



Ecclesiastes 10-12

Ecclesiastes 10-12
Tape # 7238
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to Ecclesiastes chapter ten as we continue our study and the words of the preacher, the Ecclesiastes. Solomon is identified as the writer. Written in his later years when he had turned his heart away from the Lord and he sees, in this book, the emptiness and the futility of life at its best, apart from Christ. He tasted of everything, he had done everything, he said that there is not a single thing that he desires that he did not withhold from himself. Yet, having tasted of it all, he speaks of the emptiness of it all. The emptiness of all of those worldly accomplishments, worldly glory, the riches and the fame, was empty in and of themselves.

In chapter ten he continues really with the thought that we had at the end of chapter nine. You do understand that when wrote this, he didn't write it in chapters. It was just one book, one scroll, without any divisions. Those divisions were created later for our benefit. It's a lot easier to look up a scripture because you have it in the chapters and verses so we can make reference to a particular scripture. Originally it wasn't set out that way.

In setting it out in chapters, it's extremely handy for us in referencing scriptures but unfortunately, we in our western mind and in the way we read when we come to an end of a chapter we think, "that's the end of that chapter and now we are going to begin a new chapter kind of a thing" and we don't often carry through the thought from the previous chapter. When you say, "I'm going to read five chapters of the Bible tonight" and you may be quitting right in the middle of a thought if you had read on in the next chapter and then carry it on. Studying it as we are, when we are taking a few chapters a week, unfortunately we are many times making a break right in the middle of the development of a thought. Such is case in chapter nine and chapter ten and even in eleven and twelve there should be no break. Fortunately there will be no break tonight and we will go right through and see the continuation of thought.

In the previous chapter he was talking about a city that was being besieged by strong enemy and there was this wise poor man who delivered the city by his wisdom from this powerful enemy that was besieging the city. So he came to the conclusion that "wisdom is better than weapons of war: however, one sinner can destroy a lot of good" (9:18). In that idea, he goes right into his next thought.

DEAD flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: [odor] (10:1).

The flies when they would swarm into the oil of the apothecary, the perfumed oil, they would keep them covered because the flies would swarm and it isn't long before it begins to get rotten and it begins to stink. It was something very common to their relating to life. He talks about this and they understood exactly what it means. We think, "dead flies in the ointment of the apothecary" (10:1), what's that all about? The people at that time understood completely as they saw the swarms of flies and they would get into the perfumed oils and turn them into a stinking odor. The analogy that he is drawing,

so doth a little a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour (10:1).

You take a man who has a great reputation for wisdom, a man who is held in high esteem and honour, all it takes is just a little folly to turn that whole opinion of the man. The idea is "one sinner could destroy much good" (9:18), it just takes a little bit, a little folly can take a man who is in authority, power and great reputation and bring him down very quickly.

A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left (10:2).

The idea behind that is a wise man's heart will lead him to right things, to right actions, whereas fool's heart will lead him to wrong activities and wrong actions. The idea was the right hand was always the place of honour, respect and esteem and the left hand was really the place of sort of put down or rejection. You remember Jesus when he comes again will "gather together the nations and he will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. To those on his right hand he will say, Come ye blessed ye of the father inherit the kingdom". The right hand, the place of honour, it leads to honorable things. However, the fool will lead to dishonorable things.

Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool (10:3).

A fool just can't hide it. It's going to come out. As he walks in the way it becomes very obvious that he is a fool. His actions speak to everybody the fact that he is a fool.

Changing the thought,

If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences (10:4).

Basically, he is making reference here to a man who sits as a counselor to a king. The king doesn't follow your counsel or he turns from the advice that you have given him thus his spirit rises up against the counsel. Don't get in a huff and quit and say, "Well, if you're not going to listen to me then I am leaving" don't remove from your place. Yielding will bring peace even when there have been great offenses. "A soft answer turneth away wrath", it's so easy to bring an end to a dispute by saying, "maybe you're right". What difference does it make?

I am amazed at what a great fire a little matter kindles. Some of the big fights you have are over whether or not it was dark chocolate or milk chocolate. Divorces can come about from such things. It just builds up and up and up and up. Yielding will pacify great offences and that's the end of it. It ends all of the argument, the offence and the fighting and the bitter feelings that rise out of it.

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place (10:5-6).

The exalting of the fools and the denigrating of the wives.

I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth (10:7).

I've seen a reversal of order. I've seen fools exalted while I've seen the wise men sort of put down. I've seen princes who were put down while the servants were exalted.

He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; (10:8).

You set a trap for someone else and quite often you are caught in your own trap. In our neighborhood there is a posted twenty-five mile an hour speed zone. The people don't always observe it and every once in a while some of the people in the neighborhood called the Newport Beach police department. They asked them to set up a radar unit to keep the people at the proper speed, to make sure they don't exceed the twenty-five mile an hour speed limit. The interesting thing about that is the people who called and complained and asked that the police set up the radar trap were invariably the ones that got caught exceeding the speed. It's sort of a joke in the neighborhood because the fellow who called and did the most complaining got caught himself for speeding. The idea of digging a pit to trap an animal or whatever will fall into it himself.

and whoso breaketh an hedge [wall], a serpent shall bite him (10:8).

They used to have these rock walls between their vineyards and if a person goes to brake down a rock wall there were these little snakes that would nest inside. So in taking down a rock wall you were very apt to

be bitten by a snake. Digging a pit, you will fall into it and if you go to hurt someone by braking down their wall, you will be hurt, you will be bitten by the serpent.

Whoso removeth stones (10:9).

These stones were the markers for the field and a person would try to pick up a little extra acreage by going out and moving these stones that marked off the limits of the field.

Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth [splits] wood shall be endangered thereby. If the iron be blunt, [axes are dull] and he do not whet [sharpen] the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct (10:9-10).

In other words, rather than using all of your strength with a dull axe, take a little effort to sharpen it and it takes then a lot less effort to then do your job.

Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better (10:11).

That is a babbler will bite you. A person is just mouthy and the Bible calls them babblers. Unless a serpent is enchanted, they did have those guys with the flutes and the serpents were enchanted. Unless they are enchanted they'll strike and so will a babbler; they'll strike you. Watch out for them.

The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself (10:12).

So you can tell what a man is by his words.

The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness [the fool]. The fool also is full of words; a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him: (10:13-14).

People do a lot of talking but really you don't know what is going to take place tomorrow.

The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city. Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! (10:15-16).

The idea is that of dinning and eating and if your princes are eating in the morning then you are in trouble. It means that they're drinking in the morning and eating and they really should be about their business during the day. They are playboys eating in the morning.

Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season [the proper time], for strength, and not for drunkenness! By much slothfulness the building decayeth; (10:17-18).

I think we all know that don't we? Our houses need constant upkeep and it's sort of a frustrating thing when you just see your house going to pieces in front of you and you don't have the time to do the things you need to do to keep the house up.

and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through. A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things (10:18-19).

How many of you really believe that? Money is the answer to everything; there are people who believe that. Anything and everything can be answered by money.

Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter (10:20).

Have you ever heard them say, "a little bird told me"? Have you ever wondered where they got that? This is the scripture that that saying comes from. Solomon is saying to be careful of what you are saying,

even in secret, even in the privacy of your own home. It's amazing how your words can get out, how you can be exposed. Just be careful of the things you say, even in secret.

CAST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days (11:1).

There are those who understand this and interpret it as the bread meaning the wheat, or the grain, from which the bread is made. In Egypt they used to have a practice in the flooding of the Nile River when it was overflowing it's banks to just stand there where the banks were overflowing and toss their wheat into the water. Of course it's carried out then into the plains, into this rich soil that is being carried with the flood and that was the way they spread their seed. Rather than going through their fields they would just toss it on the water and let the river carry it into the fields that were beside the river, at the time of overflow, and then it would take root and they would have a very rich harvest of wheat. They think that Solomon is making reference to that practice of casting the wheat on the water. You will find it after many days; it will grow and come up a rich harvest.

The idea is that of receiving by giving away. It is a strange principle that is taught in the Bible, a spiritual principle, and that is a person who gives shall receive and you gain by giving. Jesus expressed the principle, he said, "Give and it shall be given unto you press down, measure it out and running over shall men give into your bosom". Paul said, "by whatsoever measure you needed out it will be needed back to you again". "If you sow sparingly you will reap sparingly, if you reap bountifully you will reap bountifully". So the more you give to the Lord and to others, the more you are going to receive. God will never be a debtor to you. The more you give to God the more God is going to return to you; he'll never be your debtor.

It's an important spiritual principle that many people do not follow because they cannot logically understand it. It doesn't make sense that the more I give, the more I am going to get. My logic tells me that the more I hoard, the more I am going to have. When Paul made this analogy, I can begin to understand it. He said, "he who sows sparingly" in other words, if you go out to sow your wheat and you just drop a seed here and there and be very careful on how you sow your wheat, then you are going to have a little shoot here and a little shoot there, you are not going to have much of a crop. But if you go out and throw the seed everywhere as you are sowing the wheat, then you are going to have a bumper crop of wheat. You are going to have wheat come up all over the place. So the more you give, the more you get, is the idea Paul is seeking to put across in illustrating the principle of giving. Sowing sparingly, reaping sparingly, sowing bountifully and reaping bountifully.

Give a portion to seven, and also to eight: (11:2).

Be giving.

for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth (11:1).

You don't know what is to happen to you in the days to come. It may be that you're going to need help one of these days. If you're generous and if you're giving to people, then if you are in need they will be helpful and generous to you. You don't know what the future may hold for you and thus the encouragement to go ahead and be generous with others because it may be in the future that they will be in a good position and you'll be in a poor position and they will be able to return then the favour to you.

You remember Jesus gave the parable of the steward who was the accountant for the master. His master said to him to get your books in order because you're going to be fired in two weeks. So the fellow said, "Man, what shall I do? I'm too proud to beg and I'm too weak to dig ditches." And he called in all the creditors of his master and he cut the bills in half so that when he got fired he could go around and say, "Hey, remember what I did for you?" So he took advantage of his position to set himself up for the future. Jesus said he was wise, he didn't say he was honest, he just said he was wise. He commended the wisdom of the man because he took advantage of his present position to set himself up for the future. So Jesus said, "Make use of the unrighteousness of money so that when you fail [die] you might be received into the everlasting habitations".

The idea is you don't know what the future holds so be generous with what you have. You'll find that it will come back to you in the future.

If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be (11:3).

The clouds, you see them, a cloudy day and yet they empty themselves upon the earth. They give what they have. Then they seem to keep having sufficient supply to keep giving.

He that observeth the wind (11:4).

There are always difficulties that we can imagine if I give what I have to others. If you start considering the difficulties of these things, many times you will not do them.

He that observeth the wind shall not sow; (11:4).

Looks like a windy day today so I better not plant the seed. I'll just stay in and sit by the fire and kick back today because it's too windy to sow. But if you don't sow, you can't reap.

and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap (11:4).

You can't let problems or difficulties stop you from doing what is necessary in life. Anything and everything we do is froth with danger or with problems or with difficulties but you can't just say well I'm not going to do it because there are real problems that can rise from that. Now people often times do that, they let the difficulties stop them from important activities for God. There are some people that can always see and define the difficulties. If you are looking for trouble it will be there. You could find problems and possibilities for problems in everything.

I have a friend who was a professor of mine and a man who taught me so much and I admire him tremendously. He has been a mentor for me for years, my younger years. I traveled with him extensively just to glean from him. His wife was one of those persons who could always see the problems or the dangers that might exist. She was always saying, "That could be dangerous. Don't you realize that this could happen or that could happen?" She was always pointing out the potential or possible dangers in anything and everything that you might want to do. Finally, one day he just turned to her and said, "Honey, living is dangerous". That's true. Living is dangerous but you can't quit living just because it's dangerous.

It's sort of a warning against that inactivity that rises out of the possible difficulties that may exist.

As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all (11:5).

We don't really know or understand the works of God. We don't really know the way of the spirit. Jesus said, concerning the spirit in John three, "The spirit blows where ever it wishes. You hear the sound of it but you can't really tell where it's coming from or where it's going, so is he that is born of the spirit". So talking about the spirit, the spirit moves in interesting ways. We don't understand the moving of the spirit. There are sometimes when I feel the spirit ought to really move now and it doesn't seem to move. Then there are other times when I feel that the spirit can't move here, and he does. We don't understand the moving of the spirit. That's what Solomon is saying here.

We really don't understand how the bones of a child are formed within the womb. Marvelous, the ways of God, the formation of new life within the womb. We don't really know the works, the ways of God who makes all things, makes that child in the womb. Marvelous, marvelous, marvelous miracle.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: (11:6).

That is from helping other, giving to others.

for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good (11:6).

So get out and do your work, give to others, don't slack and you really don't know what may come of it but it isn't necessary. It's just necessary that we do what the Lord has commanded us to do. It's necessary that I sow seed, it isn't necessary that I reap the harvest. God has called us to be his witnesses. Whether or not people accept or reject is not your problem. You are to just share the truth of God; you're just to share the love of God. You are to share the word of God and plant the seed in their hearts sow the seed of God's word to people and then leave with God what comes of it. Don't worry about it. Keep witnessing even when you think no one is listening. Go out and do your job and do what you are supposed to do and leave the rest for the Lord.

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: (11:7).

Daytime is a great time.

But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity (11:8).

You might live a good life, a long life, see a lot of daylight but a day of darkness is coming is what Solomon is saying and they're going to be many too. All that you've done is going to come to nothing. Not quite so. As we pointed out in our Parson to Person this morning in the bulletin, Paul the apostle encourages us in first Corinthians fifteen by declaring to us that "your labour for the Lord is not in vain". Whatever you do for God is never in vain.

God called you to sow the seed to plant the seed, his word, in the hearts and in the minds of people. You're paid not by commission; you are paid by salary for doing the job of sowing the seed. You get the same pay whether or not there is any fruit or lots of fruit. You are not paid by the amount of fruit that comes from sowing the seed; you are paid for sowing the seed. It's not up to you to say you had no success in sharing your faith with others. Whatever you do for the Lord is never in vain. God takes in account for all that you do for him and your work for the Lord will be rewarded by him. Your reward is not according to the amount of fruit that comes from it. You may not see any fruit of your labour. God may not call you to reap. As Paul says, "one sows, one waters and God gives the increase". So he that sows is nothing, he that waters is nothing but it is God who gives the increase.

I knew a man, a missionary, who has long since gone to be with the Lord. He was a bank president in San Jose, California when he accepted the Lord. He got called of God, as a result of a vision, to go to Panama to preach the gospel, to be a missionary in Panama. In his vision he saw this old gray haired gray bearded man standing with one of these wooden plows. There was a big field that was needing cultivating. The old man in the vision was just too weak and was calling, "Come and help me to reap the harvest". In the vision he was aware that the call was in Panama. He resigned as the president in the bank and he sold things that he had and went to school to study the language and he prepared and went to Panama as a missionary. He had tremendous success; he was a brilliant man and had tremendous success in his missionary endeavors in Panama.

He built a very large church and became well know throughout all of Panama. One day he received a call from the hospital there in Panama and they said, "We had an old man in the hospital who is dying. He's incoherent and sort of babbling and we don't know what he is saying. We don't have much background on this man. But we know that he was a Christian and some kind of a missionary. We feel that some Christian should come and pray with him because he's not going to last long. Could you come over to the hospital and visit this man?" So Dr. Edwards went over to the hospital. When he walked into the room he saw the gray haired man with the gray beard that he had seen in his vision. He prayed with the man. The man was there praying in the spirit, (That's why they didn't understand him because he was praying in tongues). They said to him, "We don't understand what he is saying" and Dr. Edwards said, "Don't worry you never will".

The man died and Dr. Edwards became so interested because this was the man that he had seen in the vision. When he began to inquire about him he found out that he was a Presbyterian missionary. He'd been down in Panama for years and yet they could not find any converts but he had been planting seed for years in Panama. God gave to Dr. Edwards the privilege of going down and reaping the harvest from the seed that was planted by this man.

When they stand before the Lord to receive the rewards for the things done in their bodies and the Lord gives the rewards for this great missionary work that was done in Panama, the thousands of people who came to Jesus Christ. According to God's books and God's accounting, the old gray haired missionary will get the same or equal reward of Dr. Edwards who had the privilege of reaping the harvest that came from the seeds that were planted by this old man. God rewards you for your faithfulness in doing what he has called you to do. He has called you to sow the seed in windy days or in cloudy days or whatever, you are to cast the bread upon the waters.

The whole idea of this section is that of the importance of us just doing the things that God has called us to do. If you are not a child of God then this does apply to you. Rejoice in the blessings or what you have in the days that you are alive because when you go in the grave you will be in the days of darkness for a long time. Everything is empty and it is all gone, there is nothing to show for your life of eternal value or of eternal good. That's rather tragic to live a whole life and have nothing of eternal value to show for your life.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment (11:9).

Someday you are going to answer for it. Just remember that. You will give an accounting to God for your life and you will receive the rewards for those things that you have done that were for eternal benefit and glory.

Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity [emptiness] (11:10).

REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; (12:1).

He's saying, while you are young, to remember your Creator, serve God and take advantage of your youth in serving your Lord.

Evil is not the sense of wicked evil but just that in the days of older age when you just can't get around as easy as you used to get around. Those days when you wake up and you ache all over and say, "Oh my. My aching body". The days in which you have no pleasure in them anymore. It's not you wake up excited saying, "Oh man I wonder how the surf is today" but it's when it is hard to roll out of bed and you stand up rather slowly and you feel the cricks and pops.

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: (12:2).

He gives some interesting figures of speech for some of the problems that a person experiences as the body begins to wear out. The keepers of the house are your arms, your hands.

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, (12:3).

You notice how when people get older they begin to tremble. I've noticed that my writing is beginning to get trembling. I used to think it was funny when my aunt would write to me in trembling script but it's catching up with me now.

and the strong men shall bow themselves, (12:3).

They begin to sort of hunch over.

and the grinders [teeth] cease because they are few, (12:3).

You are getting in bad shape now. No more steaks or corn.

and those that look out of the windows [eyes] be darkened, (12:3).

You can't see so well.

And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; (12:4).

You can't hear very well, "say it again". You wake up; you don't sleep soundly all night long anymore. You wake up with the birds in the morning.

Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, (12:5).

Stand up on a chair, no way it's too high up there.

and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, (12:5).

You look out and a grasshopper is a burden to you.

and desire shall fail: (12:5).

It used to be that surfing was important to me. If someone asks me if I had been surfing lately, "no it's been years". The desire has failed. Things don't mean the same to you as you get older. Stuff that you used to say, "Let's go for it" now you say, "Are you sure you want to go for it?"

because man goeth to his long home, (12:5).

"Going home, going home".

and the mourners go about the streets: (12:5).

One day you go home. They lay you in the ground and the mourners go about the streets.

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern (12:6).

The wheel was the thing that they would use to put the rope down to pull the water out of the cistern. The pitchers are broken at the mouth, the golden bowl, silver court, and a picturesque speech concerning death.

Then shall the dust [body] return to the earth as it was: (12:7).

"Dust thou art" God said, "and to dust you shall return". He's speaking of the body of man, not speaking of the soul. As Longfellow put it so well,

"Tell me not in mournful numbers. Life is but an empty dream for the soul is dead to slumbers. Things are not what they seem. Life is real and life is earnest and the earnest and the grave is not thy bowl. Thus thou art to dust returneth was not spoken of the soul."

Spoken of my body it goes back to dust.

and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it (12:7).

The body goes downward into the earth but my spirit soars upward to God who gave me life.

Here he is, end of the road. He's about ready to go back to dust and leave this life. How does he see it?

Vanity of vanities, [emptiness of emptiness] saith the preacher, all is vanity [emptiness] (12:8).

So true of a life that is apart from Jesus Christ. It ends up empty and unfulfilling, unsatisfying and frustrating.

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs (12:9).

As we pointed out there were some three thousand proverbs, he was wise. He set things out in order so that you could understand. He set them in a way that made them attractive and teachable.

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd (12:10-11).

The goad was a thing they used to use that had a nail at the end of a stick when they were plowing with the oxen. If the oxen was getting lazy they would take this stick with a nail on it and hit him in the flank, they'd goad him and he would get moving again. The Lord, when he apprehended Paul on the road to Damascus said, "It's been hard for you to kick against brick". There is one thing that you don't want to do when you are being goaded is to kick against it. That thing will really hit you then. Paul has been kicking against the goads. Some of you have been kicking against the goads and you find that you are the one that hurts and you are the one who suffers when you kick against the goads.

The wisdom is set out in ways that sort of challenge you and catch your attention. That was the purpose of setting them out in proverbs, to capture your attention, to be a goad, to be a challenge to you.

The masters of assemblies, the masters were the teachers. They called Jesus Master. They were the teachers in the assemblies but there is only one real shepherd and that's the Lord. That is what he is saying here, to stimulate you to think, and to get you thinking. Yet there is one shepherd.

And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh (12:12).

All of you that are in college say, "Amen". Much study does make one weary. I remember that in the books that I inherited in school, you inherit it from the class above you being used by others. I remember one of my Latin books in Santa Ana High School had written in it, "Latin is a language as dead as dead can be. First it killed the Romans and now it's killing me". It just about killed me too. Another history book that I had, had written in it, "The more you learn the more you know. The more you know the more you forget. The more you forget the less you know. So what's the use of learning?" That's pretty much what Solomon is saying here. Much learning is weariness to the flesh, much study.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man (12:13).

This is why you exist. This is the purpose for life. God created you that you might fellowship with him, living in fellowship with him, standing in reverence of God and in awe of God. The idea of fearing is worshipful fear or reverence of God. In the worship of God and in the awe of his greatness of heart is to fear God and keep his commandments.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil (12:14).

Someday you are going to stand before the eternal God and all of the things that you have done will be brought, whether they be good or evil, unless you are a child of God and the evil is all erased. I love that. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus". He's erased the negative aspect

of my account, taking away my sin. This is the whole duty of man. One day you will stand before man so fear God and keep his commandments.

May the Lord bless you this week and prosper you in all that you do for him. May we follow the exhortations of sowing the seeds, of fearing God, of keeping his commandments, doing the work of the Lord and trusting God for the fruit that will come, committing to those things in the end.

So go out this week and sow seed, cast your bread upon the waters, give to seven or to eight, take advantage of the opportunities that you have now in knowing God and in serving God. For you younger ones remember the Creator in the days of your youth. Give your youth to him, the strength of your youth to serve him. You'll never be sorry.