

Intro

- ~ If I was to ask how many would like to know why you're on this earth for how many would sign up?
- ~ Taking up this idea of our purpose in life I want to speak primarily to our youth
- ~ There's a battle for our young people today in our schools and colleges
- ~ It is imperative that young people use these years to develop an intimate walk with God. Calling the young person to remember your Creator is not passive; it involves action (Kaiser, 118).
- ~ The intimacy with God and the convictions that can come during a person's younger years will serve him well when he becomes older. Getting on in years generally means more difficult circumstances on many fronts. The spiritual stability that comes from walking faithfully with God during the youthful years will help a person weather future challenges that will come with the passing of years. It's hard to imagine a more significant truth for Christian teenagers to grasp than this one! (Holman Old Testament Commentary)
- ~ The preachers shows in his wisdom in instructing the youth by using the analogy of a house
Just as a house (even new) will eventually have problems
- ~ We can all come up with a list things that need fixed on the house
- ~ Question to the youth – have you seen your parents fixing the house, whether it's painting, repairing the garage, fixing a light, a door, pressure washing the house to get it clean, the ice maker broke on the fridge, there's water coming in the basement, the drains plug up?
- ~ This idea of a house breaking down is one of the reasons Solomon gives as a reason to remember the Lord from the days of our youth.

Outline

The Remembering (V1)

1. Who to Remember - Creator
2. When to Remember - Youth
3. Why to Remember – Days of adversity and old age

The Realities (V2-8)

The Reckoning (V9-14)

The Remembering (V1)

Who to Remember

V1 and 8 serve as bookends to life (from the beginning to end – from youthfulness to being elderly)

From youth to dust (the end of life)

~ Remember - "think about God." It means "pay attention to, consider with the intention of obeying." It is Solomon's version of Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (nkjv). How easy it is to neglect the Lord when you are caught up in the enjoyments and opportunities of youth.

Bible Exposition Commentary - Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Satisfied (Ecclesiastes).

~ Creator stresses that God is the author of our life

~ If God is the one who gave life, then He's the author of life, therefore our life belongs to him

~ We build or lives on the foundation of Jesus Christ

~ A wise builder builds his house on the rock which is Jesus Christ so when the storms of life come we won't be toppled (Matt 7:24-27)

~ We build on the foundation of Christ because we have certain realities that are going to come v2-8

~ David recognizes the Lord as his source and shepherd (Ps 23:1)

~ Paul said in Romans 11:36 "for of him, through him, and to him are all things."

~ "your Creator," emphasizes Him as the Author of life, who gives it and takes it away (cf. Ecc. 12:7; and the allusion to Gen. 2:7; 3:19). (BKC)

~ This is the OT equivalent of 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19,20

~ We remember because of the realities: 1 evil and hard days 2 old age will come

~ Hosea 8:14 Israel has forgotten her maker

~ Israel had forgotten the God who chose them, redeemed them from bondage and led them out of Egypt
1 Sam 4,5 – Israel had a fellowship that was formal, forsaken and forgotten

Remember God before life happens

When to Remember

~ In remembering God before life happens we think about when to remember the creator

~ The days of our youth

~ This sets the stage for life

~ This remembrance keeps us balanced

~ When we were commanded to remember our creator – in our youth

~ Remembering our creator in our youth lays the foundation for the rest of our lives

~ Remembering our creator in our youth can save us a lifetime of heartache and pain because of not having followed Jesus Christ

~ Many times people can accumulate a lot of baggage as a result of not having followed Christ and this baggage becomes a stumbling block between them and the Lord

~ 1 Jn 3:8 Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He came to deal with the baggage that the enemy and godless living have caused us.

~ Examples of great youths

1. Joseph – He remembered God and didn't want to sin against God

Remember God reminds us not to sin

2. David – When everyone was afraid of Goliath David remembered how God delivered David from the lion and the bear and he had the faith that God could deliver him again

Remember God's faithfulness

3. Daniel Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – They wouldn't defile themselves with the king's food. It was a diet the OT forbid and possibly the wine was offered to the Babylonian gods.

Remembering God reminds us not to defile ourselves with the world

The Realities (V2-8)

Why to Remember

~ The realities of life give us the reason to remember our creator

~ The reason to remember is two-fold 1) hard days will come and 2) old age will eventually come

~ When we were young we were excited to experience life, we were fearless, we were eager but we never think about how there will be hard days ahead

~ The hard days that will come are described in v2-7

~ When we're young we don't think about old age but that day comes to us all

~ We live much of life thinking that adversity will happen to someone else and not us but then life and adversity happens to us

The Realities of life

V2-6 these are descriptions of aging

keepers of the house—Your arms and hands tremble.

strong men—Your legs, knees, and shoulders weaken and you walk bent over.

grinders—You start to lose your teeth.

windows—Your vision begins to deteriorate.

doors—Either your hearing starts to fail, or you close your mouth because you've lost your teeth.

grinding—You can't chew your food, or your ears can't pick up the sounds outdoors.

rise up—You wake up with the birds early each morning, and wish you could sleep longer.

music—Your voice starts to quaver and weaken.

afraid—You are terrified of heights and afraid of falling while you walk down the street.

almond tree—If you have any hair left, it turns white, like almond blossoms.

grasshopper—You just drag yourself along, like a grasshopper at the close of the summer season.

desire—You lose your appetite, or perhaps your sexual desire.

long home—You go to your eternal [long] home and people mourn your death.

Bible Exposition Commentary - Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Satisfied (Ecclesiastes).

V7 man will return to the dust

Dust returns to the earth

~ At the end of life we return to the dust

~ This calls Gen 2:7 to mind, “God formed man out of the dust of the ground.”

~ Gen 3:19, “man will work by the sweat of his brow until he returns to the dust in death.”

~ This verse brings reality to our lives – the dust

The spirit shall return to God who gave it

~ Perhaps the point here is that man is eternal and will live on into eternity Eccles 8:8; 3:19-21; 12:14; Ps 36:9

~ This obviously alludes to part of the Creation account ([Gen. 2:7](#); man was made from the dust of the ground and was given breath). This makes it evident that Solomon was not referring to the return of individual human spirits to God for judgment. (BKC)

~ Ryrie - man’s spirit returns to God for judgment.

~ Notice it says the our spirit returns to God who gave it

~ this brings us back full circle to V1 – Remember our creator

V8 - Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

~ Because Solomon has just described the downward spiral of life he says its vanity

~ V1 and 8 serve as bookends to life (from the beginning to end – from youthfulness to being elderly)

From youth to dust (the end of life)

~ This book opens with vanities in Eccles 1:2-4

V2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. 3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? 4 One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever

~ The point of the book is life vain without the Lord

~ Vanity is used 33 times in this book

~ This is the final vanity of vanities used here in Eccles.

~ Life is vanity (empty) without Christ

~ Now he’s showing us that old age without God is vanity (empty, worthless)

The Reckoning (V9-14)

~ Now that the preacher has established the need to Remember and the Realities of life he instructs the youth regarding the Reckoning

~ The way he prepares them for the realities and reckoning is by

1 Teaching them (9-12)

- **V9** What the preacher (Solomon) does – he taught the people knowledge by the following process
 - He gave good heed (pondered)
 - Sought out
 - Set in order many proverbs
- The teacher/preacher should ponder, seek out and set in order his lessons he teaches and preaches
- BKC - he pondered (i.e., carefully weighed in his mind) and searched out and set in order (i.e., carefully arranged) many proverbs.
- Ryrie - Solomon’s words are like goads to prod us and nails to anchor us. The reference to the one Shepherd confirms the fact that the teaching of Solomon is God-given.
- Nelson Study Bible – pondered, sought out, set in order: The three verbs that describe Solomon’s activity may also be translated “weighed, examined, and arranged.”
- **V10** Nelson Study Bible - The Preacher devotes special care to write acceptable words—pleasant words, words of grace—and words of truth. The truth referred to here is the truth from God.
- There is the alluding to words of truth and grace in John 1:14-17
- **V11** The fixing of the words of the preacher
- Nelson Study Bible (ox goads) Just as an ox goad prods an animal in the right direction, so will the words of this book when they are properly understood.

- Nails – Pegs or hooks in a tent where people hung their pots or clothing used in daily life. Thus the preachers words served as hooks on which we hang our hat on
- Nail also seems to have the idea of something that is firmly fixed. It had to be firmly fixed to hold things
- Nelson Study Bible – (nails) -driven nails: The nails, or “pegs,” referred to here are the same as in 2 Chr. 3:9; Jer. 10:4. These are hooks in tents where families hung the clothes and pots needed for everyday life. Here they refer to mental hooks giving stability and perspective to life.
- **V12** This study will be wearisome but necessary so don't be discouraged by the work it takes
- Barnes - Writings.” Probably the proverbs current in the Preacher's age, including, though not especially indicating, his own. The Preacher protests against the folly of protracted, unprofitable, meditation.

2 the final instruction (V13-14)

- **V13** The conclusion of the matter
- Let's hear the conclusion of the whole matter – this speaks of listening to God and his word
- The conclusion of the whole matter is to
 - Fear God
 - Keep his commandments
 - This is the whole duty of man
 - This teaches us the purpose of man – fear God and keep his commandments
 - Fear = revere, respect, and be in awe of
 - Keep = to hedge about (as with thorns), that is, guard; generally to protect, attend to
 - Commandments = all the commands in the bible
- **V14** God will judge all our works
- God will bring every work into judgement
- Solomon then gives further description of these works
- Secret works – 1 Cor 4:5
- Good works – 1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Cor 5:10
- Evil works – 1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Cor 5:10
- This calls to mind our 3 week series we did on the Judgements Seat of Christ

Conclusion

~ The word vanity is used 33 times in this book and at the end of Ecclesiastes Solomon tells us that the life that's vain is a life lived without the Lord and to teach us how to not live a vain life

1 Remember our creator

2 Fear our creator

3 Keep our creator's commands in the bible

~ If we want to know what our purpose is it's to fear God and keep his word

Deut 8

Pro 6:23

Psalms 19:7,8

Psalm 119