

# LEARNING TO LIVE WITH WISDOM (Ecclesiastes 11)

*How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*

—Bill Turner

## 1. “Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

*Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?” – T.S. Elliot*

## 2. We are being Water-boarded with information—and it takes a toll...

*a. “Our world has more and more information and less and less wisdom. More data, less clarity. More distraction, less stillness. More pontificating, less pondering. More opinion, less research. More speaking, less listening. More to look at, less to see. More amusements, less joy.” (Wisdom Pyramid; p.11)*

## 3. Everyone has a mega-phone, no one has a filter... — Our ears are bleeding! We need the Wisdom from Above now more than ever

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## I. LIFE IS RISKY—Learn to Live with the Good & Bad (1-4)

### A. RISKS ARE REAL—BECAUSE NO ONE KNOWS THE FUTURE (v.1-2 NIV)

#### 1. TWO MAIN RESPONSES TO RISK → 1) WORRY 2) WORK

a) “The reason why worry kills more people than work, is that more people worry than work.” – Robert Frost

#### 2. When we carry the regrets of yesterday and the worry of tomorrow we hardly have the strength to carry our duties of today

a) “A day of worry is more exhausting than a day of work.” – John Lubbock

b) “Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.”  
— Corrie Ten Boom

#### 3. Worry Doesn’t Work—it Prevents us from doing the work (Mt 6:34)

a) Worry Is Usually Over Things We Can’t Control...

b) All the Worry in the world won’t affect the Weather, Rain, Wind, or where a tree falls

c) Or change an election, or a war, or a marriage, or a storm or drought...

#### 4. Work Smart by Expecting the Unexpected and Accounting for it (v.2 NLT)

### B. ANALYSIS PARALYSIS (v.3-4)

#### 1. An inability to make a decision due to over-thinking a problem.

a) Psychologists say the root cause of analysis paralysis is anxiety.

We fear choosing the wrong option.

b) And now with vast amounts of information on the internet, People get caught in an “Obsessive Research Loop” — research until the point of exhaustion

c) Too much information, too many variables, too many choices, Analysis Paralysis

#### 2. Some people—including many Christians—are so risk averse that they wait until conditions have to be perfect before they will do their duty

a) Everything Has to Be Perfect Just the Way they Want it, or they wont do it!

#### 3. Analysis Paralysis drains our energy with worry

- a) EX: A Man was getting weaker and weaker with worry... He finally learned to stop worrying when he saw his wife singing to herself while doing the dishes...
- b) He realized that WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG, Before she got married, if she had thought about the astronomical amount of dishes she would have to clean over a lifetime—she would've never married him!  
A mountain of dishes she would have to clean across the rest of her life?

### C. WHAT IS THE OPPOSITE OF ANALYSIS PARALYSIS?

The the opposite of analysis paralysis: "utopia myopia."

1. Utopia Myopia Glamorizes things in life in an unrealistic way
2. Solomon Already Spent Years Chasing This Utopia Myopia Mirage
3. The Grass is Always Greener because of Utopia Myopia  
**My Way is Always the Best Way because of Utopia Myopia**

- a) Or someone is convinced they know the only possible solution.
- b) No research (or discussion) is necessary, especially if it doesn't confirm my bias.
- c) (Proverbs 15:22; Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 18:1-2)

### D. WE ARE CALLED TO DUTY DESPITE THE RISKS OR REWARDS

1. Despite Grass Looking Greener & More Glamorous on the other side fence
2. Do Your Duty, Learn to Live with the Good and the Bad—God will Provide!

## II. LIFE IS MYSTERIOUS—Learn to Trust God (v.5-6)

### A. THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE ARE VAST

1. So many people today think they have all the answers to life...  
They think their little thimble full of knowledge can save them...

*"It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance."*

*"It doesn't matter how smart you are unless you stop and think" (Thomas Sowell)*

2. Job was questioning God from the hot ashes of his suffering...

**But Job didn't understand the mysteries of God's plans**

- a) From Job's limited perspective it didn't make sense—and from ours it may not either
- b) From a Whirlwind God gives Job a Tour through the mysteries of the cosmos & life!
- c) Questions Job could not answer, mysteries he could not comprehend (Job 42:1-3)

### B. THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE SHOULDN'T LEAD TO DESPAIR BUT TO FAITH

1. Some Mysteries have been revealed to those who want to know (Lk 8:10)
2. The mystery of the gospel has been revealed (Eph 3:3-4, 9)
3. God Holds the Mysteries in His hands! (Rev 1:20)
4. The Mystery of Providence (Romans 8:28) a fascinating aspect of God's work
5. The Mysteries of Answered Prayers! Imagine how many prayers God answers

### C. ONLY GOD KNOWS THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

1. So We Walk By Faith and Not By Sight! We Learn to Trust and Obey!

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### III. LIFE IS SHORT—Learn to Enjoy Life (v.7-10)

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#### A. LIFE HAS SEASONS—LEARN TO APPRECIATE & ENJOY THEM... (v.7-8)

*Mark Twain: "Life could be infinitely happier if we could be born at the age of 80, and then gradually approach 18."*

##### 1. **As We Get Older—Some People Get Better and Some Get Bitter**

###### **Mark Twain Got Bitter...**

- a) He spent his last years drinking alcohol and writing how unfair and cruel life was.
- b) He had lived a selfish life without God and then hated life! Just like Solomon!

##### 2. **Why Do You Have to Be Bitter When You Get Old?**

- a) Why Not Gain Wisdom Instead of Regrets?
- b) Why Not Be A Light to the World Instead of a Complainer?
- c) Why Not Live a Thankful Life for God—Instead of an Entitled one?

##### 3. **Why not learn to love God and love others instead of just yourself?**

#### B. LIFE IS SHORT—STOP WORRYING AND START LIVING (v.9-10)

##### 1. ON ONE HAND—Don't Be Over-confident—blinded by self-importance...

**Living in a way you'll one day regret...**

##### 2. ON OTHER HAND—Don't be filled with worry & sorrow—blinded to the beauty and Joy of life! → and Afraid to Walk by Faith!

*"For the light of day be grateful and don't take a single day for granted. Enjoy your youth – for it will soon be gone. In the journey of life, do not become a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances." –Don Givens*

#### C. LIFE IS A JOURNEY—LEARN TO APPRECIATE IT

##### 1. **When we live without wisdom and fear of the Lord—we chase idols of the heart—which lead to Despair because our Idols Fail us in the end**

- a) You Can't Enjoy Life Being Selfish and Self-Centered
- b) You Can't Enjoy Life Living an immoral lifestyle of sin
- c) You Can't Enjoy Life Being in Rebellion against God
- d) You Can't Enjoy Life Living in Darkness rather than the Light

##### 2. **You Cannot Find Happiness Apart from God—it does not exist!**

- a) **But When we live life with wisdom– and fear of the Lord**  
**—then we can enjoy life the way God intended...**

*If we accept the truth — that there is more to life than what we can see – that there is an eternity and an eternal God to reckon with – then the legitimate pleasures of life can be enjoyed in the best sense. One doesn't try to find meaning in those pleasures, but simply some good seasoning for a life that finds its meaning in eternity and the eternal God. In this frame of mind we can now turn to the delights of life ... not as if they were opiates to tranquilize us, but as invigorating gifts of God." (Derek Kidner)*

#### CONCLUSION:

- I. **The Greatest Gift, Greatest Sacrifice, Greatest Love, Greatest Reward is in Christ**
- II. **Proving How Much God Loves You! He Gave the Greatest Gift of Heaven for You**
- III. **Stop Worrying in the Dark and Start Living in the Light! (11:9-10)**