How to Live Free of Regrets November 27, 2022

*Ecclesiastes 11:1-12:1 Series: Israel’s Greatest Philosopher*

Love God and do what you please. – Augustine

Intro: Regretting the time he wasted

1. Take every opportunity because you don’t know as much as you think
2. You don’t know as much as you think

v. 2 *you know not what disaster may happen on earth*

v. 5 *you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child*

v. 5 *you do not know the work of God who makes everything*

v. 6 *you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good*

1. Don’t be paralyzed by the unknowns

v. 4 *He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.*

Matthew 25:25 *I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent*

1. Seize opportunities with your eyes open to the risks

v. 1 *Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days.*

v. 2 *Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth.*

v. 6 *In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper…*

* What are some ways that we live as if we know everything?
* How do unknowns tend to keep us from doing anything?
* What might you do differently if you weren’t afraid to fail?

1. Enjoy every opportunity because life is shorter than you think
2. God has created this life for our enjoyment

v. 7 *Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.*

v. 8 *if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all*

v. 9 *Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth.*

v. 9 *Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes.*

2 Timothy 2:22 *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

1. Eventually, the sun sets and it’s time to go home

v. 8 … *but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.*

* What keeps young people from finding “cheer … in the days of [their] youth”?
* What helps you find joy in life when it’s hard?
* How does remembering “the days of darkness” help us to rejoice in our lives?

1. Remember God in every opportunity because you’ll answer to Him in judgment
2. Joy and judgment can hold hands

v. 9 *But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.*

Ecclesiastes 12:14 *For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.*

John 15:10-11 *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

1. Life is too short to spend it focused on all that’s wrong with it

v. 10 *Remove vexation from your heart, and put away pain from your body, for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.*

Matthew 5:11-12 *Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

1. Learn to remember God now, so you can enjoy Him later

v. 1 *Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them” …*

Psalm 94:19 *When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.*

Deuteronomy 8:19 *And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish.*

Luke 22:19 *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”*

* How is it possible to experience joy knowing that we will answer to God’s judgment for everything we did?
* Practically, how do you remove “vexation from your heart”?
* Some people think it would be more fun to sin all your life and trust Jesus on your death bed. Why is remembering your Creator from a young age important to a life of joy?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Matthew 1:3; Genesis 38:6-30

Notes