Crossroads International Church Dr. Rick Griffith

16 November 2014 Message 16 of 17

NLT 40 Minutes

**How to Enjoy Your Youth**

Title

***Ecclesiastes 11:7–12:7***

**Topic:** Youth

**Subject:** How can you enjoy your youth?

**Complement:** Honor God (before judgment, old age and death come)

**Purpose:** The listeners will decide to serve God *now* since old age is coming.

# Introduction

### Interest: Today we see how to enjoy your youth. Are *you* a youth? How would you know?

Are you a youth?

### Need: Are you a youth or not? That depends on how many stages of life exist. But in its most basic sense, I think life has essentially *three stages:*

What are the stages?

#### One person says that the three stages for women include: (1) annoying her dad, (2) annoying her husband, and (3) annoying her son-in-law.

Women

#### For men the stages are: (1) You believe in Santa, (2) You don’t believe, and (3) You are Santa.

Men

#### Seriously speaking…

Serious

##### Youth includes birth up to about age 30, since by that time most of us get married and are on our own.

• 0-30

• 30-60

##### Mid-life starts quite early in this depiction at age 30 and goes to age 60.

##### Nowadays many people live into their 80s and even their 90s, so old age would refer to ages 60-90.

• 60-90

### Intro to MPI: What happens in stage 1 will certainly influence stages 2 and 3, so youth is crucial. This raises the important question: What should youth pursue in life? How should they live?

Solomon

• Subject

### Background: What can Solomon teach us? Like us, Solomon had three stages of his life:

• Song

His 3 Stages

• Prov.

#### He lived *godly* in his youth—knew true love (Song of Songs), asked for wisdom (1 Kings 3), built the temple (1 Kings 6), etc.

#### He got *sidetracked* in middle age—with political links to 1000 women and other profitless pursuits we saw in Ecclesiastes 2—yet he likely wrote Proverbs then.

• Eccl.

#### He now shares his *wisdom* in his old age—work and wisdom don’t last (Eccl.).

### Context: How does today’s passage fit into the book?

#### Ecclesiastes speaks of many things but focuses upon three areas of life that are fleeting: (1) human achievement, (2) human wisdom, and (3) youth.

Gray
(8 slides)

#### But now the subject shifts into the third fleeting area in the final section of the book. This time it’s about youth (explain book chart).

Youth
(2 slides)

### Preview: This passage specifically shows *two pursuits every youth should have*. However, it actually relates to all of us, whether youth or not. Even if you are ***not*** a youth, you certainly relate to youth and can help them with this passage. This means that you are closer to aging, which this passage also addresses!

2 Pursuits

### Text: Solomon gives us God’s two key priorities for youth in Ecclesiastes 11:7–12:7. Let’s listen in!

• Eccl. 11:7–12:7

(What’s the first pursuit God commands youth? You’ll be happy to know that God says you should…)

# I. Enjoy life now before judgment and death comes (11:7-10).

MP

[Live each day with joy because you’ll account for it and it might be your last.]

## Enjoy your whole life now before death comes (11:7-8).

Whole
Life

### Living is pleasant and good (11:7).

7

### Enjoy life into your old age (11:8a).

8

### Live responsibly because after death is eternity (11:8b).

### The future after death is obscure (11:8c).

(However, some of us are youth, so how can ***youth*** enjoy life?)

## Enjoy your youth in light of God’s judgment (11:9-10).

Enjoy Youth

[Pursue youth’s opportunities realizing that you’ll account to God for each.]

### Enjoy your childhood and youth (11:9a).

9a

### Do what you like and pursue what you see (11:9b).

9b

#### ***Travel*** to share the gospel as many places as you can—like on *Logos Hope*. I got to do this myself in the Crossroads music team when I was 22 years old. God not only allowed me to minister in 11 nations, but he led me to someone with whom I could do this for a lifetime! We sang 269 concerts and know of 10,000 people who trusted Christ in the 20 or more nations we traveled before we got married. In that vein…

Crossroads (4 slides)

Logos Hope

#### My advice? ***Don’t get married*** until your mid-20s. Marriage is great—but it can wait!

### Yet realize that God will judge your choices in life (11:9c).

9c

#### God knows that the most important decisions in life we make when we are young—so he wants this passage to set the trajectory for our lives on the right course. God will hold you accountable for the decisions you make.

10a

10b

#### This week our Burmese member Singpu sent a report of a recent conference he conducted in Myanmar. He saw 24 young people come to Christ! In fact, 80% of people who become Christians do so before age 18.

Singpu
(3 slides)

### Refuse to worry and keep your body healthy (11:10a).

### Yet know that youthful energy won’t last (11:10b).

Subj

(I noted at the beginning that this passage gives *two pursuits every youth should have.*

We saw first that God wants youth—and all of us—to enjoy life. But what else should youth pursue besides fun? In other words, *how* are youth to enjoy life? The way to really enjoy your youth is to…)

MPI

# II. Honor God as Creator before you grow old and die (12:1-7).

MP

 [Respect the Lord as a young person because you soon will be elderly.]

## Honor your Creator now.

1

### Have you ever been guilty of looking at others your own age and thinking, surely I can't look that old? One woman writes…

Old DDS

My name is Alice, and I was sitting in the waiting room for my first appointment with a new dentist.

I noticed his DDS diploma on the wall, which bore his full name. Suddenly, I remembered a tall, handsome, dark-haired boy with the same name had been in my high school class some 30-odd years ago.

Could he be the same guy that I had a secret crush on, way back then?

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought.

This balding, gray-haired man with the deeply lined face was way too old to have been my classmate.

After he examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended Morgan Park High School…

“Yes, yes, I did. I’m a mustang,” he gleamed with pride.

“When did you graduate?” I asked.

He answered, “In 1975. Why do you ask?”

“You were in my class!” I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely.

Then, that ugly, old, bald, wrinkled-faced, fat, gray-haired, decrepit, man asked,

“What did you teach???”

### What does it mean to “remember your creator” (12:1)?

Remember

#### “The command **Remember your Creator** means to revere God, to keep His laws faithfully, to serve Him responsibly, remembering that because He created people, everyone owes Him his life” (Donald Glenn, in *BKC*).

AiG
(7 slides)

#### The opposite, of course, is to forget God—specifically to forget him as Creator!

##### Recent studies show that youth in the church need to heed this more than ever—up to 88% leave the church in their twenties in the US! Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis reports that our kids are actually losing their faith much earlier—as young teenagers, in fact [share slides].

##### It’s been said that, “The difference between the good guys and the bad guys is whether they use human shields or make themselves human shields.”

Honor

##### I agree, but I’d tweak it a bit, as the difference between the good guys and the bad guys is whether they want God to honor *them* or they want to honor *God*.

Honoring God

(But why honor him *now*? As youth, we think we’ll always be invincible—but your life will pass faster than you can ever imagine! So chapter 12 begins by telling youth…)

Invincible

## Honor your Creator *now* before you have the limits of old age (12:1-5).

Now

### The elderly lose perspective (12:1-2).

2 NAU

#### Honor God now before you can’t see well or enjoy life (12:1-2a).

• 2 NLT

#### The elderly are often gloomy (12:2b).

##### Research shows that elderly depression is a common, widespread problem. Adults over age 60 are five times more likely to be depressed or suicidal than younger people.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Elderly Gloom

##### To fight gloom, it’s like me giving my wife the promise that “we’ll be friend ‘til we are old and senile… Then we’ll be new friends!”

Senility

### The elderly slow down physically until they die (12:3-4).

3a NAU
• 3a NLT

Physical

#### Their legs and arms tremble with age (12:3a).

#### Their spine curves so they walk bent over (12:3b).

3b NAU
• 3b NLT

#### Their teeth fall out with too few to chew properly (12:3c).

3c NAU
• 3c NLT

##### Chewing has always been a problem for the elderly.

##### Fortunately, someone has invented a bottle opener shaped like teeth that the elderly can use to get things done faster!

Bottle opener

#### Their eyes can hardly see (12:3d).

3d NAU
• 3d NLT

#### Their pursed lips enclose teeth that chew slowly (12:4a).

4a NAU
• 4a NLT

##### Remember when I noted that life has three stages? Here’s another depiction…

• Youth
• Mid-life
• Elderly

3 Stages

##### Youth have energy, have time, but no money; adults have energy, have money, but no time; and the elderly have time, have money, but no energy.

#### Their ability to sleep is disturbed by a tiny noise (12:4b).

4b NAU
• 4b NLT

#### Ironically, their hearing is impaired (12:4c).

4c NAU
• 4c NLT

(I believe that courage is contagious—but less so for the elderly…)

Courage contagious

### The elderly lose courage and ability (12:5a-e).

Courage

#### Their lack of balance causes a fear of high places (12:5a).

5a NAU
• 5a NLT

#### Their sense of adventure turns into staying home (12:5b).

5b NAU
• 5b NLT

##### A wife told her husband, “You told me you’d spend your whole life trying to make me happy.” His response? “I didn’t expect to live this long.” Sometimes our worry is that we are living too long!

Cartoon

##### In fact, a study came out this week that shows that most people are living longer than they expected! Half thought they’d die before 75 but they didn’t!

5d NAU
• 5d NLT

5c NAU
• 5c NLT

Longevity

#### Their hair turns white or gray (12:5c).

#### Their feeble legs make them move slowly (12:5d)—like the “Grasshopper Cowboy.”

5e NAU

#### Their desires to do things diminish (12:5e).

##### What does "the caperberry is ineffective" (NAU) mean (12:5e)?

###### Many say that “Caperberries…were used to stimulate one's appetite and sexual desire”—Bob Utley, bible.org

• 5e NLT

###### So their desires to do things diminish (cf. NIV "desire no longer is stirred"). This means they have diminished appetites (BKC).

Ronald McDonald

##### In any case, it means that old folks tire easily.

## Honor your Creator now before death comes (12:5f-7).

Death

### At death people enter eternity but others mourn their loss (12:5f).

5f NLT

### Death is permanent (12:6).

Permanent

#### Death is like a broken cord, never fixed again (12:6a).

6c

6a

#### Death is like a broken bowl, never fixed again (12:6b).

6b

#### Death is like a broken pitcher, never fixed again (12:6c).

6d

#### Death is like a broken pulley, never fixed again (12:6d).

### At death the body and spirit go opposite ways to their origins (12:7).

Water

#### Adam was created from dust (Gen. 2:7).

7b

Adam

7a

#### The body returns to the dust from where it came (12:7a).

#### The spirit returns to God from whom it came (12:7b; cf. Gen. 2:7).

Subj

(So *how* can youth really enjoy life?)

# Conclusion

### The way to enjoy your youth is to honor God (MI).

MI

### Solomon advises youth to have two pursuits:

2 pursuits

#### Enjoy life now before judgment and death comes (11:7-10). *However, the way to enjoy life is to…*

MPII

MPI

#### Honor God as Creator before you grow old and die (12:1-7).

### You *will* die. One young person noted, “Old people at weddings always poke me and say, ‘You’re next.’ So, I started doing the same thing to them at funerals.” But the irony is, *you* will follow these old people too.

Your End

### Imagine yourself on your deathbed. What regrets do you think you might have? How might you wish you had used your life differently?

Cane Shadow

#### A nurse named Bronnie Ware recently wrote an article entitled, “The Top Five Regrets People Make on Their Deathbed.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

##### I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

• 1

##### I wish I didn’t work *so hard*.

• 2

##### I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings.

• 3

##### I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

• 4

##### I wish that I had let myself be happier.

• 5

#### This nurse isn’t a Christian, so she gives a secular way of saying what Solomon says here in Ecclesiastes. I would paraphrase what this nurse is saying as:

Paraphrase

##### I wish I had sought God’s plan for my life.

• 1

##### I wish I put my energy into eternal priorities.

• 2

• 5

• 4

• 3

##### I wish I were honest with God about how I felt.

##### I wish I cared for people more than things.

##### I wish I had found my joy in God.

### Which of these would you most likely say on your deathbed, given your present state in life? Put a mark by it in your notes and commit it to prayer.

### Prayer

Prayer

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### The preceding six verses have expressed what to do with an uncertain future—the key theme of the central part of the book. The answer is to give generously, invest wisely, and work hard.

### But now the subject shifts into the fourth and final section of the book. This time it’s about youth (explain book chart).

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### God knows that the most important decisions in life we make when we are young—so he wants this passage to set the trajectory for our lives on the right course.

### Youth have an opportunity that the older ones do not—since most of the key decisions in life are not yet made, and there is no need to look back with regret, youth can take responsibility for their future—at least to some degree.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### The Bible has many positive things to say about older people, especially concerning their wisdom.

### However, today’s passage balances these things out by declaring the other side in terms of the limits and pains of old age.

# Questions

### What does it mean to “remember your creator” (12:1)?

#### “The command **Remember your Creator** means to revere God, to keep His laws faithfully, to serve Him responsibly, remembering that because He created people, everyone owes Him his life” (BKC).

#### The opposite, of course, is to forget God.

### What is the meaning of *hebel* in the declaration that youth is “meaningless” (11:10 NIV)? This is difficult to render, as seen in the various translations:

####  "…because childhood and the prime of life are *fleeting*" (NASB)

####  "…for youth and vigor are *meaningless*" (NIV)

####  "…but remember that youth, with a whole life before it, can *make serious mistakes*" (LB)

### What in the world does "the caperberry is ineffective" (NAU) mean (12:5e)?

#### Some say that the sexual desire/ability to procreate ceases as the caperberry relates to sex.

#### Their desires to do things diminish (cf. NIV "desire no longer is stirred"). This means they have diminished appetites (BKC).

#### "caperberry is ineffective" Normal sexual desire is gone. Caperberries (BDB 2, cf. NASB, NJB, JPSOA, REB) were used to stimulate one's appetite and sexual desire. Some scholars translate (BDB 2) as "desire" (i.e., NKJV, NRSV, TEV, NIV).—Bob Utley at https://bible.org/seriespage/ecclesiastes-12

### What is the relationship or the four broken items in 12:6?

#### BKC says that death is like both light and water (12:6; cf. Ps 36:8-9).

##### The light (of life) is extinguished by the snapping of the cord holding up the bowl in which the light burns, which shatters the bowl (12:6a).

##### The water (of life) is unavailable from a broken pitcher or a well with a broken wheel for a pulley (12:6b).

#### I think this reads too much into the text, so I take the view that all four are individually broken beyond repair, showing the permanence of death.

### Should 12:7 refer to our “spirit” or our “breath” (life)?

#### The words "spirit" and "breath" are translations of the same Hebrew word *ruah*, so either translation is allowed.

##### The NET reads, “and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the life’s breath returns to God who gave it.”

###### The NET footnote reads, “tn Or ‘spirit.’ The likely referent is the life’s breath that originates with God. See Eccl 3:19, as well as Gen 2:7; 6:17; 7:22.”

###### Solomon obviously alludes to Genesis 2:7 here, so he may not be referring to the individual spirits returning to God for judgment but only to the life which God gives both to man (Job 34:14-15) and to animals (Gen 1:30) which returns to God (Eccl. 3:19-21).

##### However, all other translations read “spirit” here. Thus they see no conflict with Genesis 2:7, especially since God also gave Adam a spirit at that time in addition to the breath of life.

### "If a person lives to be very old, let him rejoice in every day of life, but let him also remember that eternity is far longer, and that everything down here is futile in comparison" (11:8 TLB).

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

**Subject:** Live with godly joy in your youth

**Complement:** because old age and death are coming.

MI: Live with godly joy in your youth because old age and death are coming

**Why Honor God in Your Youth**

**How Youth Should Live**

**How to Enjoy Your Youth**

# *Exegetical Idea: The reason to honor God as a youth is because accountability, old age and death will come (11:7–12:7).*

# *Exegetical Idea: The way we can enjoy our youth is by honoring God before judgment, old age and death come (11:7–12:7).*

# The way youth can enjoy life is to honor God.

# *Exegetical Idea: The way youth should live is by enjoying life and honoring God before judgment, old age and death come (11:7–12:7).*

# Possible Illustrations

### Interest: If you are younger than 50, this is what you have to look forward to.

Perks 1

#### Kidnappers are not very interested in you.

#### In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.

#### No one expects you to run—anywhere.

#### People call at 9 pm and ask, "Did I wake you?"

#### There is nothing left to learn the hard way.

#### Things you buy now won't wear out.

#### You can eat dinner at 4 pm.

#### You can quit trying to hold in your stomach no matter who walks into the room.

#### You sing along with elevator music.

Perks 2

#### Your eyes won't get much worse.

#### Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.

#### Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.

#### Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.

#### Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.

### Decisions I made during my teen years:

#### Be a virgin until marriage.

#### Marry only a virgin.

#### Read God’s Word at least 5 minutes daily the rest of my life.

#### Get to know the Bible better than any other book.

#### Give God the best years of my life.

#### Memorize as much of the Bible as you can.

### *Already Gone* data

### Testimony by Leland & Linda Calhoun, retired MAF missionaries and the oldest couple in our church

# 19 Reasons Getting Older Is The Best Thing That Will Ever Happen To You

Posted: 02/21/2014

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/21/wanting-to-grow-old_n_4774291.html>

I wish I had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

I wish I didn’t work *so hard*.

I wish I had the courage to express my feelings.

I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

I wish that I had let myself be happier.

# Nurse reveals the top 5 regrets people make on their deathbed

[Life and Health](http://www.ariseindiaforum.org/category/life-and-health/)

http://www.ariseindiaforum.org/nurse-reveals-the-top-5-regrets-people-make-on-their-deathbed/

**Author: Bronnie Ware**

For many years I worked in palliative care. My patients were those who had gone home to die. Some incredibly special times were shared. I was with them for the last three to twelve weeks of their lives. People grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality.

I learnt never to underestimate someone’s capacity for growth. Some changes were phenomenal. Each experienced a variety of emotions, as expected, denial, fear, anger, remorse, more denial and eventually acceptance. Every single patient found their peace before they departed though, every one of them.

When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again. Here are the most common five:

**1. I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.**

This was the most common regret of all. When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honoured even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made.

It is very important to try and honour at least some of your dreams along the way. From the moment that you lose your health, it is too late. Health brings a freedom very few realise, until they no longer have it.

**2. I wish I didn’t work *so hard*.**

This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children’s youth and their partner’s companionship. Women also spoke of this regret. But as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence.

By simplifying your lifestyle and making conscious choices along the way, it is possible to not need the income that you think you do. And by creating more space in your life, you become happier and more open to new opportunities, ones more suited to your new lifestyle.

**3. I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings.**

Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result.

We cannot control the reactions of others. However, although people may initially react when you change the way you are by speaking honestly, in the end it raises the relationship to a whole new and healthier level. Either that or it releases the unhealthy relationship from your life. Either way, you win.

**4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.**

Often they would not truly realise the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying.

It is common for anyone in a busy lifestyle to let friendships slip. But when you are faced with your approaching death, the physical details of life fall away. People do want to get their financial affairs in order if possible. But it is not money or status that holds the true importance for them. They want to get things in order more for the benefit of those they love. Usually though, they are too ill and weary to ever manage this task. It is all comes down to love and relationships in the end. That is all that remains in the final weeks, love and relationships.

**5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.**

This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realise until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called ‘comfort’ of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content. When deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again. When you are on your deathbed, what  others think of you is a long way from your mind. How wonderful to be able to let go and smile again, long before you are dying.

Life is a choice. It is YOUR life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness.

Source: This article originated from blog of author **Bronnie Ware** at [http://inspirationandchai.com/Regrets-of-the-Dying.html](http://inspirationandchai.com/Regrets-of-the-Dying.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

Based on this article, Bronnie has released a full-length book. It is a memoir of her own life and how it was transformed based on the regrets of the dying people she cared for. The book is available from her website [http://www.bronnieware.com](http://www.bronnieware.com" \t "_blank) and major online bookstores and is called ‘The Top Five Regrets of the Dying – A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing’.

# We Live Way Longer Than We Expect

And that could be bad news post-retirement: study



By [Arden Dier](http://www.newser.com/user/83590798/1/arden-dier.html),  Newser Staff

http://www.newser.com/story/198626/we-live-way-longer-than-we-expect.html

Posted Nov 14, 2014 8:54 AM CST

* [STORY](http://www.newser.com/story/198626/we-live-way-longer-than-we-expect.html)
* [COMMENTS (12)](http://www.newser.com/story/comments/198626/we-live-way-longer-than-we-expect.html)



(Newser) – How long do you think you'll live? New research suggests you can tack a few more years on to whatever number you came up with. In 1992, University of Michigan researchers asked 26,000 Americans between the ages of 51 and 61 if they thought they would make it to 75. Some 22 years later, researchers with the [Brookings Institution](http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2014/11/06-retirement-longevity-annuities-abraham-harris%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) crunched the data and found people tend to underestimate how many years they have left. Of those born between 1931 and 1934, a full 49% who said they wouldn't see 75 were wrong. In fact, almost all that group's respondents, except those who gave themselves 90% or better odds of making it to 75, turned out to have been overly pessimistic, the [Wall Street Journal](http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2014/11/06/americans-are-bad-at-guessing-how-long-theyll-live/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) reports.

It's more than just an interesting stat: With the dwindling state of Social Security, researchers worry people won't save enough money to cover the possibility that they'll live longer than they expect, [Phys.org](http://phys.org/news/2014-11-health-people-wildly-underestimate.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) reports. "Individuals do not fully understand the longevity risk they face," the [authors explain](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CDEQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.brookings.edu%2F%7E%2Fmedia%2Fresearch%2Ffiles%2Fpapers%2F2014%2F11%2F06-retirement-longevity-annuities-harris%2F06_retirement_longevity_annuities_harris.pdf&ei=uSVmVNmfMbTbsATs1oAw&usg=AFQjCNH6_qc8JGIdd39F-4y64d7q_nQ-sQ&sig2=tR75O6bfO6WNB8YFWOqmFw" \t "_blank). A longevity annuity could be a solution: An individual hands over a chunk of cash and begins receiving payments after a set number of years. The researchers outline what $100,000 spent on an annuity by a 60-year-old male could result in: $1,052 monthly payments beginning at 70, or $2,539 payments if the purchaser waited until 80 to collect. (Your nose may offer [a clue to your longevity](http://www.newser.com/story/196678/your-sense-of-smell-may-predict-longevity.html).)

# Possible Applications

### Do what you can do now in your youth and never again.

#### ***Travel*** to share the gospel as many places as you can (Logos Hope, itinerate music ministry, etc.)

#### ***Postpone marriage*** until later in your 20s.

### Testimonies:

#### Dr. John Hannah, Chairman of the Department of Historical Theology, Dallas Seminary (*Kethiv Qere*  January 24, 1986, p. 4).

#### Dr. Don Kanaley, Missions Pastor, Reinhardt Bible Church

**How Youth Should Live**

***Ecclesiastes 11:7–12:7***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea: The way youth can enjoy life is to honor God before judgment, old age and death come (11:7–12:7).*

# I. The way youth should live is enjoy life before judgment and death comes (11:7-10).

## Enjoy your whole life now before death comes (11:7-8).

### Living is pleasant and good (11:7).

### Enjoy life into your old age (11:8a).

### Live responsibly because after death is eternity (11:8b).

### The future after death is obscure (11:8c).

## Enjoy your youth in light of God’s judgment (11:9-10).

### Enjoy your childhood and youth (11:9a).

### Do what you like and pursue what you see (11:9b).

### Yet realize that God will judge your choices in life (11:9c).

### Refuse to worry and keep your body healthy (11:10a).

### Yet know that youthful energy won’t last (11:10b).

# II. The way youth can enjoy life is honor God as Creator before aging and death comes (12:1-7).

## Honor your Creator now before you have the limits of old age (12:1-5).

### The elderly lose perspective (12:1-2).

#### Honor God now before you can’t see well or enjoy life (12:1-2a).

#### The elderly are often gloomy (12:2b).

### The elderly slow down physically until they die (12:3-4).

#### Their legs and arms tremble with age (12:3a).

#### Their spine curves so they walk bent over (12:3b).

#### Their teeth fall out with too few to chew properly (12:3c).

#### Their eyes can hardly see (12:3d).

#### Their pursed lips enclose teeth that chew slowly (12:4a).

#### Their ability to sleep is disturbed by a tiny noise (12:4b).

#### Ironically, their hearing is impaired (12:4c).

### The elderly lose courage and ability (12:5a-e).

#### Their lack of balance causes a fear of high places (12:5a).

#### Their sense of adventure turns into staying home (12:5b).

#### Their hair turns white or gray (12:5c).

#### Their feeble legs make them move slowly (12:5d).

#### Their desires to do things diminish (12:5e).

## Honor your Creator now before death comes (12:5f-7).

### At death people enter eternity but others mourn their loss (12:5f).

### Death is permanent (12:6).

#### Death is like a broken cord, never fixed again (12:6a).

#### Death is like a broken bowl, never fixed again (12:6b).

#### Death is like a broken pitcher, never fixed again (12:6c).

#### Death is like a broken pulley, never fixed again (12:6d).

### At death the body and spirit go opposite ways to their origins (12:7).

#### The body returns to the dust from where it came (12:7a).

#### The spirit returns to God from whom it came (12:7b; cf. Gen. 2:7).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will decide to serve God *now* since old age is coming.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: Are you a youth or not? Life has three stages:

#### Youth

#### Mid-Life

#### Elderly

### Subject: What should youth pursue in life? How should they live?

### Background: Like all of us, Solomon had the same three stages of his life.

### Preview: This passage specifically shows *two pursuits every youth should have*. However, it actually relates to all of us, whether youth or not.

### Text: Solomon gives us God’s two key priorities for youth in Ecclesiastes 11:7–12:7. Let’s listen in!

(First of all, what does God say for youth to do? You should…)

# I. Enjoy life now before judgment and death comes (11:7-10).

## Enjoy your whole life now before death comes (11:7-8).

### Living is pleasant and good (11:7).

### Enjoy life into your old age (11:8a).

### Live responsibly because after death is eternity (11:8b).

### The future after death is obscure (11:8c).

(However, some of us are youth, so how can ***youth*** enjoy life?)

## Enjoy your youth in light of God’s judgment (11:9-10).

### Enjoy your childhood and youth (11:9a).

### Do what you like and pursue what you see (11:9b).

### Yet realize that God will judge your choices in life (11:9c).

### Refuse to worry and keep your body healthy (11:10a).

### Yet know that youthful energy won’t last (11:10b).

(But *how* can youth enjoy life? God says to…)

# II. Honor God as Creator before you grow old and die (12:1-7).

## Honor your Creator now before you have the limits of old age (12:1-5).

### The elderly lose perspective (12:1-2).

#### Honor God now before you can’t see well or enjoy life (12:1-2a).

#### The elderly are often gloomy (12:2b).

### The elderly slow down physically until they die (12:3-4).

#### Their legs and arms tremble with age (12:3a).

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### The elderly lose courage and ability (12:5a-e).

#### Their lack of balance causes a fear of high places (12:5a).

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#### Their feeble legs make them move slowly (12:5d).

#### Their desires to do things diminish (12:5e).

## Honor your Creator now before death comes (12:5f-7).

### At death people enter eternity but others mourn their loss (12:5f).

### Death is permanent (12:6).

### At death the body and spirit go opposite ways to their origins (12:7).

(So *how* can youth really enjoy life?)

# Conclusion

### The way to enjoy your youth is to honor God (MI).

### Main Points

#### Enjoy life now before judgment and death comes (11:7-10).

#### Honor God as Creator before you grow old and die (12:1-7).

### On your deathbed, which of the following regrets do you think you might have?

##### I wish I had sought God’s plan for my life.

##### I wish I put my energy into eternal priorities.

##### I wish I were honest with God about how I felt.

##### I wish I cared for people more than things.

##### I wish I had found my joy in God.

### Prayer



**Rick Griffith**

16 November 2014

Message 16 of 17

**How to Enjoy Your Youth**

***Ecclesiastes 11:7–12:7***

# Introduction

### Are you a youth or not? Life has three stages:

#### Youth

#### Mid-Life

#### Elderly

### What should youth pursue in life? Solomon advises *two pursuits*.

# I. Enjoy life now before judgment and death comes (11:7-10).

## Enjoy your whole life now before death comes (11:7-8).

## Enjoy your youth in light of God’s judgment (11:9-10).

# II. Honor God as Creator before you grow old and die (12:1-7).

## Honor your Creator now before you have the limits of old age (12:1-5).

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### At death people enter eternity but others mourn their loss (12:5f).

### Death is permanent (12:6).

### At death the body and spirit go opposite ways to their origins (12:7).

# Conclusion

### The way to enjoy your youth is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Main Idea).

### On your deathbed, which of the following regrets do you think you might have?

##### I wish I had sought God’s plan for my life.

##### I wish I put my energy into eternal priorities.

##### I wish I were honest with God about how I felt.

##### I wish I cared for people more than things.

##### I wish I had found my joy in God.

**Thought Questions**

1. Read 11:7–12:7 aloud. List as many advantages of youth that you can find here:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Verse** | **Advantages or Privileges of Youth** |
| 11:7 | Eyes are better to see a new day (cf. 12:2) |
| 11:8 | More positive without worry about the future (live in the present better) |
| 11:9a | Idealism with ability to follow impulses and dreams for self |
| 11:9b | Accountability to God can be recognized |
| 11:10a | Less worry |
| 11:10b | Better health (cf. 12:1-5) |
| 11:10c | Can recognize the fleeting nature of life |
| 12:1a | Privileged to serve God before life becomes unpleasant |
| 12:1b | Can avoid God’s judgment (“prevention is better than cure”) |
| 12:1-5 | Less physical limitations in life  |

1. Distinguish between ***your rights*** over your life and ***God's rights*** over your life.

We *have privileges* (granted by grace from God) but *no rights* that we can demand.

**We** have a right to ***enjoy*** the life God gave us (?) and a right to ***decide*** our priorities.

**God** has the right to ***bless*** or ***not bless*** us—and to determine ***how long*** we live.

1. Do you think *remembering God* will be easier as you grow older? Why or why not?

Godliness *ought* to become easier as we age, but this depends upon what we do *now*.

You may *think* you will pray more later, but *you will be what you are now becoming!*

1. http://www.beliefnet.com/Health/galleries/Old-and-Depressed-The-Not-So-Golden-Years.aspx#FjzGjWUit1iwiCM2.99 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This article originated from blog of author **Bronnie Ware** at [http://inspirationandchai.com/Regrets-of-the-Dying.html](http://inspirationandchai.com/Regrets-of-the-Dying.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)