

# HOW TO BE ALIVE YOUR WHOLE LIFE Ecclesiastes 9

*Only those who truly honor God the Giver of Life  
can truly appreciate and enjoy God's Gift of Life*

*Bill Turner*

1. **A group of businessmen gathered for a luncheon to hear an economist<sup>1</sup>**
  - a. give a talk about the recession. On a large flip chart, the speaker made a black spot in the middle of the paper and asked a man in the front row what he saw.
  - b. The man said: "A Black Spot." then he asked another & another w/ same reply: A black spot.
  - c. With a calm and deliberate pause, the speaker then said, "Yes, there is a little black spot... —But none of you mentioned the large white sheet of paper it is on."
  - d. The speaker then gathered his notes from the podium and sat down. The room was totally silent and the host who had introduced him looked nervously around, not know what to doe next. And someone in the back began clapping, and soon they all applauded.
2. **But what had he taught about the recession? That You Need to Have Perspective!**
  - a. You Can't Just Focus on one small thing—You Need to See the Big Picture
  - b. But Many Times in Life We Hyper-Focus on some small black dot
  - c. We get obsessed about an offhanded remark someone said about us...
  - d. or some bad thing that happened to us, or a mistake we made or someone else made

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## I. LIVE WITH FAITH (9:1-6)

### Because our life is in God's Hands

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#### A. BY FAITH WE KNOW OUR LIFE IS IN GOD'S HANDS (v.1)

1. **All of Time and Eternity is in God's Hands—as well as our individual lives**
  - a) *The rich man was blessed—Lazarus was poor and sick—God is in control*
  - b) We try to make sense of things that don't make sense to us
2. **Faith Trusts that God Will Make All things Right in His Time**
  - a) Daniel's Friends refused to bow down and worship an idol statue of the King
  - b) They were taken to a fiery furnace to be burned to death for refusing...
  - c) They said, Our God is able to Deliver us... However, even if God chooses NOT to save us, we will not bow down to worship an idol anyway...
  - d) They Had the Faith to Know God is in Control—and He will do what is best

#### B. BY FAITH WE KNOW DEATH DOES NOT HAVE THE FINAL SAY (v.2-3)

1. **Death Does Not Discriminate... It is the Final Enemy of all...**

**the One Destiny we all share in common regardless of who we are**

(1) the righteous and the wicked    (2) the good and the bad  
(3) the clean and the unclean        (4) the religious and the nonreligious  
(5) the good man and the sinner    (6) the one who takes an oath and one who doesn't

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<sup>1</sup> Story from: The Control Freak, Les Parrott, p.25)

## 2. But Those Who Have No Faith—Have No Hope...

- a) The impending doom of death causes some to make wrong decisions in life  
Notice New Living Translation paraphrase of v.3 → (9:3 NLT)
- b) It is so strange to me to see people live lives of wickedness and then they die!
- c) What did it get them? A few years of narcissism—Then eternal Judgement!

*We all “share a common destiny on earth—death and the grave  
—we do not share a common destiny in eternity.” (Warren Wiersbe)*

## 3. Your Decisions in This Life — Will Echo Into Eternity...

- a) Christ Has Defeated Death—and offers you victory over death
- b) It's Your Decision that Determines Your Destiny

### C. BY FAITH WE HAVE HOPE (v.4-6)

#### 1. NOW is the Time to Live! —While You are Alive!

- a) A living dog is better than a dead lion—As long as there is life there is hope (v.4)

#### 2. To Live By Faith is to Live With Hope—Even while we live in a broken world

*“There is no escape from an aching soul, only denial of it. The promise of one day being with Jesus in a perfect world is the Christian's only hope for complete relief. Until then we either groan or pretend we don't” (Larry Crabb).*

#### 3. There are only so many years to your life—therefore add life to your years!

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## II. LIVE WITH JOY (9:7–10)

### Because Your Life is a Gift from God

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#### A. APPRECIATE LIFE AND HONOR GOD THE GIVER OF LIFE (v.7-8)

##### 1. Instead of living under a dark cloud—live your life while you're alive!

- a) Not Under a Dark Cloud of Depression and Despair...
- b) Not Paralyzed by Fear Over What May or May Not Happen
- c) This is YOUR LIFE—Live it While Your Alive!

*“This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)*

##### 2. Lets Realize He is not encouraging reckless self-centered gratification

- a) Solomon lived life chasing the idols of his heart...
- b) He was a king—and he sat down to a daily feast...  
But that doesn't mean he always enjoyed it... (Prov. 15:17; 17:1)
- c) Without Love in the Home—even a good meal is a battleground...  
But with Love in the Home—even dry bread can become a feast!

##### 3. Self-Centered Gratification Doesn't Bring True Joy and Happiness...

**The Only Way to Truly Enjoy Life is to Know the Joy of Salvation!**

- a) Knowing that God loves you and you love God!
- b) That God is in Control—and He has Forgiven your sins by the blood of Christ

**Only those who truly honor God the Giver of Life—**

**—can truly appreciate and enjoy God's gift of life**

## **B. ENJOY THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH (v.9)**

- 1. Just as life is a gift from God—so is marriage!**
    - a) Life is too short and too hard to NOT Enjoy Your Marriage
    - b) Since marriage is from God—it contains inherent goodness from God
  - 2. A Healthy and Happy Plant Requires 4 things:**
    - a) **Water, Soil, Sunshine, Nutrients** — It NEEDS All 4...
    - b) If you only give it water and soil it will grow weak and die
    - c) Only Sun with no water it will grow weak and die
  - 3. A HEALTHY HAPPY MARRIAGE REQUIRES 4 THINGS... (v.9)**
    - a) **Sharing of Happiness Together (NIV: enjoy life NKJ: live joyfully w/ your wife)**
    - b) **Affection (“love...”)**
    - c) **Life-Long Commitment (“all the days...”)**
    - d) **A Duty and Responsibility to each other (NKJ: in the labor which you perform)**
  - 4. Sometimes Life Hits us hard and we get off track...**
    - a) A Married Couple was always arguing and frustrated...
    - b) A counselor asked them to list 3 things they missed from when they dated or 1st married  
Simple things they’d forgotten & stopped doing for each other over years
    - c) They Began Remembering, and Returning, and Repenting and LIVING!
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## **III. LIVE WITH UNDERSTANDING (9:11–12)**

### **Because Life is Uncertain and Unpredictable**

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#### **A. LIFE IS UNCERTAIN, UNPREDICTABLE AND OFTEN UNFAIR!**

- 1. There Are No Guarantees in Life... (v.11)**
  - (1) The fastest doesn't always win the race... (2) Strongest Don't Always Win the Fight
  - (3) The Wise sometimes go without... (4) the Smartest are Not Always Successful...
  - (5) The Skilled don't always succeed...
- 2. Time and Chance Happen to Everyone—Regardless of who you are**
  - a) Sometimes an olympic athlete who's the fastest runner, stumbles or falls in the race
  - b) A Promising Football Career is cut short from a torn ACL
  - c) A career cut short... a Retirement fund is lost in a market crash...
- 3. The storms of life have 3 characteristics: (v.12)**
  - a) UNPREDICTABLE: Man does not know his time
  - b) INESCAPABLE: like fish in a net or bird in a snare
  - c) ABRUPT: It is shocking and sudden
- 4. So it's Not IF the Storms of Life Will Hit—**

#### **But WHEN they Hit—HOW we Handle Them?**

"Sorrow can lead us into one of four lands: the barren land in which we try to escape from it; the broken land in which we sink under it; the bitter land in which we resent it; or the better land in which we bear it and become a blessing to others." (J. W. Bramhall)

**B. HAPPINESS IS NOT THE RESULT OF GETTING OUR WAY IN LIFE,  
BUT IN HAVING A TRUE RELATIONSHIP W/ GOD THE CREATOR OF LIFE**

1. Wise planning is important—but the wisest planning of all...  
is an abiding faith in God regardless of outcomes
2. We Just saw how Our Abilities Don't Always Bring Success...
  - a) Solomon is going to give us a real-life example...

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**IV. LIVE WITH WISDOM (9:13–18)**

**Because Our Reward is from God not from Men**

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**A. WISDOM IS BETTER THAN STRENGTH, POWER AND RICHES—  
BUT EVEN WISDOM CAN BE DESPISED BY UNGRATEFUL PEOPLE**

1. A Powerful King Surrounds a Small City
2. A Poor Wise Man lives in the city and saves the city with his wisdom
3. But the poor man's wisdom was despised, not heard, then forgotten

**B. QUIET WORDS OF WISDOM ARE BETTER THAN SHOUTS OF RULERS**

1. Quiet Words of Wisdom are despised—shouts of fools are praised!
2. You See This on Social Media all the time!  
Loud Shouts of Fools and Celebrities go viral!  
But a Bible Verse posted gets crickets chirping!

**C. BUT OUR REWARD IS FROM HEAVEN—NOT FROM MEN**

1. Do What's Right Regardless of Who Get's the Credit  
Do What's Right Even if it is Despised...
2. True Joy and Happiness is Not From the Praise of People!  
It comes from a right relationship with God
3. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world

**CONCLUSION:**

**1. How can you be alive your whole Life?**

*There are only so many years to your life—therefore add life to your years!  
Only those who truly honor God the Giver of Life  
can truly appreciate and enjoy God's gift of life*

**2. THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS OFFERED IN CHRIST (Jn 10:10)**

- Only Jesus Can Take Away Our Guilt and Condemnation
- He Gives us Victory over Satan, Sin and Death
- He Brings us Peace with God... Peace w/ ourself... Peace w/ others
- We Find Joy as we Live in the Light — rather than in the Darkness