

Ecclesiastes 11: 7 and 8; “Remembering Light and Darkness”, Message # 77 in the series – “Remember Your Creator”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on August 22nd, 2012, at the Rendall home.

These two verses bring an end to the section that we have just studied in Chapter 11; of doing your good works while you can, while you have life. They also provide a connecting link to the last section of the book, the conclusion, in which all that has gone before will be summed up and applied. The truth that Solomon is emphasizing is, that life is fleeting and vain if you do not live it for God. It is easy to forget this truth. Solomon had to learn it the hard way, as I suspect many of us will have to do. So this evening I would like us, first, to remember the sweetness and the pleasantness of light. And then 2^{ndly}, to remember the days of darkness, which will be many. And then to conclude we would like to think about Solomon’s concluding statement which is that all is vanity.

1st – Let us remember the sweetness and the pleasantness of light.
(verse 7)

“Truly the light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun.” The word light here is a synecdoche. The word “light” is being used synecdochically, which means “a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole or the whole for a part, the special for the general or the general for the special, as when the seamen of old used to say, “ten sail” for ten ships or to call a man a “Croesus” for a rich man”. In this case the word “light”, here, is a word which is referring to your whole life. Your whole life is sweet and pleasant when God blesses you and things are going well for you. If things are going well for you, then it is like you are lying on your back, out in woods or in some lush pasture, surrounded by nice shade trees, and you feel as though you could lie there all day. Perhaps you might think about it in this way; being on vacation, and lying on the beach in the sun for hours. It is just very pleasant and good if you have nothing else to do, and you have planned for it to be this way. The light is sweet and pleasant. But hold on; that may be what light means to an unbeliever, but what about a believer? For the believer, life in God’s sight is not a vacation, and it is not wasting all your time on earthly things. So what does it really mean to be able to see that light, the light of life, is sweet and pleasant for the eyes. Turn with me over to Isaiah 45, verse 7. “I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I the Lord do all of these things.” Notice how sweet and pleasant a thing light is in this verse. It is directly associated with peace, whereas darkness is associated with calamity. Indeed, just like this verse, in the verse that we are studying tonight, we are meant to take it in more than just a physical sense. The physical sense is meant to point us on to the spiritual sense. Even as God forms the physical light, even so he is able to give spiritual light and to give you peace. I would like to take a few more minutes to open up this important truth for you.

So, turn with me over to Genesis 1, verse 1, and you will see that God is author of light. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.” “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” “And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.” You can see here that God is the creator of physical light and it was, and is today, one of His greatest distinguishing blessings to man. He intended light to reveal and to make clear and beautiful all that He had created physically for man. He also intended it to warm bless man’s mind and his body through the sun’s rays. He intended light to be separate from the darkness. He intended it to mark off time in days. Verse 5. “God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.” “So the evening and the morning were the first day.” This creation of light, if you will notice, was done before God created the sun on the 4th day of the 6 days of creation. There is a reason for this, I believe. It was not because God needed the light to see what He was doing, for “the light and the darkness are alike to Him.” (Psalm 139, verse 12) But it was because God is Light Himself. Turn with me over to 1 John Chapter 1, verse 5. “This is the message that we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” So God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all. The light referred to is not physical created light, but rather pure and perfect literal spiritual light. This God resides in heaven, a different spiritual dimension from our physical world. And He is Light; that is, He is perfect, pure, and holy. He is faithful and true to Himself and His Word. He is totally separate from darkness, which is a word picture which represents sin and ignorance.

But God’s creating physical light first, before He created the sun, is to show us something about Himself and something of His purposes in regard to man. First, He, God who is spirit, would create physical light for His creature man on the first day of creation. Then He would create the sun itself on the fourth day to contain within itself the light and to be a source of light to the whole world. This was, I believe, a deliberately purposed order in the creation to show us that in the fullness of time He would send His Son into the world in the Incarnation. The Light would be contained in a physical body, and in the Incarnation Jesus Christ would become the light of the world spiritually. Christ was the Light of the World spiritually in the Incarnation and now since Jesus’ resurrection, He is in heaven where He is still shining in all of His glory. The Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings, as it was prophesied of Him in Malachi 4: 2. Indeed we can say with our text, substituting the word “light” for Christ: “Truly Christ is sweet, and it is pleasant for the spiritual eyes of our hearts to behold Jesus Christ the Son of God by faith.”

Turn with me to John’s gospel Chapter 8. You probably remember this episode in the ministry of Jesus. The scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery, the very act, and they asked

him what should be done with her, seeing as the law said that she should be stoned. And you remember that Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. We are not told what it was, but it was probably something like – “You men had her set up, and that was why she was caught in the very act.” When they continued asking Him what should be done, with her, He said, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground; probably the names of some of these men. Then, because they were convicted by their conscience, the men left one by one beginning with the oldest even to the youngest. “When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, ‘Woman where are these accusers of yours?’ “Has no one condemned you?” “She said, “No one Lord.” “And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’ “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world.’ “He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” “Truly the light is pleasant, to behold the Son of God by faith.” To behold the Son by faith and to believe in Him is to have all your sins forgiven, and you will have the light of life, His Spirit and His word to guide you into all His truth; to guide you into paths of righteousness and peace.

Now 2ndly – We need to remember not only that the light is pleasant, but that days of darkness are coming and they will be many. (verse 8)

“But if a man lives many years and rejoices in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many.” “All that is coming is vanity.” There no doubt have been many beautiful days of earthly physical light that have been given to you if you are old enough to read this message and to think about it a little bit. But our text says that even if a man lives many years and is able to rejoice in them all, that he should still remember that there will also be many days of darkness, and that all that is coming is vanity. He is speaking here, again, to persons who live their lives as if there is no God keeping track of them, no death that is coming for them, no grave to be placed in, no judgment which will follow; and no life hereafter to anticipate. Many people fail to recognize that all the earthly pleasures that they enjoy shall indeed come to an end. And no matter how many pleasant sunny earthly days we have, they will eventually come to an end, and they will have to face the difficulties of old age, and death, and the judgment to follow. Surely, then, if we do not remember God, and if we do not have Christ as our Savior and Lord, all is vanity. There will be nothing good which will continue to come to us; only an infinity of dark days throughout eternity in hell. Therefore we must ask ourselves, “How should we respond to the light that we have been given?” We must first of all believe in Jesus Christ and begin to walk in His light. Turn with me over to John Chapter 12, verse 31. “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.” “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” “This He said, signifying by what death He would die.” “The people answered Him, ‘We have heard from the law that the

Christ remains forever; and how can You say, “The Son of Man must be lifted up?” “Who is this Son of Man?” “Then Jesus said to them, ‘A little while longer the light is with you.’ “Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.” “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” “These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.” Jesus is speaking of Himself as the Light of the world once again, and He is telling the many people who were following Him and listening to His teaching that they must believe in Him, lest darkness overtake them. He says that the person who walks in this darkness does not know where he is going. This darkness is the darkness of blindness which is related to the sin of unbelief. In order to prevent the awful calamity of becoming judicially blind in this life, and cast into outer darkness when you die, you must believe in Jesus and thus be made a son of light. Once you believe in the light, then you need to walk in the light. Take steps of obedience in accordance with the commands of the Bible so that your life will not be lived in vain.

Look also at Matthew 6: 22 – Here the context is “laying not up treasures upon the earth, but rather in heaven, because where your treasure is, there your heart will be. “The lamp of the body is the eye.” “If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.” “But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.” “If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” Here the light is the understanding of Christ and the Bible; learning to do God’s will in relation to the light you have received. Truly the light of the Bible is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes of the heart to behold the truth of it. But if you are a hearer of the word only, and not a doer then the result will be vanity. If the way that you look at the light of the Bible (the truth of the Bible) is good, you will act upon it to obey it. Your whole body, that is the things that you will do with your body, will be full of this truly Christian understanding. But if you waste your time pursuing vain things, earthly things, or sinfully compromising things, because your eye (your understanding of the Bible) is bad, then your whole body will be full of selfish and sinful works, which works you will be judged by.

Specifically, what will this mean if we are sons of light? It will mean that we will remember to do what we can, while we can, for the Lord Jesus Christ. We only have so much time to do our good works and to sow the seed of the word of God. So, turn with me over to 1 Timothy Chapter 6, verse 6. “Now godliness with contentment is great gain.” “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” “And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves with many sorrows.” If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! The earthly light may be sweet and pleasant for a time, but eventually all will be lost.

“But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.” “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” “I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.” “Amen.” The Christian must remember where Christ is. He is with the Father now, at His right hand, dwelling in unapproachable light. The Father is this unapproachable light, whom no man has seen, nor can see, except through the mediation of Christ Jesus our Lord. Someday every true believer shall behold that light, that glory, in the face of Jesus Christ. Let this be your vision, by faith now, in all the days of darkness that you pass through in this life. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Pursuing these qualities will insure that when you come to the end of your life, you will not have lived in vain, but that you will find treasure stored up there godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness in heaven.