



Fear God

Open it

1. What is a memory you have from when you were younger that you will never forget?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read Ecclesiastes 12:1–14.

2. Who should we remember in our youth, and why?
3. What are we to beware of?
4. What does the preacher tell us to do after he has determined that everything under the sun is worthless?
5. What will God bring into the day of Judgment?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Remember God in Your Youth

Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-8.

Do you ever remember random events from when you were really young? For me this mainly relates to my old house in North Aurora. When I was 4 years old, my family moved to Big Rock from North Aurora. Since I was so young when we moved, my memories of the old house are very vague, but I still have a few. I remember the overall layout of the house; I remember building a huge fort in the basement with my siblings, and I specifically remember watching *Air Bud: Seventh Inning Fetch* on a tube TV with my brother. But why? How can I remember specific random events from when I was so young? This selective memory is actually due to something called childhood amnesia. Childhood amnesia represents an inability of children to recall episodic memories from infancy and early childhood, before the age 2-4, so for whatever reason these few specific memories were deemed important for me when I was really young, and I've held onto them my entire life.

In this passage the preacher is begging us to remember God so we can build our life on the basis of God being our Creator. The preacher spent his youth seeking a fleeting lifestyle. If we do not implement the fact that God is our Creator into our minds every day, then we will lose focus on what really matters and start developing an “under the sun” mindset. The more we remind ourselves of this the more it will reflect in the way we live our daily lives.

6. Why is it important to remember God while you are young?

7. What are some things you can do to ensure that you are remembering God in your day-to-day life?

8. How can you make sure you don't get tired of pursuing God?

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Hold Fast to God's Teachings

Read Ecclesiastes 12:9–13.

When I started playing basketball, I was terrible at it. I would still argue that I'm not that good, but I'm definitely better than I was. I would go to practice and the coach would give me hard and sometimes hurtful advice on how to improve my game. Every time my coach would tell me how to do something differently or tell me how to improve my game, it would be my choice to listen. I always had the option to hear what my coach was saying and implement it or just ignore my coach and not improve my game. I would respect what the coach would tell me because he had more experience than I did. He had played in more games, shot more shots, and just experienced more when it came to basketball. This is also true when it comes to the ending of Ecclesiastes.

The preacher has examined everything under the sun, and he knows what it's like to live a life that is void of eternity. He has tried to live this life without God, and he has felt that it is meaningless. Just like it was my choice to listen to my coach, it is also your choice to listen to the preacher.

9. Do you often set aside time in your day for devotions? If so, are you putting the required care and attention into it? How do you know?

10. How can you know what teachings are God's teachings?

11. Why can you trust the preacher's teachings in Ecclesiastes?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Final Score

Read Ecclesiastes 12:13–14.

The preacher spent all of Ecclesiastes examining this world and everything under the sun. After spending his entire life deliberating and searching for answers, he came to one conclusion. He determined that only one thing matters: that we fear God and keep His commandments.

At the end of every semester a teacher will calculate your final grade for the class. Everything you submitted will be evaluated, whether it was an A or an F. Your teacher examines EVERYTHING. The assignments you did well on and the assignments you did poorly on, even the assignments you didn't turn in. There is no hiding assignments or making excuses for why certain things aren't submitted. The teacher won't care.

This is the same concept that the preacher is telling us. He says that every single deed will be judged. The good, the bad, the embarrassing, and the shameful sins; nothing will be hidden. Thankfully, if you are a born-again Christian, you have nothing to fear because the perfect blood of Jesus covers any wrongdoings in your life.

12. The preacher tells us to fear God, but be honest, do you fear God in any way?

13. Which of God's commandments do you find difficult to follow/listen to?

14. Can you hide sins from God?

15. Verse 14 tells us that “every deed” will be brought into judgment. Does this scare you?