



# How to Enjoy your Youth

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

**Target Audience:** Today's message is for everyone under 31 and 7/9ths years old.\*

**The Terrible Thing:** A homemade, PVC walker stuck against a door jam.

**Warning!** Baring an early death or the return of Jesus—you will get old! Old age is not something you contract by touching the knob of a public restroom or not taking your vitamins. We view old people as pitiable people who did some dumb thing that we will not do. Somewhere in our culture we got the notion that old age is a punishment for not being hip and that hip people will not get old.

**Question:** What should you do before you get old?

**The Inevitable Thing:** You will get old and deteriorate. \*\* (vv1b-5 and 6b-7)

Elements of aging:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The end of aging: \_\_\_\_\_

Before the end of aging: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Optional (really, really, really good) Thing:** Remember your Creator while you are young...before the inevitable deterioration of old age sets in. (vv 1a and 6a)

- Remember:
- Your Creator:
- Days of youth:
- Evil days:

**Big Idea:** The really, really, really good thing is to pursue God while you are young and strong and healthy.

\* Though the rest of you are not dismissed! Listen in—you might find out what you did wrong!

\*\* I am not excluding myself from this but I am speaking to young people because I am already old.

# “Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

**Big Idea:** The really, really, really good thing is to pursue God while you are young and strong and healthy.

- **Today:** What do you believe about getting old and about being old? What age, in your thinking, is the cut off between young and old?
- **Monday:** If you are young how are you doing on remembering your Creator? If you are old how are you doing on remembering your Creator?
- **Tuesday:** How are you doing mentally and emotionally with the reality of your own death? Have you put your trust in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins? If not, is anything stopping you from making that decision right now?
- **Wednesday:** Read the list of “Thirty ways to remember God while you are young” and pick out one that you would be willing to begin in your life.
- **Thursday:** What all does it mean that God is your “Creator?”
- **Friday:** What is the Bible’s meaning and command in the word “remember?”
- **Saturday:** Would you be willing to initiate an “electron fast” for an hour a day?

# “Companionship Papers”

Dialogue questions for helping each other in the Christian walk this week.

## GETTING STARTED:

- What have you personally experienced with old people and the process of aging?
- What do you honestly believe about being old and getting old?
- Do you have a story about the last time some old person did something that they had been doing for decades?
- What is the meaning of this sentence: “When an old person dies a library burns down?”

## LOOK AT THE TEXT:

- Verse 1: What is the spiritual significance behind the fact that God created us?
- Verse 1: What does Solomon mean by “...the evil days when you will say, “I have no delight in them?”
- In this passage what are the specific pieces of the aging process that Solomon mentions?
- Verses 6, 7: What is the key personal application of these two verses?
- Verses 5b-7: What is the end of the aging process? Who escapes this?
- Verses 1-7: What is the main idea that God is communicating in this paragraph?

**LIVE DIFFERENTLY**—you can also use questions from the Walking Papers above:

- Read the list of “Thirty ways to remember God while you are young” and pick out one that you would be willing to begin in your life.

## **Thirty ways to remember God while you are young:**

1. Be a leader—stand up to your peers. Be the independent person who takes the ridicule for not going along but who also earns the respect for having self-will.
2. Listen to CD's by Casting Crowns, Flyleaf, Underoath, and Chris Tomlin
3. Go on a missions trip to a third world place.
4. Go on a service trip to help rebuild Galveston.
5. Read your Bible every day.
6. Explain to your friends how to know God.
7. Connect with other young people who are remembering God: Jump Kids, Super Church, Generations, Jr. High, Sr. High, College/Young Adults, Becoming One, Becoming More, small groups, Young Life, Campus Crusade for Christ, Intervarsity...)
8. Pray every day.
9. Take an electron fast for one hour every day and one day every month to read or pray or think or exercise or ...
10. Have lots of fun but do it within God's bounds.
11. Say out loud, "I will get old and face the pain of aging."
12. Say out loud, "I am grateful to be young right now."
13. Say out loud, "I will remember God while I am young and enjoy my youth."
14. Enjoy and relish the best things of youth: the ski trip to Colorado, the first time you have sex with your spouse, the finding of a new job, the running of a race, the birth of your child, camping on the beach with your friends...
15. Have lunch with an old person and ask them if they have any regrets.
16. Watch a movie that deals with aging and talk about it with your friends.
17. Make an honest and courageous list of the ways you dishonor your parents and show it to them.
18. Write a handwritten letter to your grandparents and express your love and appreciation for them.
19. The next time your parents tell you to do something jump right up and do it.
20. Take your parents out for a coke and pay.
21. Put "Safe Eyes" or some other filter on your computer to screen out all pornography.
22. Give away 5 personal possessions to people who would benefit from them.
23. Stop smoking.
24. Commit to doing one act of service each month—whether large or small.
25. Stop dating someone if they are not a Christian or if they are dragging you down spiritually.
26. Support a child in a third world country through Compassion International or World Vision or another Christian relief organization.
27. Help with the CBC Christmas service projects.
28. Volunteer to serve through the CBC ministries to children and teens and students.
29. Start giving to God's work from every bit of income that comes to you. Even give something from your birthday and Christmas checks.
30. Read Ecclesiastes 12 every day for a week.