



Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

*Living God-centered – Start
Young and Stay the Course*

God-centeredness should never be postponed (12:1)

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";

- Solomon reflects on the importance of living with the awareness of our Creator God
- Remembering our Creator means we live with conscious awareness of our accountability to the God who made us
- All sinful and selfish ways of living bring only temporary pleasure and eventual guilt, shame, and emptiness
 - Hebrews 11:24-26

God-centeredness should never be postponed (12:1)

- The sooner we live with God-centered devotion and determination, the better
- Putting devotion to the Lord off is foolish and dangerous
 - Lamentations 3:64-66
- Young people and children, there's no time like the present to be wholeheartedly devoted to your Creator
- It is possible that Solomon, older and now repentant, is experiencing declining health and vitality and is saying, "*I have no pleasure in them*"
- To enjoy life with God when in possession of strength and energy is better than enjoying the things of earth without any thought of God

God-centeredness prepares people for difficulties and deterioration (12:2-6)

- Solomon, by illustration and example, is describing the waning years of life
- ² before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain,*
- Many elderly folks will battle health issues
 - Failing health brings one storm of sickness after another

God-centeredness prepares people for difficulties and deterioration (12:2-6)

³ *in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are dimmed,* ⁴ *and the doors on the street are shut – when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low –*

- *“keepers of the house tremble”* – tremors and shaking reveal the growing instability of the body
- *“strong men are bent”* – those who were once characterized by strength and ability are bent over in weakness
- *“grinders cease because they are few”* – likened to people in a household who would grind grain for food, older people lose their teeth and are unable to chew food as well
- *“those who look through the windows are dimmed”* – clarity of eyesight fails
- *“the doors on the street are shut”* – retreat and isolation happen more frequently
- *“when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises at the sound of a bird”* – normal noises of the day end at night, but rather than sound sleep, older people are awakened by the smallest noise
- *“all the daughters of song are brought low”* – age brings the failing of hearing

God-centeredness prepares people for difficulties and deterioration (12:2-6)

⁵ they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and desire fails, because man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets –

- *“they are afraid also of what is high”* – instability brings a fear of heights
- *“terrors are in the way”* – confidence and security are no longer strong
- *“the almond tree blossoms”* – almond blossoms are white and this describes hair turning grey
- *“grasshopper drags itself along”* – agility is lacking and mobility is impaired
- *“desire fails”* – sexual passions fade away
- *“because man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets”* – preparations for death are being made

God-centeredness prepares people for difficulties and deterioration (12:2-6)

⁶ before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern,

- Solomon gives a list of items that no longer function in the way they were designed
- For most elderly people, things don't function like they once functioned
- As life draws to a close, the elderly do not have the passion and strength they once had to be influential and assertive in godliness and righteousness

God-centeredness is preparation for the end of earthly life and the beginning of eternity (12:7)

⁷ and the dust returns to the earth as it was,

- The dust that returns to the earth is our physical decay as a result of death
 - Genesis 3:19
- As the body of everyone decomposes, their earthbound achievements also fade away

and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

- The spirits of all who die will appear before God, their Creator and Judge
- The purpose and productivity in life of the people of God, stands in contrast to evil doers
 - Psalm 92:1-15
- Jesus is our hope in life and death
 - Colossians 3:1-4
 - 2 Corinthians 5:1
- Being God-centered produces fruit to the glory of Christ throughout our life and the hope of eternal gain
 - Philippians 1:21-24

Questions to Consider

- Why do you believe that God-centeredness should never be postponed?
- Can you affirm the God-centered fruitfulness of your life? Are you affirming the God-centered fruitfulness you see produced by others?
- How is living a Christ-centered life preparing you for the deterioration of life and the inevitability of death?
- In what ways is Christ-centeredness preparing you for eternity?



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