

Remember Your Creator in the Days of Your Youth

Ecclesiastes 12

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** All of us need admonition from God's Word.
 - A. Admonish, admonishing, admonition are common words in the Scriptures.
 - B. Definition: "to put in mind, i.e. (by implication) to caution or reprove." (Strong)
2. The Word of God gives admonition to all, to the old and the young, to men and women.
 - A. Older men: **Titus 2:2**: *"that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;"*
 - B. Older women: **Titus 2:3-4**: *"the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things — 4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,"*
 - C. Young women: **Titus 2:4-5**: *"that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed."*

1 Tim. 5:14: *"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (KJV)*
 - D. Young men: **Titus 2:6**: *"Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded,"*
 - E. Youth: **2 Tim. 2:22**: *"Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."*

1 Tim. 4:12: *"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."*
 - F. All: We all need admonition...

1 Cor. 10:11: *"Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."*

Col. 3:16: *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*
3. I think that you can see from these passages that we all need admonishing; and even more emphasis on certain things at different stages of our lives.
4. The Word of God does not single out any age group and give it emphasis above another age group, but gives equal emphasis to the needs of all age groups.
5. As parents we must play a critical role in admonishing our children:

Eph. 6:4: *"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."*
6. **3** In today's study I want to focus on the admonitions needed by our young people.

II. DISCUSSION:

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...4

1. Put spiritual values first:
 - A. Includes the entirety of our spiritual life: spiritual growth (2 Pet. 1:3-11) and attendance (Heb. 10:24-25).

- B. Recall what Jesus said: Matt. 5:6; 6:33
- C. This should be the top priority for anyone at any age! Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10 (JIE's sister)
- D. This includes our personal walk with Christ and our obligations to the local church.
 - (1) The church is so important because the saved are in it: Acts 2:47
 - (2) Christ is the Savior of the church: Eph. 5:23
 - (3) We are reconciled to God in the church: Eph. 2:16
 - (4) Only those in the church are purchased with the blood of Christ: Acts 20:28
- E. Seek Him first for our own salvation **and** the salvation of others: Matt. 5:14-16
- F. Live your life in harmony with God's will: Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 5:3
- G. God must be first in our lives, or not at all: Matt. 6:24; Jas. 4:4; Matt. 10:34-37
- H. You will pay a high price by living for God, but it is worth it: 1 Thess. 4:15-18

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

2. **** Respect and obey parents:**

- A. Paul's admonition: **Eph. 6:1-3**: *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 3 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.'"*
 - (1) It is a sin to be disobedient to parents: **Rom. 1:30**: *"disobedient to parents"; 2 Tim. 3:1-2*: *"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, **disobedient to parents**, unthankful, unholy..."*
 - (2) Law of Moses: **Ex. 20:12**: *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."; Lev. 20:9*
 - (3) Only one caveat: **Eph. 6:1**: *"obey your parents in the Lord"; Acts 5:29*
- B. Our parents never stop being our parents.
 - (1) They deserve our "honor" always (Ex. 20:12).
 - (2) When our parents grow old, we are to show our respect for them by caring for them and loving them: Matt. 15:3-6; **1 Tim. 5:4**: *"But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God."*

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

3. **5 Beware of the sins of disposition:**

- A. The sins of disposition such as:

☛ Pride	☛ Malice
☛ Envy	☛ Selfishness
☛ Covetousness	☛ Hatred
- B. These sins are a constant threat to one's welfare.
 - (1) Paul warns about the sins of disposition:

Gal. 5:19-21: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- (2) These sins not only will keep us out of heaven they make us ugly (in character) and undesirable people unfit for civil company:

Eph. 4:31-32: “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

- (3) The fruit of the Spirit will keep one spiritually and physically healthy and beautiful:

Gal. 5:22-25: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

- (4) The wiseman commented on this: **Prov. 17:22:** “A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.”
- (5) The elder son in the story of the prodigal was guilty of these sins: Lk. 15:28-30

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|----------------------|------------|
| ☛ Anger | ☛ Envy |
| ☛ Resentment | ☛ Contempt |
| ☛ Self-righteousness | ☛ Malice |

C. Life is too short, our soul and the souls of others too precious to harbor these sins.

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

4. * Flee youthful lusts:**

- A. Paul warned Timothy about youthful lusts: **2 Tim. 2:22:** “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
- B. Satan works day and night to lead us into temptation and sin: 1 Pet. 5:8
- (1) Satan is a liar: **Jn. 8:44:** “...he is a liar and the father of it.”
- (2) He lies to us about things like “youthful lusts” in order to deceive us and take us captive.
- C. The word of God warns us about the sins of the flesh:
- (1) Works of the flesh: Gal. 5:19-21
- (2) All of us must deal with the sexual sins (e.g., “adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness”).
- (3) The sexual sins tend to be more of a problem with younger people.
- D. Sex is a wonderful thing, but God’s Word clearly limits it to marriage (1 Jn. 5:3).
- Heb. 13:4:** “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
- (1) People think they can have sex outside of marriage and not suffer any consequences.
- (2) Nothing could be further from the truth!
- ☛ Unwanted pregnancy

- ☛ STDs
- ☛ Mental anguish

Prov. 6:26-28: *“For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. 27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?”*

(3) Sexual immorality, at any age, will have terrible temporal and eternal consequences!

E. Therefore, we cannot flirt with sin!

(1) We are to flee fornication: 1 Cor. 6:18

1 Thess. 4:3-5: *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;”*

(2) Sexual immorality is shameful (shames self, family, church, and the Lord):

Eph. 5:3: *“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;”*

(3) We are not even to look with lust: Matt. 5:28

F. Young people you are not fleeing youthful lusts if you flirt with it:

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|---|---|
| ☛ Dance | ☛ Attend night clubs, frequent bars and taverns |
| ☛ Pornography | ☛ Immodest attire |
| ☛ Engage in petting: i.e., “making out” | ☛ Mixed swimming |

G. Sexual immorality is running rampant in our society!

(1) Only ~5% of new brides are virgins (Google).

(2) Keeping yourself sexually pure is the most precious gift you can give your future spouse.

(3) We must be determined to exercise sexual self-control: 1 Thess. 4:3-5

H. If your steady boyfriend/girlfriend (or fiancée) pressures you to have sex before marriage they really don't love you or God.

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

5. 6 Be a good steward:

A. Be a good steward, especially of your time and money: Maybe the third most important thing you will do in life!

1 Cor. 4:2: *“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”*

1 Pet. 4:10: *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”*

B. Realize your life belongs to God; therefore, your time belongs to God and He will make you account for your stewardship of it:

Matt. 24:45-51: *“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come*

on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 5 I and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- (1) If you live a typical lifespan you have many years ahead of you.
 - (2) But you don't know if that is really true or not! Jas. 4:14 (JIE's sister!)
 - (3) Don't rob God of the time that belongs to Him.
- C. Realize your money belongs to God: 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9
- (1) Manage your money well!
 - (2) Don't run up debts; it is better off to do without possessions than for possessions to possess you!
 - (3) Always regularly save some money, regardless of how small the amount.
 - (4) Plan to give generously throughout your life (lay up treasure in heaven! Eph. 4:28).
 - (5) The man who robs God becomes poor indeed.
1 Jn. 3:16-17: *“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?”*
 - (6) Failing to give will destroy your personal sense of responsibility for the work and growth of the church.
 - (a) This lessens your concern for the greatest cause on earth.
 - (b) You can't go to heaven with the attitude, “Let the other fellow pay.”

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

6. ****** Choose a Christian mate:***

- A. Your salvation and personal relationship w/God is the MOST IMPORTANT thing in your life.
- (1) Christians must permit nothing to turn them away from God: Matt. 6:33
 - (2) You need all the help you can get in living the Christian life.
 - (3) Thus, you should seek a mate with the same goals and ideals to team up with for life.
 - (4) Don't just choose a Christian mate, choose a faithful, diligent, determined Christian mate.
Matt. 22:37-38: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment.”*
 - (5) If you don't think choosing a mate is a big deal, learn from the sad tale of King Solomon:
1 Kgs. 11:4-8: *“...his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. 8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.”*
 - (a) Ashtoreth: moon goddess; probably employed the 400 priests of Jezebel (1 Kgs. 18:19).

- (b) *Molech*: to whom children were sacrificed by fire; “Moloch as a hollow brass humanlike body, with ox's head, and hands stretched forth to receive. When it was thoroughly heated the priests put the babe into its hands, while drums...were beat to drown the infant cries, lest the parent should relent.” (Fausset's Bible Dictionary)
 - (c) There is nobody who will probably influence you more in life than your spouse.
- B. ** A preacher in Oklahoma compiled this information for the 20+ year period he worked with a particular local church; the figures concern marriages within that congregation (old info; I don't think time has improved anything!):
 - (1) Christians married to non-Christians: 79 total
 - (a) 57 left the church (72.2%).
 - (b) 22 remained faithful (27.8%).
 - (c) 26 divorced (32.9%).
 - (2) Christians married to Christians: 64 total
 - (a) 5 left the church (7.8%).
 - (b) 59 remained faithful (92.2%).
 - (c) 2 divorced (3.3%).
- C. Think!
 - (1) Use your spiritual mind!
 - (2) Don't wait until you've “fallen in love”; when that happens it's probably too late!

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

7. *Choose your career carefully:*

- A. Your choice of career is probably the third/fourth most important decision you will make (after becoming a Christian and choosing a mate; good steward of time and money).
 - (1) Too many young people drift into some occupation that interferes with their work in the church (explain ways).
 - (2) No job/career is perfect; all have their drawbacks.
 - (3) Always remember your job/career is only a means to an end; not an end in itself (see point on good stewardship).
- B. Prayerfully consider the job you take! Select a job/career...
 - (1) And, be a good employee; obedient and giving an honest day's work:

Eph. 6:5-8: “*Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*”; Matt. 5:14-16
 - (2) That gives you the greatest opportunity to develop as a Christian.
 - (3) Realizing your job is a means to an end, not an end in and of itself:
 - (a) “*doing service, as to the Lord and not men*” (Eph. 6:7; Matt. 5:14-16),
 - (b) Provide for your family (1 Tim. 5:8),

- (c) Help the needy: (**Eph. 4:28**: “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”; Matt. 25:31-46).
- (d) Support local church (1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- (4) That is located where faithful congregations are within easy driving distance.
- (5) That allows you to find a job pretty much anywhere will give you a better opportunity to find a job where there is a faithful church.
- (6) That does not place you in situations where you are sorely tempted to do wrong! 2 Cor. 6:14

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

8. **** Develop your talents to glorify God:**

A. We all have some abilities that are useful for the kingdom of God.

- (1) The five and two talent men developed their talents and were rewarded (Matt. 25:24-30).

Matt. 25:20-21: “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’
21 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

- (2) The one talent man did not use what ability he had and was condemned: Matt. 25:14-30

Matt. 25:26-30: “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

B. Comfort zone:

- (1) We all have a “comfort zone.”
- (2) Don’t be afraid to get out of your “comfort zone.”
- (3) You are capable of doing and achieving much more than you think!
- (4) Hard work, determination and persistence will beat raw talent any day of the week!
- (5) But keep God first in your life; give Him your time, talent and energy first! Matt. 6:33

An important admonition needed for our young people is to...

9. **8 Keep your eyes on the goal:**

A. If you live a “normal” life you will have many decades on this earth: sister Wilma

Psa. 90:10: “The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.”

B. Satan will do everything in his power to tempt you to fall away.

- (1) You will experience many heartaches in life (“yet their boast is only labor and sorrow”).
- (2) At times life will seem “vain”:

Eccl. 2:11: *“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.”*

- (3) But there will also be “good times”:

Eccl. 5:18: *“Here is what I have seen: It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; for it is his heritage.”*

Eccl. 9:9-10: *“Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.”*

- (4) There is an inherent joy in faithfully serving the Lord! Because doing so is the only way to complete fulfillment and true joy:

Phil. 4:4, 6-7: *“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

- C. Always remember that heaven is real! Jn. 14:1-6 And can be obtained:

1 Pet. 1:3-5: *“God...has begotten us...to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”; 2 Tim. 4:6-8*

- D. So, no matter what life throws at you:

- (1) Never forget the real meaning of life:

Eccl. 12:13-14: *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:*

*Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.
14 For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.”*

- (2) Keep pressing forward!

Phil. 3:13-14: *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

III. CONCLUSION: 9

1. As a young person you have your whole life ahead of you.
 - A. Don't squander your life by living for yourself.
 - B. Serving God now in your youth is so important and so valuable!
2. No matter what great things we might accomplish in life as far as money, position, awards, etc.
 - A. It all is vanity (Eccl. 1-11).
 - B. Especially when compared to the true purpose of life (Eccl. 12:13-14).
3. You can achieve fame and fortune in this life; but if you don't live for God you will miss heaven.

- A. What really matters is eternity.
 - B. As a young person, you are tempted to treat life as if you will live forever.
 - C. You will not! We all have an unavoidable appointment with death and judgment (Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10).
4. Live your life in recognition of those profound facts; you will never regret it:
- Ecccl. 12:1:** *“Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’”*

Adapted from sermon (*Admonition to Young People Who Are Christians*) by Donald Townsley.