

Seize the Day

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[0:00] Beginning at chapter 11, verse 7. Light is sweet, and it pleases the eyes to see the sun.

! However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all! But let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. Everything to come is meaningless.

Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment.

So then, banish anxiety from your heart, and cast off the troubles of your body, for youth and vigor are meaningless. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

Before the days of trouble come, and the years approach, when you will say, I find no pleasure in them. Before the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain, when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men stoop, when the grinders cease because they are few, and those looking through the windows grow dim, when the doors to the street are closed, and the sound of grinding fades, when men rise up at the sound of birds, but all their songs grow faint.

[1:39] When men are afraid of heights, and of dangers in the streets, when the almond tree blossoms, and the grasshopper drags himself along, and desire no longer is stirred.

Then man goes to his eternal home, and mourners go about the streets. Remember him before the silver cord is severed, or the golden bowl is broken, before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, or the wheel broken at the well, and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Meaningless, meaningless, says the teacher, everything is meaningless. Gather ye rosebuds while ye may.

Old time is still a-flying. And the same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying. The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun, the higher he's a-getting, the sooner will his race be run, and nearer he's to setting.

That age is best, which is the first, when youth and blood are warmer, but being spent, the worst, and worst still follows the former.

[3:05] Then be not coy, but use your time, and while ye may go merry, for having lost but once your prime, ye may forever tarry.

There's a Latin phrase that expresses the meaning of that poem, and maybe you know what it is. It's *carpe diem*. And that is what Koh-Leth teaches us tonight.

Carpe diem, seize the day. In the hands of the godless, it's a powerful weapon for wickedness. But in the hands of the wise man, it is a powerful weapon to live a God-glorifying life.

And so tonight, Koh-Leth, our teacher, teaches young people especially, but also all of us, how to live God-centered lives in light of rapidly approaching old age.

So young people, junior high students, college students, young parents, you need to listen to what Koh-Leth, the teacher, is telling us tonight.

[4:21] We need to take Koh-Leth's message to heart. He's going to tell us how to orient our lives now so that we can live a life with real meaning and real purpose that we could really live.

And some of his words, they are not pleasant, but all of his words are true. And so you and I, we both need to listen.

Now this passage that we had read is divided under two commands. And the first command we see in verses 7-10, and it should be easy to remember this command because there was a silly song made up about it a long time ago.

Koh-Leth's command is, don't worry, be happy. And you get the first part of that command in verse 12 where it says, or verse 10, excuse me.

So then banish anxiety. Banish anxiety. Don't worry. And then you get the second part of that command in verse 9. Be happy. So don't worry. Be happy.

[5:27] Well, let's look at it. You see verse 7 there? Light is sweet, and it pleases the eye to see the sun. And that is a proverb. But doesn't it sound strange coming from the mouth of Koh-Leth, who has had a lot to say about living under the sun, and not really any of it has been very good.

What does a man gain from all his labor which he toils under the sun? Flight answers, nothing. I have seen all the things that are done under the sun. All of them are havel.

They're all fleeting, meaningless, vanity, frustrating. All of them are havel, a chasing after the wind. And I declare that the dead who had already died are happier than the living who are still alive.

But better than both is he who has never, who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun. Koh-Leth has repeatedly told us that living under the sun is a miserable business.

And so it sounds strange here for him to say, but you know what? It is sweet to live under the sun. It's good to see the sun. So here he says, light is sweet and it pleases the eye to see the sun.

[6:41] Is he contradicting himself? Is he saying one thing now that he wouldn't agree with earlier? No, I don't think so. I think he's saying, yes, despite the havel, the frustration, the vanity of life, there is a certain sweetness to it nonetheless.

Havel doesn't ruin all of God's gift of life to you and me. It's still a joy to be alive. It's good to drink in the blessings of living.

So this past week, we went apple picking in Michigan, and I've seen a lot of you guys have done the same thing lately. In parts of the place where we went, it was apple orchard in one section, and it was a vineyard in another section.

And so there was just fruit everywhere. And the sun was shining, and my daughters are running through the orchard, and it was good to be alive.

It was good to be there. So what should you do in the light of all the goodness that we taste in this life? Well, look at verse 8. However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all.

[7:56] You should enjoy them. Light is sweet. It tastes good. So drink up is what he's saying. It's good to walk through God's world. It's good to experience those things.

This is a broken world. He's shown that over and over again. But there's still so much beauty to enjoy. It's miserable. It's frustrating at times.

But God is so good. And we taste his goodness. So as long as we're here, as long as we're alive, God wants us to be happy while we're here. He says enjoy all.

That word all gives us some problems. All the years of your life, wherever you are now, if you're under the sun, your job is to enjoy life. He doesn't want us, God doesn't want us, to be forever wanting the next thing.

And don't we have that problem? We always think the next thing is going to be better. The next stage of life is going to be better. And he's saying, we can't forever be unsatisfied with the age that we're at.

[9:00] So, young people, this is especially for you. And I think what happens is you get older and you realize, you know what, the better times are behind me. And so that, you're disabused of that notion.

But young people, if you're in junior high, enjoy being in junior high. Don't long for high school so much. And high schoolers, if you're in high school, God has put you in high school to enjoy high school, to live life to the fullest there, to live with vigor, to live for him.

So drink it up now. Now maybe single people, this is especially difficult for you. Are you receiving your gift of singleness as a gift from God?

Or is this one stage that you just, this is one gift that you would like to return? It's sort of, you know, it's kind of like that Christmas present from Old Aunt Marple and she knits you that sweater and you say, oh, thank you.

This is so beautiful. I can't wait to wear it. And of course, she insists that you wear it. The whole time you're thinking, I want to take this off. Is that you? You just want to get rid of this gift.

[10:14] Well, Colossus, don't be like that. Enjoy all the days of your life. There's precious gifts in singleness as well as in married life. Empty nesters.

The nest is empty. The children are gone. There's no more games to go to. There's no more happy young voices around the house. And then we see that midlife crisis start to happen.

And Colossus is saying, don't let the empty nest ruin your joy. However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all. So wherever we're at, not just young people, but whoever you are, if you're under the sun, Colossus is saying, enjoy your life.

What delights of life aren't we enjoying? Because we're dissatisfied with where we're at in our life. And so Colossus' word to young people, to old people, to single people, to married people, to everyone, is get to it.

Get to it, young people. Get to it, single people. Get to it, empty nesters. Why? Because days of darkness are coming. Verse 8, but let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many, and everything to come is havel.

[11:37] So why, if you're young, why, if you're an empty nester, why, if you're single, should you enjoy life now to the fullest, because days are coming when you will find no pleasure in those days.

There'll be days that you cannot enjoy. Those are days when the light is cut off, the sun is cut off, and everything in your life, he says, will be chock full of havel.

It will be a miserable business. And the end of life is a miserable, frustrating, hard, difficult time.

And Coleth is telling us that, not to be a stick in the mud, not to have this horrible shadow, not to put a horrible shadow looming over our lives, but just, actually, just the opposite.

He wants us to remember those days, so that we'll enjoy the days that we're at now, so that we'll enjoy the days of our youth. And he says, remember it, fix it in your mind, fasten it there.

[12:45] The latter days, the end of life, he is saying, are the worst days. They're the hardest days. The sun sets.

The days are dark, and the flower dies, and the beauty of life is cut off, and yet you are still alive. And so smell the flowers now while you can smell them.

Enjoy them now. Don't let the future that is coming, don't let that future cast a shadow over you where you cannot enjoy them, but use the future.

Think about it and say, you know what? I have to enjoy my life now. I have to chase those dreams, those hopes, those desires, is what he's going to talk about.

I have to do these things now, because the days of darkness are coming. Well, verse 9, Koalath gets more explicit, and he's getting more clear through the passage of what exactly he means.

[13:46] He takes that general principle, and he drives it home, especially to young people. And he says, Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth.

Follow the ways of your heart, and whatever your eyes see. Now, there is a tendency, and maybe many people hear this, and this is how many people hear this, or they hear this, and then these sirens start going off.

You know, they hear that passage of do whatever your heart sees, and follow the ways of your heart, and these like, woo, woo, we got trouble here. And then what they do is they go through the Rolodex of the scripture, and they find Jeremiah 17, 9, and they say, The heart is deceitful above all things, and beyond here.

And so they start saying, No, young people, don't follow the ways of your heart. Don't do those things. That's not what he means. That's not what he means. He's being ironic, or something like that.

And, that's to make scripture contradict scripture. He's obviously not saying sin. He has been clear throughout the whole book, that the ways of unrighteousness, they're hard, they're foolish, they're not to be followed.

[15:03] And so, obviously, Coleth isn't saying sin. Sin boldly. If your heart wants to sin, you just sin. You might as well do it while you're young. He's not saying that at all. Well, what is he saying then?

Well, now is the time to follow the desires of your heart. So, do you want to do something fun while you're young? Well, do something fun is what he's saying.

Do you want to go jump off the diving board? You can go swimming and you jump off the high dive? Well, do it now because there's coming a point where you're not going to do it and you're not going to want to do it and you're going to think that they're crazy for doing it.

So, do it young. Do you want to go to college and do you want to study computer engineering? Well, now is the time, young people, to do it and to do it with all your heart. To do it under the Lord. To take that in hand and to do it with all of your might, like he said earlier. Well, do you want to go on a mission field? Do you want to do something for the Lord that is extraordinary, we'll say.

[16:05] Well, find some way to do it. Follow the ways of your heart. Don't delay living is what he's saying. Don't delay living. Don't put it off because days of darkness are coming and you'll have no pleasure in any of those things.

And so, young people, look around. not here. Go to school. Look around at your peers. And most of them are mere phantoms of what they could be.

They waste their time endlessly, hour after hour, sitting in front of the computer playing Warcraft or modern warfare and they're just there wasting their time.

And so, they settle for those mud pies when God is offering them Cedar Point. And Colaleth is saying don't settle for that kind of living.

Don't settle for paltry, milquetoast, half-hearted living. God wants the days of your youth to be days of vigor, to be days of strength, and to enjoy them.

[17:14] And so, he commands you to be happy. Be happy. And that is just as serious of a command as do not steal. It is just as serious.

And so, be happy while the light shines on you, while the sun is shining. Now listen, young people, to what he says next. But know that for all these things, God will bring you to judgment. judgment. And then, the grouchy people said, aha, I knew it. All this talk about don't worry and be happy, that's trouble.

And Colaleth is going to give it to them in the end, and here it is. So, is that right? Is that the right way to think about it? Is he saying, go, go enjoy yourself, but don't do anything bad, and if you do something bad, you better watch out, because all that fun you're going to have, God's going to bring it all into judgment.

Is that what he's saying? Partly, yes. He is. He's certainly putting a curb right around what he means.

[18:29] In your pursuit of joy, in the pursuit of your heart's desires, don't sin. In the following of your heart, do it responsibly.

do it responsibly, because God is still going to hold you accountable. Young people, God will call you one day, as sure as I am standing here, and he is going to hold you accountable for all of your actions.

And so, in all of your pursuit of joy and happiness, don't sin. But, is that the whole story of what Colaleth is saying?

I don't think so. I don't think that's all of it. That's certainly most of it, or some of it. He's not bringing God's judgment in here to discourage joy, to discourage happiness, to discourage you.

He's actually bringing it in here to encourage you, to encourage you to enjoy life. See, judgment doesn't temper joy. Judgment underscores it, it underlines it, and it directs it.

[19:33] So, God will judge you if you will not be happy. Remember that the old ancient rabbi, I've quoted him before, he said, everyone must give an account before God of all the good things one saw in life and did not enjoy.

If you're abusing God's gifts, there is a judgment for that. And Jeremy Taylor, the old Puritan, said, God threatens terrible things if you will not be happy.

So, is God pouring sunshine into your life? Is he giving you those days in the apple orchard where you're enjoying things? Yes, times are troubling.

Yes, they're frustrating, but are these days of sunshine and strength and health? Do you have friends and young people? You have these bodies that are so healthy and strong and enjoy them. Rejoice. These are gifts from God and he's going to hold you accountable for what you do with them. Are you going to use them for his glory? Well, judgment underscores joy.

[20:50] It underlines it and also directs it. So, where can the best joys be found? Well, it's not in sin. It's not by sinning. It's by living a righteous life.

See, the thought of judgment should keep us from seeking our joy in the poisonous pleasures of sin. Because there is a pleasure to sin for a time, but some pleasure, much joy carries the cobra's venom.

And those fun days can be absolutely disastrous. And so, Coleth is calling you to responsible pleasure.

Not to shallow carnality. Not to sinful pleasures. And so, judgment directs us in how the best way to be happy.

The best way. Well, verse 10, he finishes the first command. So then, banish anxiety from your heart and cast off the troubles of your body for youth and vigor are havel.

[21:58] They're meaningless. They're fleeting. So, how can you young people be happy while you are young? Coleth says, get rid of two things.

Get rid of them. Anxiety and bodily pains. And anxiety here, it can mean anxiety. It can mean vexation. It can mean anger. It can be all those emotional problems that keep us from being happy. And he says, chuck it all. Get rid of it all. Get rid of it. Throw it away. So, young people, what are you worried about? What are you worried about? Are you worried about not fitting in?

Not being liked by this person or that person or this group or that group? Coleth says, get rid of it. Banish it. Are you worried about how you look? Chuck it.

Get rid of it. So, are you worried about all those demands that your teachers are putting on you, that your coaches are putting on you, that even your parents could be putting on you?

[23:01] Are they causing you to worry and to fret? Coleth says, get rid of it. And while you're at it, get rid of all those aches and pains that are bothering you.

And this kind of sounds weird. I mean, how can you command someone to not feel pain? I think you'll see what he means as we kind of talk through it.

Basically, are you sore from practice? Are you sore from work? And maybe you have that nagging injury. All those bodily things that keep you from enjoying life. What should you do?

And Coleth says, cast them off. Throw them away. And, I mean, how are you supposed to do that? I mean, like, you might be saying, but I hurt.

And what, am I just supposed to ignore that fact that I don't feel that good? Am I supposed to just pretend it's not there? Why act like bodily pain is not real? Because it is real. And that is a good question.

[24:04] And the answer is this. You should ignore those things, to the best of your ability, because you have a bigger problem on your hands. There is something bigger than your aches and pains and your worries now.

You have a bigger problem. Old age is coming, is what he's saying. Old age is coming. The days of darkness are chasing you, and youth and vigor are havel.

They're fleeting. They're not going to last very long, and so you have to enjoy life now, is what he's saying. So pain and worry, they have to go, because you simply cannot afford to live hampered by them.

So the flower is dying, and seize it now, because it soon will be gone. Well, young people, how should you live? Don't worry, be happy.

That's Coloss' first command, and his second command is in chapter 12, verse 1. Remember your creator. So let's read it.

[25:10] Remember your creator, in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come, and the years approach, when you will say, I find no pleasure in them. So how do you live a life that's worth living?

How do you live a joyful life? Well, Coloss says, remember your creator now, now while you are young, not until, don't wait until you're older to do this.

Now, isn't it interesting that he says, remember your creator, and not remember your God, remember the Lord, something like that.

He says, instead, fix in your mind this, that you have a creator, and who he is. Fasten him there. Live in light of who he is, and what he is doing. Live corum deo. It's another Latin phrase that we've heard, before the face of God.

[26:14] And that's how you live life to its fullness. That's how you really live. So, remember that fundamental reality of your life, that you are a creature, and that God is your creator.

You have a creator. You have a creator, and that means that he's made you, and he owns you, and he has sovereign, complete rights over you.

You belong to him, and he can tell you what to do. And so, remember your creator means living in light of God's law. The Ten Commandments is what it means to remember your creator.

So, you are autonomous. You're not a law to yourself. you don't make the rules. You aren't the captain of your soul, or the captain of, you know, the master of your faith, the captain of your soul. That's not how it works. You are a creature, and a very short-lived creature at that. And you have a creator, and he's told you what to do.

[27 : 24] And you need to remember that. And so, young people, until you come to grips with that, until that fact grips you, then you're not going to live a very, joyful life, not a very God-glorifying life, for sure.

You're totally missing the point of living. So, what does it mean to remember your creator? It means making God absolutely central in your life, to live for him completely.

And so, the first part in verses 7 through 10, that pursuit of joy that we talked about, about enjoying life and living here, and then remembering your creator, these aren't two commands, two separate ones.

At heart, they're one command, they're following one path, they're the same path. Coleth is saying, here now, while you are young, especially when you are young, live for God now.

He made you for himself, you exist to make much of him, so you exist to shine his glory out. You exist to make his son look good. That is why God made you, for his own glory.

[28 : 37] And so, until you have taken that on, until you have made that central in your life, you are not going to live life to its fullness until you remember the purpose of your life.

Remember why God made you. That's what it means to remember your creator. And for some of you, this doesn't mean anything God is God you're at the center.

You live for yourself and you like it that way. God doesn't live in the center. He's not on the throne. He doesn't fit into your life.

And you don't say it in so many words. You would never say it. But every day your life drips with Pharaoh's words. Who is the Lord that I should serve him?

so you get up in the morning and your morning is about you. And you go to school and school is about you.

[29 : 41] And you play your sports and your sports are about you. And you study hard to make yourself look good. So you're not living for God's glory to go out.

You're living for your glory to go out. And you obey or you disobey your parents as it suits you if it's good for you.

And if that's you, do you hear Colas' call to repent, to renounce the sinner? He's saying stop. So now in the days of your youth, before you are old, before the days of trouble come, now is the time to stop living only for you and start living for God.

God. So you must, he's saying you must renounce the sinner. You have to say no, that I'm not going to live in the sinner. You have to give up the throne. See, right now, you're a comet, and you're acting like you're the sun.

But you don't see that, you know what, one day that comet is going to crash into the sun, and the sun is still going to be there, and the comet will be gone. So remember your creator, he's commanded you, and you have rebelled against him.

[30 : 58] You've tried to sit in his throne, and he stands ready to judge you, and yet even now on the brink of judgment, he is coming, and he's giving a message where you can be invited into the wedding feast, you can be forgiven.

He sent his son by whom he made all things, and he sent his son to save all those who would throw down their arms, quit the rebellion, and simply cling to Jesus, to stop living for themselves, and start living for him.

And so if you will throw down your arms, you're fighting against God, and you throw your arms around Jesus and say, you know what, Jesus is my only hope.

I look at myself, and I am all unrighteousness. Everything I do is completely selfish, completely unrighteous, unworthy.

And if you say that, and you say, Jesus, but I see in you a righteousness that is perfect. I need that perfect righteousness. And you see that he died for sinners.

[32 : 14] You died for sinners, and I desperately need someone to take my punishment. And if you will do that, if you will renounce the throne, and put Jesus on that throne, renounce the sinner, and cling to Christ, you will live.

You will live. And so young people, remember your creator. And Kola says next, don't wait. Don't wait a minute.

Don't wait for a better time. In the days of your youth, remember him. Before the days of trouble come, remember. Remember the creator and begin living happily for him now.

Before the years approach, when you say, I have no pleasure in them. Before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark and the clouds return after the rain.

What is he talking about? Well, light is sweet and it pleases the eye to see, but the days of darkness are coming.

[33:19] He's talking about old age. The day will be dark. The sun and the light is cut off. And the dark will be dark.

The night time will be dark. The clouds will roll in. And it will rain and after it rains, it will be more clouds. See, young people, old age doesn't work like youth works.

When you're young, you have a setback every now and then, and then the sun shines again. In old age, you have a setback, and then you have another setback, and then you have another setback, and it never stops raining.

And when it does stop raining, the clouds are still there. Sun doesn't shine anymore, and one thing leads to another, and then things become chronic.

They don't get better, they only get worse. There's no healing, it only gets worse and worse. It's one perpetual, cloudy, rainy day, and you will say, I look at these days, and there's no pleasure in them at all.

[34:35] So remember your creator before those days happen. The sweetness of life will be over, and it will be one long night. And he's telling you this not to ruin your day, he's not telling you to, he's not telling that to depress you, but to make you say, you know what, today, I have to live for God.

I have to remember my creator now, I have to seize the day now, now is the good time, now is the right time, because old age isn't a good time to live for God. I mean, I think you know what I mean, it is a good time to live for God, but it's not a good time to start.

It's better to start when you're young, when your life is not a wreck, when your body is not a ruin, because he deserves the years of your life that are strong and vigorous, not just the leftovers when you're broken down.

And that's what he begins to say, starting in verse 3 and going through 5, he gives us an extended metaphor of what old age is like.

So what is old age like? Look at verse 3. When the keepers of the house tremble, that's the hands. Your hands used to dress you and feed you and protect you.

[36:01] You could feed yourself, you could fight if necessary, you could keep yourself with your hands. But now they tremble, they weak, they're weak.

And the strong men stoop, the strong men are the legs. So all through your life those strong men have been carrying your body up hills and down hills and up mountains and through the years of your life and now here they are at the end and they're stooped, they're crooked, they're bent.

And so there's the old man, bull-legged, tottering along. When the grinders cease because they are few, your teeth begin to fall out.

And those looking through the windows grow dim, so your eyes glaze over. Your sight grows fuzzy and faded. You can no longer see very well.

Colors are all muted. And the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades. So your eyes are going, your hands are going, your legs are going, and here your ears are shut and the sounds of life fade.

[37:26] Children, do you ever wonder why your grandpa says, speak up, it's not because you're not talking loud enough, it's because his ears aren't working like yours do. And that's what happens.

When men rise up at the sound of birds, but all their sounds fade. So now the old man wakes up at the crack of dawn, even though he has nothing to do, he can't sleep anymore.

He's bone-weary, tired, and yet sleep eludes him. And the sad thing is, he can't hear the birds to enjoy. You know how good it is to go out on an early summer morning, and the birds are all chirping and singing to each other.

The old man can't enjoy those things. He doesn't enjoy his early mornings. When men are afraid of heights and dangers in the streets, fear is a perpetual reality for the old.

they're afraid of going upstairs. They're afraid of climbing up anything. They're afraid of walking in the streets. Why? They can't defend themselves anymore.

[38:37] Anyone can push them over. They can't move quickly, so they can't move out of the way. And streets back in those days aren't like our nice paved streets here.

We're talking deep, rutted roads where it would be nothing to trip and to fall. So, no, I just better stay at home, safer here.

The almond tree blossoms. When the almond tree blossoms, it's this brilliant, dazzling, glorious white color. And so, from a distance, it looks like a head of white, silver hair.

And so, the old man's black, thick hair that was his pride is now falling out, and his hair is white, and old age is taking him.

And the grasshopper drags himself along. Now, you know what a grasshopper looks like? They have those very swollen, crooked joints and legs, and that's what our old man now looks like.

[39:43] Swollen joints, crooked limbs, and he's dragging himself along to death. And desire is no longer stirred. Literally, it says the caper berry fails, and the ancient people thought the caper berry supposedly increased your appetite.

It helped you to eat more, stimulate your appetite if you're sick. But now it fails. It doesn't work anymore. Your taste buds are dulled, your hunger is gone.

And many of you have seen this first hand. Eat less and less, and the old man begins to lose weight. Then man goes to his eternal home, and mourners go about the streets.

Then it happens. Death. Old age always ends in death, and life goes on for other people, but it doesn't go on for you.

And so young people, now is the time to remember the creator, your creator, and your youth. Now is the time to repent and believe. And if you don't believe me, go with me sometime down to the nursing home.

[41:08] Go with me and look at those people and tell me that it is okay to wait to live. It's okay to wait to repent. Because there is one thing that I always go away from the nursing home thinking, and it's, you know what, now I have to live.

I really have to live. It is so important to hear and believe in the gospel now before it is too late. Because now is the time to believe, not when you're in that situation. Because I preach to those people and half of them are asleep within the first two or three minutes of me starting.

And the other half, I don't know about these proportions, they're confused. They're looking off in space.

And you look at them and you wonder if anyone's home at all. And you walk down the hallways and you look in the rooms as you walk and there they are bedridden, asleep, staring off, looking at nothing.

[42:22] You go there and you tell me that it's okay to wait. You can say, I can put off remembering God. And maybe you say, you know what, I won't wait that long.

I won't wait that long. And you know what, I wonder how many of those people said the same thing. I'll just wait a little longer, but I won't wait that long.

And let me ask you, what makes you to be any different from them? Maybe God will harden your heart for all your stubbornness.

And then you'll go into the nursing home and there you'll be mumbling, confused, asleep, and without a care in the world for your soul.

Young people, now is the time. It's not later, it's not tomorrow, it is now because this is the most urgent thing going on in the world, going on in your life. Now is the time to remember God because tomorrow will come and then the next day will come and then pretty soon you'll be in the nursing home too.

[43:35] So young people, now is the time to remember God. Verse 1 said, remember before the days of trouble come.

Verse 2 says, remember him before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark.

Now look at verse 6, remember him before the silver cord is severed or the golden bowl is broken before the pitcher is shattered at the spring or the will broken at the well and the dust returns to the ground it came from and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

So here's two pictures of life and death. Life is precious. It's beautiful. It's costly. It's a golden bowl hanging from a silver thread, from a silver cord.

And he's probably talking about a costly, beautiful lamp with oil in it and it's burning bright and it's beautiful. And then the silver cord is cut and then the bowl crashes to the ground.

The oil goes out and the light is turned off. And that's life. It's beautiful. It's costly. And it's easily broken. So you'll be burning brightly and quite unexpectedly the silver thread, the silver cord will be cut and your bowl will crash to the ground.

[45:03] And who knows when it will be. Friday at Grace College, a student was laying in a hammock along Winona Lake and one of the trees collapsed and killed her instantly.

She was a freshman in college. So the silver cord was cut and the golden bowl was broken. Was she ready?

I don't know. Would you be ready? She wasn't expecting it, I'm sure. Well, life and death. It's like a golden bowl, a silver thread.

It's a water pitcher at a well. And so now the picture is different. This isn't something beautiful and costly. It's something useful. It's something that gives sturdy service over the years.

And so life here is this useful thing. And then one day the wheel breaks and the pitcher falls and it crashes and shatters. And you know how this is.

[46:11] Year after year she served and she loved her family, she loved her children, she taught them, she loved her husband, she was a tightest two woman in the church. and there was years of sturdy, consistent, faithful service.

And then the wheel breaks and the pitcher falls and it's broken. And she returns to dust. And dust you are and dust you will return.

And the spirit returns to the God who gave it, to God who gave it. So young people, how long will you wait? Older people, how long will you wait?

How long will you stand on the edge? And how long will you dance between life and death?

Because death always carries a dagger and it always kills its man. No one escapes.

It always gets you in the end. So will you be ready? Will you be ready to face your maker? Because your body goes into the dust and your spirit goes to God. And if you are clothed, in Jesus righteousness, like what we saw this morning, then you'll be ready.

[47:24] You will face your maker and there will be no fear. But if you are not clothed in the righteousness of Christ, then it will have been better for you to never have been born.

You will regret your birthday if you face God without Jesus. We'll look at these last words some more next week, but here they are in their context.

He begins, or he ends where he began. Havel, Havel, says Coleth, says the teacher. Everything is Havel. From birth to death, life is frustrated.

It's frustration, it's vanity, it's flying quickly away. It's like trying to grab a hold of the wind and it slips out of your hands. And so the joys of youth will end and the silver cord will be severed and you will die.

Now he doesn't end here. He doesn't end this whole book of Ecclesiastes to cast a shadowy gloom over your whole life and to think, you know what, I'm going to die at the end, what's the point?

[48:37] He's telling you this to encourage you. to live life to the full now. And so young people, old people, don't complain because God's telling you the truth.

Instead, take him at his word and obey him and live for him. Believe, repent, don't worry, be happy, remember God, come to Christ, because in the end there will be a funeral and it will be yours.

God have mercy on us. Let's pray. Our heavenly father, we love you for waking us out of our sleep. We love you for telling us to live. Thank you God. we love you and we love you and we have to breathe into us.

And when we were spiritually dead, you breathed in us new lives, new spiritual life. So we thank you and I just pray that you would come and do that spiritual resurrection, that spiritual new birth here tonight.

[50:05] Don't let anyone go away saying tomorrow I'll take care of it. Because we have no guarantees. Will you please be merciful? Will you be merciful to us who believe?

Will you put your word into our hearts and remind us of it consistently tomorrow and the next day and the next day that we would live our life to the fullest now because you have made us, you've made us for yourself, you've made us for your glory, you are worth living for.

Will you help us to do it and do it joyfully? And thank you that if we are in Christ, we have a righteousness that is perfect.

And that when we die and our bodies return to the dust, we will go and see you. Our spirits will return to you and we will be made perfect.

And we will join that glorious song and we will wait for our body's resurrection and then we will be with you forever. Thank you that you have planned such wonderful things, such lovely and beautiful things.

[51 : 20] I pray that we would lay a hold of them and live for eternity. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.