

Ecclesiastes 11:7 – 12:14

Rejoice and Remember



Introduction

1. If you had three months to live, what would you do?

What does your answer reveal about you?

The Text

2. Would you describe the book of Ecclesiastes as death denying? eternity denying?

Try to reconcile these passages:

Ecc 3:18–21

Ecc 7:1–4

Ecc 9:1–6

Ecc 12:7b

Ecc 12:13–14

3. Read Ecc 11:7–10. What is the main advice in the face of death?

Can you reconcile 'follow the ways of your heart' with 'God will bring you to judgment' (11:9)?

How could you more fully follow the ways of your heart?

4. Read Ecc 12:1–5. What does it conjure up in your mind's eye?

What are the benefits of imagining a war scene, a funeral, an ageing body and a dead body?

5. Read Ecc 12:6. What does the poetry mean?

6. Read Ecc 12:7. Do you think this is a hopeful or despairing verse?

7. Read Ecc 12:8. Play around with inserting *vapour*, *fleeting* or *puzzling*, instead of *meaningless*. Which works best?

8. Read Ecc 12:13–14 Is this consistent with rejoicing and remembering?

Our Lives

9. How much have you thought about death and judgment in the last week?

Do you avoid funerals and cemeteries? What about nursing homes? Why?

How could you make yourself more deliberately remember death and judgment?

10. Can you describe an event in your life where you were both rejoicing in life and

remembering death at the same time? Can you imagine living differently if you did hold these together?