



The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Lesson Leader:

**James Haymon**

Class Leaders:

**Director: Ron Harris**

**Inreach: Pat Hester**

**Outreach: Shearon Lehrack**

**Secretary: Mary Clark**

## What is the Purpose of Life A Study of Ecclesiastes

Date	Lesson	Text
05/02	Introduction	
05/09	Trivial Pursuits	Chap 1-2
05/16	Expectations	Chap 3-4
05/23	Satisfaction	Chap 5-6
05/30	Perspectives	Chap 7-8
06/06	Guest Teacher	Bro. Smarto
06/13	Live Wisely Pt 1	Chap 9-10
06/20	Live Wisely Pt 2	Chap 9-10
06/27	Joint Class with Bell	Class
<b>07/04</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Chap 11-12</b>
07/11	Summary & Review	

### THANK YOU

Thank you Bro. Joe Liles for blessing us with your ministry and service these many years. Please continue to bless us with your presence and work of encouragement. We love you.

*They have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it..... For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.*

(1 Cor 16:15-18 NIV)

## FINAL EXAM ECCL 11 and 12

Even the best-laid plans don't always work out—that's a reality we all have to face every day. So how should you live when you're not sure how things are going to turn out? Solomon says, "Don't play it safe—take risks." In other words, you have to live confidently. **God wants you to step out in faith and take risks.** He yearns for us to stop playing it safe. In Eccl 11:1-6, Solomon will pass on two insider tips that will help us to take some risks and avoid playing it safe: diversify your investments (1-2) and seize your opportunities (3-6). The biblical view comes down to this: **Since God alone knows the future, we ought to make our plans, use our brains, study the situation, take all factors into consideration, seek wise counsel, do the best we can, and then leave the results to God.** Don't be reckless, that's the path of certain ruin; but don't sit on your hands either. Invest your money, take your chances, sleep like a baby, and let God take care of the future. Don't play it safe—take risks. In 11:3-6, Solomon says that we cannot delay our course of action. We must "seize the day", Carpe Deim. In 11:3-5, Solomon gives observations concerning the way things are, while in 11:6 he gives the practical application—the "so what" of the passage. There is no time better than the present to step out in faith. So stop procrastinating! Be diligent constantly. If we wait until we "have time" to do something we never will. The "perfect opportunity" begins now—while we still can. Don't put what God has placed in your heart off another day. Don't settle for settled-for Christianity. If you are not currently ministering, get involved today. If we wait until we're less busy, until we feel right, until just the right moment, we will never witness, never serve, and never see results. Don't play it safe—take risks. In 11:7-12:8, Solomon says, "Live while you are dying." If you know country music, this may sound a lot like Tim McGraw's song, "Live Like You Were Dying." The notable revisions are the words "while" and "are", live while you are dying. By modifying this statement, I have chosen to focus on the biblical truth that all people are appointed to die. Thus, you don't have to live like you were dying because your body is actually dying at this very moment. It is, therefore, more accurate to say **you need to "live while you are dying."** In this memorable passage, Solomon shares two exhortations that will enable us to live while we're dying: rejoice now while you can (11:7-10) and Remember now while you can (12:1-8).

Interestingly, in 12:9-12, **Solomon reverses the expected formula. For Solomon it is exam first, lessons later. In school, we study and then take an exam. Solomon claims that in the real world we face the exam, and then we study.** In Eccl 12:9-14, the final six verses of the book, Solomon gives us two homework assignments to pass life's exam: take God's Word seriously (12:9-12) and consider God's judgment appropriately (12:13-14). **In the final two verses, Solomon urges us to prepare for judgment day by fearing God and keeping His commands. These two verses summarize the book of Ecclesiastes and ultimately the whole of Scripture.** First, the "fear of God" is typically defined as "reverential awe." Oswald Chambers (1874-1917) once said, "The remarkable thing about fearing God is that, when you fear God, you fear nothing else; whereas, if you do not fear God, you fear everything else." This is the way the believer should live. Second, to "keep His commandments" is to obey the Law. Fortunately for us, Jesus summed up the commandments into one central, basic command: "To love the Lord your God" and "your neighbor as yourself" (Matt 22:34-40). A proper fear of God ought to lead to a course correction. For this passage and the entire book of Ecclesiastes teaches that the fear of God leads to life. A biblical fear of God will lead to life in this world and the world to come. If you think you have been enjoying life, but haven't been fearing God, think again. The fear of God leads to life...and only the fear of God will lead to life.

*(Adapted from "Ecclesiastes" by Keith Krell)*

### Key Themes:

- Because we don't know what will happen in the future, we have to trust God** because He is the one who makes and sustains all things. Solomon would have us to represent God in all that we do, with all that we have through faith.
- In spite of the brevity of life and its disappointing nature apart from God, **life is good and is meant to be enjoyed with God with wisdom.** Solomon describes four activities of a wise sage. A wise person faithfully teaches people knowledge, a wise person carefully studies God's Word, a wise person effectively communicates and a wise person correctly presents truth.
- To fear God and keep His commands are not suggestions or options, they are commands!** Solomon commands us to fear God and obey His commands. The Bible teaches that there is an appointed day of judgment where we will have to give an account of our lives. The natural and inevitable conclusion is that we had better live our lives appropriately in light of God's judgment.

# NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

## Chapter 11

### **Diversify your investments (11:1-2)**

*(Luke 14:25-33)* 25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

*(Luke 16:9-13)* 9 "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings. 10 "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. 11 "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? 12 "And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

### **Seize your opportunities (11:3-6)**

*(Eph 5:15-16)* 15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil

*(John 9:4)* 4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

### **Rejoice now while you can (11:7-10)**

*(Phil 4:4)* 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

*(1 Peter 1:3-7)* 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ

## Chapter 12

### **Remember now while you can (12:1-8)**

*(Ps 77:11)* 11 I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.

*(Eph 2:11-16)* 11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands — 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

### **Take God's Word seriously (12:9-12)**

*(1 Thess 2:13-14)* 13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

*(Rom 1:16)* 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

### **Consider God's judgment appropriately (12:13-14)**

*(Deut 10:12-13)* 12 "Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

*(2 Cor 5:10)* 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.