “the light of the S.O.N.”

Malachi 4:2: But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Does the thought cross your mind that these are things that you can put off till another day? Be sure you understand. Time is so short—your time is so short—that God commands you not even to depend upon tomorrow. God says, “Now, is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor 6: 2) God says, “Remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”

James 4:14: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

God commands us to take advantage of the time—“redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” (Eph 5: 16) Take advantage of the time by seriously seeking the truth of God’s salvation for sinners. Do it, not once, not just in the beginning but throughout our lives!

You have a life to live, a death to die, a judgment to face and an eternity to spend. Will you waste your life in pursuit of fool’s gold or will you use your life wisely in the pursuit of the unsearchable riches of Christ?

Matthew 16: 26: For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 27: For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

One of the saddest things to see is for a young person to ignore the gospel of Christ when they have opportunity to hear. God has given you great privileges. You have the gospel preached in truth, a faithful church, some have believing parents, believing siblings or family members. Also, you have the word of God to follow along as the gospel is preached and to study at home. Yet, with all these advantages you stop up your ears, close your eyes and “despise wisdom and instruction.” It is like a starving man refusing to eat, a sick man refusing to take medicine, a freezing man refusing to enter into shelter.

God commands you, **“Remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”** Do you know what it means for you for God to be your Creator? He made us and not we ourselves; he is our rightful Lord and owner. Therefore, we are under obligation to honor God by obeying his word to us

If you will not heed this word of God then you are directly disobeying God. You are screaming, “No God!” You are defying and cursing God’s holy name.

But understand that you are a sinner. The only way God will receive you is if Christ has put away your sins. The only way God will receive you is by you believing on Christ, that he has made you perfect to be accepted of holy God.

This word “Creator” is plural. It means “Creators”. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are our Creator. Let me try to tell you why you and I are here, why this creation exists.

God the Father created his people, his church, his kingdom—when in eternity before creating this world, he chose whom he would in Christ, not based on any good or evil in us, and called Christ to redeem us.

Then the triune God created this world and all things in it by Christ, God’s Son.

Colossians 1: 16: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Then man was created after the image of our Creators. In the beginning God said, “Let US make man in OUR image”—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How could Adam be made in the image of the invisible, triune God? God created Adam in the image of God by creating Adam in the image of Christ—after the image of that body Christ would have in the future. Thus Adam was made after the image of the triune God—our Creators—because in Christ, the fullness of the Godhead, dwells in a body. (Gen 1: 26; Col 2: 9)

Then the triune God permitted Satan to enter the garden and Adam to fall. It did not catch God off guard. God allowed it that God might be glorified in the salvation of his people through Christ Jesus. (Am 3: 6)

Then in time, God the Son created his people when he came here and established us in perfect righteousness, laying down his life in our room and stead on the cross.

Then God the Holy Spirit creates his people—when he regenerates us, effectually making us repent and come to Christ in faith. It is then that we have true light and true life—Christ the Light, Christ the Life. It is then that we find how truly sweet Life and Light really are! How pleasant it truly is to behold the “Sun of righteousness.”

So you have our Creators—God the Father created his people in eternity in divine election and everlasting covenant, God the Son created his people in redemption, and God the Holy Spirit creates us in regeneration creating a new man within

And God even created you the first time when you were conceived in your mother’s womb. Why? God created everything that was made, even you, and put you here on this great stage, to give his Son all preeminence in all things!

Illustration: So here you are in this great and grand Creation that God has made for the purpose of glorifying his Son. But if you live life for the earthy rather than the spiritual, for the s.u.n rather than the S.o.n then it is like going to some great play and adoring the spotlight, the curtains, the stage, and all the props rather than the main attraction for which all was created.

So seek now thy Creators by seeking Christ because our text says, know this, you will give Christ all Preeminence. All shall give Christ all Preeminence either by God’s grace, when you bow and believe on Christ or by justice in that day when you are judged by Christ in your sin then cast out of God’s presence for all eternity.

Philippians 2: 9: God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Isaiah 45: 23: I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. 24: Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

Our whole duty to our Creator is fulfilled by us—when we fear God and believe on Christ Jesus, God’s Son.

Ecclesiastes 12: 13: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14: For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Sinner, fear God because you shall come into judgment—every secret thing—whether good or evil shall be judged.

Illustration: The balance—your good will not be on one side and your evil on the other—your good and evil will be on the same side and Jesus Christ the Righteous shall be the one by whom you are judged. If that is

your case then you shall hear, “TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” (Dan 5: 27)

So fear God and keep his commandments. But you cannot keep God’s commandments yourself. We broke God’s commandment in Adam in the garden. (Rom 5: 12, 19-20) Therefore, we were guilty the moment we were conceived.

So there is but one commandment you can keep—and only by God’s grace—this is how we work the works of God:

John 6: 28: Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29: Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

1 John 3:23: And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

So the whole duty of man toward our Creator—the obligation we are under—is to fear the triune God and keep his commandments by believing and worshipping Christ Jesus in whom is the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Salvation is only by the doing and dying of Christ Jesus the Lord. So the only way God will receive you is by coming to Christ in faith, confessing to God that you are a sinner deserving God’s eternal wrath, believing Christ his Son has done everything necessary to justify you from your sins, making you the righteousness of God in him. God promises mercy to all who forsake self and come to God through faith in Christ Jesus. And the proper season for this duty—is now!

Ecclesiastes 12: 1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 2: While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain. 3: In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, 4: And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; 5: Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: 6: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. 7: Then [it shall be too late for then] shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Amen!