

## **Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8 Discussion Questions**

### Outline of Pastor Mike's Sermon

#### Introduction

- Revisiting Yale's class- *Psychology and the Good Life*
  - Nearly a quarter of Yale's students took this class
  - Updated article in the Washington Post describes the students and the life of the campus after taking the class
  - Learning the power of community, rest, gratitude and that life is bigger than grades
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  - Rejoice (11.7-10)
  - Remember (12.1-8)
  - Implications

#### Rejoice (11.7-10)

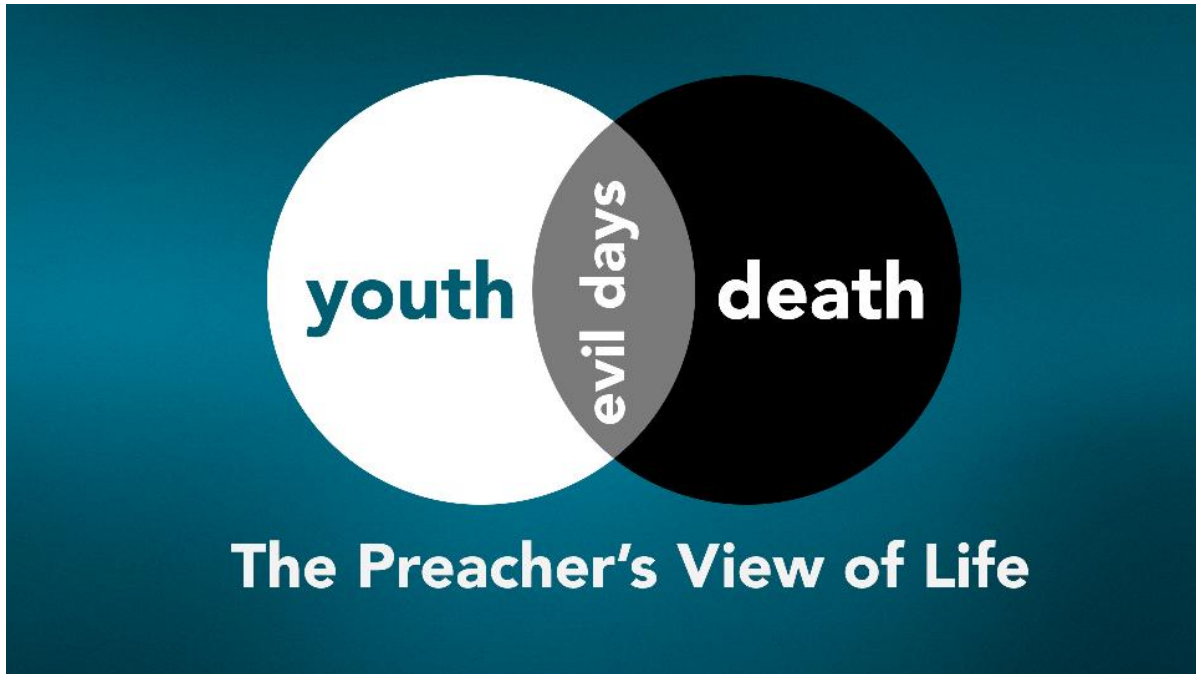
- The Preacher commends the enjoyment of life under the sun, though the days of darkness (death are many)
- The Preacher commends rejoicing- by pursuing the ways of the eyes and heart, removing vexation and putting away pain
- Youth and vitality are fleeting

#### Remember (12.1-8)

- Remember the Creator (v.1) and know that your spirit returns to God who gave it (v.7) bookend the passage. This recognition of something beyond just what the preacher can observe.
- Three before passages
  - Before the evil days of aging
  - Before the failing of the created order (eschatological) and the explanation of aging
  - Before the end of life

#### Implications

- Colossians 1.10-13
- Seeing the world rightly



- *"It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we*

*should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never met a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours” - C.S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory*

### Discussion Questions

*Feel free to choose what questions will be most helpful to your group to grow in their understanding of the Scripture and faithfully apply it to their lives.*

Read Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

1. What is it that the Preacher is instructing us to do in this passage? How would you summarize it?
2. Pastor Mike described the Preacher’s main ideas as enjoy the light while you have it because darkness is coming. In other words, the Preacher sees our existence as basically one of moving from light (youth) to darkness (death).
  - a. In Col 1:10-13 the Apostle Paul describes our situation using light and darkness metaphor as well. How would you describe his point?
  - b. How does the idea that you and those around you are essentially immortal beings (e.g. you will continue to exist into eternity in one form or another), and that we are all on a trajectory towards either inconceivable beauty and glory or incomprehensible corruption and suffering shape the way you view yourself and your life? How should it?
  - c. How does it affect the way that you view others? How should it affect it?
3. So for the Preacher, who is focused on physical and temporal life (life under the sun), we basically move from light to darkness. But for the Apostle Paul—who is focused on eternal life in Christ—those who are in Christ move from darkness to light.

a. Which approach or perspective do you tend to have: do you tend to focus on the deterioration or flourishing of your physical/temporal life or your eternal life? Why is that?

4. What does it look like, practically speaking, to be focused on the reality of eternal life without being irresponsible or neglecting the essential aspects of your temporal existence on earth? In other words, how do you still work a job, develop a career, love your spouse, raise kids, develop friendships, have fun, etc. all with a focus on eternity?

5. Consider where you spend your time and energy. Where are you currently living for eternity, and where are you stuck pursuing temporal things that will pass away?

a. Where is God calling you to be more intentional and faithful about pursuing eternal matters and what would that look like?