

Text: Ecclesiastes 12:11-14

Meaning: Solomon shared nails to build your life with

Big Idea: Gospel nails to build your life with

Objective: I want the hearers to nail down their faith

Theme: Gospel Nails

NAIL IT DOWN

Solomon says here the Word of God is like nails firmly fixed.

Solomon's aim here is to nail the truth into our minds—to secure it firmly in our memory and understanding. The Psalmist says, 'Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you' (Ps. 119:11)¹

Truths to NAIL DOWN in this culture

GOD IS CREATOR

JESUS IS LORD

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

MARRIAGE IS ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN FOR LIFE

GENDER GIVEN BY GOD, SEXUALITY DETERMINED BY GOD

HUMANITY IS SINFUL, SEPARATED FROM GOD, NEEDS SALVATION

CHRIST JESUS DIED FOR OUR SIN ON THE CROSS AND ROSE AGAIN

SALVATION GRACE ALONE THRU FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE

JESUS IS COMING AGAIN TO REIGN AS KING OVER THIS WORLD

FOREVER – AND HIS CHILDREN WILL REIGN ALONG WITH HIM

Solomon adds that we should beware of anything outside of this. He's not saying reading or studying material outside the Bible is wrong. What he's saying is that we should first focus on filling our mind and heart with God's truth before anything else.

Beyond here can mean outside the bounds of, so in other words let the Word of God provide the boundaries by which we take in truth.

Not only does He talk about truths we need to nail down, he also talks about some nails we should build our lives on. Specific actions that should drive all that we do. Whenever you build a house, the strength of that house depends upon foundation and the framing. The paint and flooring and lighting and finishes are all for décor, it's the foundation and the frame that matter most. In the Christian life we too need a strong foundation and frame by which to live life. The foundation is God's truth, the frame are those daily consistent actions which hold everything together and keep it strong.

READ ECCLESIASTES 12:11-14

SOLOMON'S LIFE FRAME:

1. FEAR GOD

In all of his vain pursuits Solomon had come to the understanding that the fear of man was a great deterrent to true joy and contentment in this life. This was a man who had spent time with the most influential people in the world, and was considered the most prosperous one of them all; yet he says here we should first fear God above all else and leave the results in His hands.

Ultimately the theme of the book of Ecclesiastes is stewardship. We don't own our lives, in fact we don't own anything at all. Scripture says that God's people are a people for His own possession. We actually possess nothing, we are possessed of God's Spirit and have a definite purpose and mission in this life given by Him, and one day we must give an account to God of what we have done with His gift.

¹ Jim Winter, [Opening up Ecclesiastes](#), Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2005), 154.

Some people SPEND their lives
Some people WASTE their lives
Wise people INVEST their lives

Corrie ten Boom

The measure of a life, after all, is not its duration but its donation

This is where fear of God comes in, when I recognize that He is God and I am not. He has put the breath in my lungs and I will give an account to Him one day for how I have lived this life.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. ² Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.

Scripture tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. What is the fear of the Lord? The fear of the Lord is not reluctance to enter His Presence, it is reverent recognition of His holiness. In fact, fear grows in God's presence, the more I am with the Lord the more I want to please Him because He's so gracious to me.

We don't fear God because He is bad. He fear God because He's so good it's scary!

To fear the Lord is to tremble at the thought of offending him by unbelief and disobedience. It is the feeling that God is not to be trifled with.

In today's cancel culture we are so concerned with not offending the world that we have lost our concern over whether or not we offend God.

Peter Cartwright

There was a fiery old revival preacher named Peter Cartwright who was famous for telling it like it was. He was preaching one time near Washington D.C. and the people of the church heard that Andrew Jackson was coming to visit. So they pulled Mr. Cartwright aside and said, "Listen Peter, the President is going to be here on Sunday and we know that sometimes you can get kind of offensive, so would you tone it down. We don't want to upset the President." So Peter got up in the pulpit the next Sunday and his first three sentences were these. "I understand that the President of the United States, Andrew Jackson is with us this morning. I have been asked to be guarded in my remarks. Andrew Jackson will go to Hell if he doesn't repent." The church was appalled, but when worship was over Andrew Jackson grabbed Mr. Cartwright's hand, shook it and said, "Sir, if I had an army of men like you I could whip the world."

Beloved, what God is looking for is an army of men who are willing to fight hell with the truth of God. We don't have to speak the gospel in an offensive way, but neither should we be concerned with whom the gospel message might offend.

I've heard people say, "I'm careful not to talk about Jesus around my friend or family member. I'm afraid I might scare them away." Where are they going to do – a more comfortable version of hell?!

Beloved, judgment is coming, and we all will stand before our holy and righteous God and give an account for our lives. He's going to bring every word, thought, and deed into judgment – and oh what a

terrible day that will be for those who don't know Christ. But the good news is that our just and righteous God has already poured out His wrath on His own Son and anyone who will repent of their sin and submit to Christ as Lord of their life will be forgiven by God, acquitted of their sin, and brought into the loving family of God!

Church – **FEAR GOD!** Come into His presence with fear and trembling, with awe and wonder that He would have anything to do with a worm such as I. It is this FEAR of GOD which crowds out ALL OTHER FEARS IN OUR LIVES!

2. FAITHFULLY OBEY HIS WORD

Solomon, like a wise grandfather, shares with us what he learned the hard way through all his vain pursuits. What he learned was that keeping God's commands is where the true joy is. He had gained wealth, indulged in alcohol, engaged in all kinds of sexual activity, experienced the best entertainment on the planet, and attained great fame and fortune along the way – yet after all that he says, "all those things were vain – just chasing after the wind." He tells us here to keep the commandments of God and true contentment will fill your soul.

ROBERT LANDS THE PLANE

Robert and his pilot friend Wesley went for a flying trip from Indianapolis to Muncie, Indiana, in June 1998. During the flight, his pilot had a heart attack and slumped over the controls. He was dead. The Cessna 172 single-engine plane began to nosedive and Robert grabbed the controls. He got on the radio and pleaded for help.

Nearby were two pilots who heard the call. Mount Comfort was the closest airport, and the two pilots gave Robert a series of instructions, climbing, steering, and the scariest part, landing. The two-experienced pilots circled the runway three times

before this somewhat frantic and totally inexperienced pilot was ready to attempt the landing.

Emergency vehicles were called out for what seemed like an approaching disaster. Witnesses said the plane's nose nudged the center line and bounced a few times before the tail hit the ground. The Cessna ended up in a patch of grass next to the runway. Amazingly, Robert was not injured.

He said later, "I listened intently and followed every single instruction as carefully as I can. My life depends on it.

Beloved, Jesus is our Lord and our guide and without His Word we are going to crash. It's only when I obey His Word that I am able to land safely. If we want to avoid the crashes of life we must obey Him with great earnestness.

Psalm 119:9

How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

Inspiration of the Word – given by one Shepherd

Solomon asserts here that all these collected sayings he had penned out were given by one Shepherd.

The Bible is God's Word to mankind. It was written by human authors, but God prompted and guided them to write what they did. Every word, word form, and word placement found in the Bible's original manuscripts was divinely and intentionally written. This is known as verbal plenary inspiration.

Inspiration, the term being "God-breathed" from 1 Timothy 3:16, refers to the fact that God supernaturally guided the authors of the Bible to write exactly what He wanted to communicate. Everything in

Scripture is there because that's what God desired. The extent of that inspiration is defined by the terms **verbal** and **plenary**.

Verbal means that every word of Scripture is God-breathed. Every single word, not just the ideas behind the words, is in the Bible because God wanted it there. The word **plenary** means "complete or full"; when used to describe the inspiration of God's Word, **plenary** means that all parts of the Bible are equally of divine origin and equally authoritative.

CHURCH, THE BIBLE IS HISTORICAL, RELIABLE, VERIFIABLE, AND UNDENIABLE! It is God's infallible, inerrant revelation of Himself to mankind.

Church – God wrote a book, it's called the Bible! We must get in it until it gets in us!

Instruction of the Word – the sayings are like goads

A goad is a cattle prod. Whenever a field needed to be planted they would strap on a plow to an ox or a team of oxen and would drive those oxen to pull that plow and break up the ground for planting. Also, shepherds would use a goad to keep sheep moving in the direction they wanted them to go.

So, the imagery here is that it is only through the Word of God that we can plow effectively. The goad would keep the cattle plowing in straight rows for effective planting. So too, the Holy Spirit of God takes the Word of God and keeps us plowing in line with God's will.

Also, through the Word of God the Great Shepherd, our Lord Jesus, leads us to green pastures

Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

³ He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Oh, to grace how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be

Let Thy goodness like a fetter

Bind my wandering heart to Thee

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it

Prone to leave the God I love

Here's my heart, oh take and seal it

Seal it for Thy courts above

3. FINISH WELL

Solomon finishes the book by reminding the reader of our end. It is appointed for man once to die then comes the judgment, and every deed will be brought into judgment by the Lord, including the secret things. I'm sure as Solomon looked back on his life and all the vain things he had done he was devastated to think of all the sinful things he was going to answer for.

Two judgments in the end:

Great White Throne Judgment – In Revelation 20 it says The **lost** will be judged for their **SIN** and cast into **Hell**

Judgment Seat of Christ – the **saints** will be judged for the **SERVICE** and welcomed into **Heaven**.

Some will come in with great reward, others empty handed. What is it that motivates the Child of God to give and serve and share Christ with others? It is hearing our Lord and Master Jesus Christ say, "Well done good and faithful servant."

In order to hear "well done" we must finish well. We must stay the course, keep the faith, and finish the race set before us.

Finishing well is a matter of....

R esponsibility

Solomon says every secret thing will come under judgment. Finishing well is a matter of taking personal responsibility for my own actions. Confession of sin and humility before others is essential to finishing well.

Sin that I COVER God will UNCOVER, but sin that I UNCOVER God will COVER.

Finishing well means taking personal responsibility for my own spiritual walk and for the spiritual lives of those around me.

R emembrance

Hebrews 12 says we must run this race of life with patience, fixing our eyes on Jesus who is the author and the finisher of our faith. Jesus is at the finish line waiting on us, cheering us on, prepared to embrace us with his arms of love as we run through that tape.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

SO CHURCH – DON'T CHASE THE WIND. Set a solid foundation of gospel truth is your life, and build life on obedience to the Lord.