

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Many people say, “I don’t want to serve God! God doesn’t let you have any fun!” But you said, “Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things” (Ecc 11:9 NASB). You know that a joyful life is a balanced life, and you want me to enjoy my liberty responsibly, for that is the only way to lasting happiness and success. I praise you as the God who desires all men to find their happiness in you! Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me the last of Solomon’s reflections on his attempt to find meaning and fulfillment in life “under the sun” (cf. Ecc 1:3). As he thought about what he had experienced, he concluded that no one knows what tomorrow may bring—the only certainty is death. Because of this, Solomon encouraged me to enjoy the fruit of my labors and be content with what I have, for the ability to find fulfillment in my work is a gift from you. As I journey through life, I must recognize that “the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong...but time and chance happen to them all” (Ecc 9:11). This knowledge will keep me steady and strong through the twists and turns of life, and it will keep me from trying to make sense of what only you can understand. Solomon charged me to “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’” (Ecc 12:1). This means that while my younger years may be filled with passion and adventure, *they must be lived in light of the fact that you are my Creator*. If I keep this truth in mind, my life will be rich and full and yet pleasing to you. This is all the more important, Solomon observed, because those who live a full life cannot avoid old age, and he painted a striking picture of what it’s like to grow old. The body begins to shut down, and even the simplest things become difficult (cf. Ecc 12:3 on eating). This reality gives a serious significance to my daily decisions. I need to be living wisely now so that I’m prepared for the days which lie ahead. All this points to a consistent theme throughout Ecclesiastes: those who live “under the sun” must look “beyond the sun” to find lasting happiness and peace. It is only when I live in a right relationship with you that I affirm what Solomon said is the end of the matter: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil” (12:13–14).

Reflection

Solomon said, “Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth” (Ecc 11:2). Am I being careful to diversify my investments, recognizing that I can’t be sure which one will prosper, “this or that, or whether both alike will be good”? (Ecc 11:6).

Request

Father, my natural bent is to seek meaning and fulfillment in the things of earth. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on Jesus and to labor always out of love for Him (cf. John 21:15).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for sharing with me “words of delight and truth.” May your words be like goads (painful but helpful), and may you always be my one true Shepherd! (Ecc 12:10–11).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Saved by Grace](#)” – Frances J. Crosby.

Meditation Verse: Ecclesiastes 12:13–14.