

**“The Good Life”**

*Sermon Notes*

➤ A godless world says *carpe diem* (“seize the day”), but the Word of God says *carpe Deus* (“lay hold your God”)

-Isaiah 64:7; Philippians 3:12

\* 3 gloriously God-centered, earth-bound exhortations from the Preacher...

1. Enjoy the things of earth (vv.7-8; Genesis 2:9; Genesis 9:1-3; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Matthew 5:5; 1 Timothy 4:4-5; 6:17)

2. Exult in the gift of marriage (v.9; Genesis 2:23; 1 Corinthians 7:6-9; Ephesians 5:32; Hebrews 13:4)

3. Embrace the charge of work (v.10; Genesis 2:15, 18; John 9:9; Colossians 3:23-24)

## Community Group Study Questions

For the Week of March 7th-13th

### Getting Started

1. The Latin phrase *carpe diem* (“seize the day”) originally comes from the pen of the Roman poet Horace. Though it’s been a popular literary sentiment over the years, the phrase got a significant push into our national consciousness when Robin Williams quoted it back in 1989 to his class of college prep students in the movie *Dead Poets Society*. How ought we to think of such phrases through the lens of the Christian worldview? Does *carpe diem* or more recently, YOLO (you only live once) comport with the biblical vision of life? Why or why not?

### Digging Deeper

2. Interestingly, in 1 Corinthians 15:12-34, the Apostle Paul responds to those in the church of Corinth who deny the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Among a number of startling implications (including that fact that Christianity comes to a screeching halt in a Palestinian tomb, see 15:12-19), he says to the church in Corinth that if there is no resurrection of the body: “Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die” (15:32). In other words, *carpe diem* (and YOLO) are fitting philosophies in a world with no resurrection. So, here’s the question: was this the Preacher’s life philosophy in Ecclesiastes (7:7-10; 12:14)? What about the Old Testament more broadly? Compare the Preacher’s words with those of Daniel in Daniel 12:2. How do we square the eschatology (end-time doctrine) of the Old Testament with that of the New (1 Corinthians 15:20)?

### Open Your Bible to Ecclesiastes 9:7-10...

3. Today’s passage has built within it seven imperatives and three indicatives (remember that an imperative is a summons to action, while an indicative is a statement of fact). What are the three imperatives that you see in verse 7? Next, find the indicative. What does “for God has already approved what you do” mean? What’s the relationship between the three imperatives and the indicative in verse 7? Why is the former motivated by the latter?
4. What are the two imperatives in 9:8? Assuming that they’re both rooted in the previous indicative found in verse 7, what is the meaning of the imperatives in verse 8? How do these references to white garments (Revelation 3:4-5, 18; 4:4; 19:8; and oil (Psalm 23:5; 45:7-8; Proverbs 27:9; Isaiah 61:3) aid in helping us to interpret verse 8?
5. What’s the one imperative in verse 9? What’s the indicative in which the imperative is rooted? How does “that is your portion in life” (v.9) serve as a motive for the imperative in v.9? Consider the author of this imperative. How does his personal example (1 Kings 11:1-8) impact his counsel to the reader of v.9? Given that marriage is the picture of the relationship between Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:22-33), how mission-critical is it that we heed the imperative in this verse as well as honor the institution of marriage throughout the church - whether we’re married or single (see Hebrews 13:4)?
6. What’s the imperative in verse 10? What’s the indicative in which the imperative is rooted? The Hebrew term “Sheol” isn’t a reference to heaven or to hell but simply to “the grave” or the

physical place of those who have died. What sort of motive, then, is built into this imperative by rooting it in this particular indicative?

7. Consider the words of our Lord in John 9:4 and the Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:23-24 and compare them with those of the Preacher in 7:10. How does a deeper and richer motive for our vocation and work begin to emerge in the New Testament? Contrast the source of power for our labor that the Preacher references in 7:10 with the words of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1:29.
8. If the Preacher saw death and the grave as sufficient motive for “Whatever your hand finds to do, [to] do it with all your might...” (v.10), how much greater motive is there for us living on this side of all of the New Testament teaching concerning resurrection and reward of believers (consider Matthew 5:10-12; 25:14-30; John 17:24; Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:8)?