

Wise Thoughts for a Meaningful Life

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Bible-First Lifestyle reading: Ecc. 7-12; Amos 4-9; 1 Chron. 1-14

“Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter, as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor.” Ecc. 7:11-12

4 Wise Practices that Give Meaning to Your Life - SLIDE

1. Life is short. Let the certainty of **eternity** dictate your **earthly priorities**.

“Death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart...” Ecc. 7:2

“For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun. Go ahead and eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for it is now that God favors what you do.” Ecc. 9:5-7

“However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all...Remember your creator in the days of your youth...” Ecc. 11:7- 12:8

2. Work hard, avoid **extremes** and strive for **balance**.

*“Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise – why destroy yourself?
Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool – why die before your time? It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. The man who fears God will avoid all extremes.” Ecc. 7:16-18*

“Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well.” Ecc. 11:6

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all of your might...” Ecc. 9:10

3. Don't try to **make sense** of everything. God's **ways** are not our **ways**.

“Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what He has made crooked. When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this; God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future.” Ecc. 7:13-14

“The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant; but time and chance happen to them all.” Ecc. 9:11

“As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother’s womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things.” Ecc. 11:5

4. **Fear** God and keep His **commandments**.

“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.” Ecc. 12:13-14

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
Prov. 9:10

The stages of learning the fear of the Lord:

1. Fear of **punishment** – God is mad and He’s going to hurt me!
2. Fear of **abandonment** – God is mad and is finished with me!
3. Fear of **violated relationship** – God loves me and I can’t stand the thought of violating that love.

How do I know if I fear God? Do I keep His commandments? Do I hate evil?

“To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.” Prov. 8:13