

Ecclesiastes 11:9-10

Introduction: A young man once studied violin under a world-renowned master. Eventually the time came for the student's first recital. Following each selection, despite the cheers of the crowd, the performer seemed dissatisfied. Even after the last number, with the shouts louder than ever, the talented violinist stood watching an old man in the balcony. Finally the elderly one smiled and nodded in approval. Immediately the young man relaxed and beamed with happiness. You see, the man in the balcony was his teacher, and thus the applause of the crowd had meant nothing to him until he had first won the hearty approval of his master. This is what Solomon is teaching in this text, how to be content and satisfied in this life and the life to come.

Breakdown of the Text:

V. 9: Today's society has the belief that you should get all you can, don't worry about anyone else. Solomon had fallen into that trap for a portion of his life. Now he is trying to warn people against that lifestyle. The age old question is, "how much is enough?" The answer "just a little bit more." In these two verses there are two Hebrew words used for the word "youth." The first one we encounter here in verse 9 speaks of boyhood or adolescence. The second one found later in the verse and in verse 10 speaks of a full grown youth. Solomon uses these words to show the progression of self-indulgence and self-gratification. God created us to desire fellowship with Him and others and when we try to fill our life with things, all we get is an emptiness that can never be filled. Jesus warned us of trying to get stuff in Matthew 6:19, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Paul warned Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:22 to flee youthful lusts. When we are young we don't think about the cost of things or value of things, we just think we have to have the latest and the greatest. I can remember growing up and the first gaming system that came out was the Atari with games like Pac Man, Pitfall, and Frogger. I thought that was the coolest thing ever. Shortly after that though came the Sega and then the Sega Genesis. Well now the Atari wasn't all that cool anymore, the Sega Genesis was the one I had to have. Was anything wrong with that Atari? Absolutely not, but it wasn't the latest and the greatest. I also remember when it was time to buy tennis shoes for school my parents took me to Walmart or Kmart. I didn't have my first pair of "name brand shoes" until I was a teenager. I couldn't stand that! I would always ask for a pair of Nike's or Reebok but my parents always said no because

they cost too much and my feet were still growing. They said they couldn't see the point in paying all the money for something I would outgrow in just a few months, but that didn't make sense to me and it didn't make me stop wanting them. That is the problem with the sin of materialism; you will never be satisfied with what you have. The phrase "let thy heart cheer thee in thy youth" is not Solomon telling young people to chase worldly pleasures. Rather he is trying to instruct us to have a proper focus in life. Jesus said in Matthew 6 there were your treasure is there your heart will also be. Therefore, Solomon's advice is to make sure that you are setting your heart on the right things. Colossians 3:2 says, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." In the end of this verse Solomon gives a very practical warning when he writes "for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." The bottom line is that every person who has ever lived will be judged by God at the end of their life. Matthew 12:36 reminds us that we will give an account for every idle word we have spoken. If our heart as been set on godly things and we have pursued those then our judgment is not about our salvation, but rather our rewards for our service to Christ. However, if we are not following Christ and do not have a relationship with Him then we are going to be judged by our works. The end result of that is given in Revelation 20:11-15 which says, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." So we can see that setting our affections on the things of this world will end up in our ultimate and eternal destruction and this is what Solomon is warning us to avoid.

V. 10: The word "therefore" here connects verse 10 with verse 9. Solomon is saying in light of the destruction that awaits those who substitute stuff for the Savior, you need to be wise and not fall into that condemnation. The word "sorrow" here means anger, grief, or indignation. Solomon here is telling us to remove all things that are going to bring God's judgment into our life. We need to remove them from our heart immediately. Luke 6:45 says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart

bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” From Solomon’s warning and Jesus’ teaching we can see at issue is our heart. What has captured and captivated our heart. What or Who do we love the most? Jesus told a parable in Matthew 13:44 that says, “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” Can you imagine the people when this man came and sold everything he had just so he could buy that field? They probably laughed at him, mocked him, among other things. But this man knew there was something worth it in that field and he was willing to sell everything he had for that one treasure. Do you believe that Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him is worth giving up everything you have and even dying to your own desires? Solomon concludes this verse by saying “childhood and youth are vanity.” What he meant is that they pass very quickly and the actions of a youth are not appropriate for adults. An example of that today would be a mom trying to dress like her teenage daughter. It’s one thing to do something when you don’t know any better, but it is something altogether different when you know it is wrong and still do it.

Application:

- ✠ **Be satisfied with what you have.** James 1:17 tells us that every good gift and perfect gift is from above. Philippians 4:19 reminds us that God will supply our every need. You may not have everything you want, but God has supplied everything we need not only for this life, but also for the life to come. We don’t need more money or more time we simply need more focus on what is truly important in this life and then pursue it until the end of our life.
- ✠ **Prepare for judgment day now.** The truth of the matter is this, from the moment you are born you begin to die. Death is inevitable according to Hebrews 9:27 that says, “and as it is appointed unto me once to die, then comes judgment.” To the unsaved, repent and follow Christ! To the saved, pursue Christ with every breath God gives you and do what He has created you to do. It would be better for you to die and have the world call you a fool and God to say “well done” than to have the world say well done and God call you a fool and tell you to depart from Him.