

1. Rejoice, because judgment is coming (11:7-9).
 - a. We will be held accountable for whether or not we rejoiced in the life God gave us (7-9).
 - b. We are commanded to rejoice (9).
 - i. Both the young and the young at heart must learn to rejoice!
 1. Spiritually speaking, all of us can be young at heart!
 - ii. Rejoicing is integral to living a full life a life that pleases God (Philippians 4:4).
 - iii. Failing to rejoice results in the forfeiture of the blessing of God (Deuteronomy 28:47).
 - iv. God will hold us accountable for the thoughts of our hearts and the way we viewed the world.
 - c. If we don't learn to enjoy the little things, we won't be able to enjoy anything (7).
 - i. Rejoice in sight!
 - ii. Rejoice in sunshine!
 - d. If we don't learn to enjoy each day and year, we'll soon come to the end with little to show for it (8).
 - i. When youth is spent enjoying what God is given, the memories will enrich your last days.
 - ii. Life is best lived when we remember that the day of our death is fast approaching.
 1. MSG Roy Benavidez – "For those who have fought for it, life has a special flavor that the protected will never know. You have never lived until you've almost died."
 2. While this statement is true, I believe that stories like Roy's can help us to cultivate a deeper sense of gratitude and enjoyment of the life God has given us.
2. Remember that life is for living (11:10-12:8).
 - a. We will be held accountable for whether or not we removed anxious thoughts from our hearts (11:10).
 - i. Sorrow is a part of life, but don't allow sorrow to crowd out joy!
 - ii. Jesus commands us not to worry about the future (Matthew 6:25-34).
 - b. Ecclesiastes wants the young and the young at heart to realize that the doctrine of creation is the wellspring of a life well lived (12:1).
 - i. Remember that God made a good world, and not an evil one.
 - ii. Remember that God is the Creator, and we are His creation, made for His glory.
 - iii. All the evils in this world stem from the creation trying to usurp the Creator.
 - c. Set your heart on God while you still have time (12:2-8).
 - i. Old age is pictured as a gathering storm (2).
 - ii. Old age is pictured as a house that is coming to ruin (3-4).
 1. The keepers of the house tremble – trembling hands (3)
 2. The strong men bow themselves – weakening posture (3)
 3. The grinders cease – difficulty chewing (3)
 4. The darkened windows – difficulty seeing (3)
 5. The doors shut – difficulty hearing (4)
 6. Rising up at the voice of a bird – difficulty sleeping (4)
 7. The daughters of music brought low – difficulty singing and speaking (4)
 8. Fear of falling (5)
 9. White hair (5)
 10. Slow moving (5)
 - iii. Life departing the body is pictured as shattered bowl or a shattered pitcher (6-8).
 1. When the silver cord is cut and the pulley at the well is broken, the vessels crash to the ground and the precious water slips away.
 2. One day, our body will break and our spirit will slip away.
 - d. Before that fateful day comes, how will you live?
 - i. Old age is the harvest of the seasons that have gone before. In our early years, we're building the house in which we must live when we are old. We may make it a prison or a palace

1. We may make it very beautiful, full of beautiful memories to feast upon during the long winter days and nights of old age.
 2. Or, we may make our house very gloomy, laying up nothing to feed upon in the hunger and craving of our declining years.
 3. It is possible to live so as to make old age very sad, but it is also possible to make it very beautiful. For those who've lived well, every memory is a little snatch of song, and the last days of life are its happiest days.
- ii. How can we live so that our old age is beautiful and happy?
1. Live a useful life. Nothing good ever comes out of idleness or selfishness. The fruit of an idle life is never joy and peace. Moments that are invested in the service of others are always "found again after many days."
 2. Live a pure and holy life. The old man, like the snail, carries his house on his back. He may change neighborhoods, or homes, or scenes, or companions, but he cannot get away from himself and his own past. Lives of passion and evil store away bitter fountains from which the old man has to drink. Nothing brings such pure peace and joy at the close of life as a well-lived past.
 3. Only Christ can make any life, young or old, truly beautiful or truly happy.
 - a. Only Christ can give peace.
 - b. Only Christ can purify that sinful fountain within us.
 - c. Only Christ can take away the fear of death and give us the assurance of eternal life!

Conclusion:

1. Is your life characterized by rejoicing? Have you learned to rejoice in the little things?
2. How are you caring for your earthly house? Are you storing up treasures that enrich the soul, or are you letting your earthly house haunt you with regrets and past failings?