

Ecclesiastes 11-12

Uncertainty Doesn't Mean Do Nothing (11:1-8)

In this section of Ecclesiastes, we begin moving toward a conclusion. Solomon has spent much of Ecclesiastes reminding us of things “under the sun” that are vanity, and like chasing the wind.

As Solomon discusses (and has discussed), there are limits to knowledge, much we don't or sometimes can't know. But that isn't an excuse to give up and do nothing.

- What does it mean to cast your bread upon the waters (v1)?
- Why give a serving because of evil on the Earth (v2)?
- Are there things we just don't know (v3)?
- Can we know what we need to know (2 Peter 1:3)?
- Too close a focus on what we don't know has what results (v4)?
- Not knowing the results, what must we do (v6, Matt 13:3-8)?
- Is there good in this life (v7)?
- Is there evil in this life(v7)?

Seek God in Your Youth (11:9-12:1)

Next Solomon gives instructions to the youth. In youth, we often feel that special time will last forever.

- What needs to be kept in mind about how we spend our youth (v9)?
- What two things are to be avoided in your youth (v10)?
- How are childhood and youth vanity (v10)?
- Why should we remember our Creator in our youth (v1)?
- What difficult days is Solomon discussing (v1)?

Description of Difficulties of Aging (12:2-8)

There are different opinions about some of the specific references in this text, but the general theme that it will become more difficult for us is obvious.

- How do things become more difficult for us as we age?
- Are there also advantages as we age?
- What should we do regardless of our age (v6)?
- What is the end of all (v7)?
- Knowing all of this, what conclusion do we reach with a strictly “under the sun” approach (v8)?

Conclusion (12:9-14)

Having concluded that from a strictly “under the sun” approach that all is vanity, Solomon switches to the broader topic to discuss the real meaning of life.

- Had Solomon put much effort into this topic (v9-11)?
- Who is the one shepherd (v11)?
- Can we get distracted in studying everything without realizing the importance of the conclusion(v12)?
- What is man's all (v13)?
- What important reminder did Solomon give as reason for this (v14)?
- Can anything we do really be hidden (v14)?