

Ecclesiastes 11:6-8

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/eccl/eccl-11/ecclesiastes-116-8/>

Solomon calls us to strive to invest our time wisely and maintain an attitude of thanksgiving, even while acknowledging the realities of a troubled world.

Solomon turns to an agricultural metaphor to continue his treatise on living life as a wise investor. Since a farmer can't control or predict the wind or rain (verses 1-5), he is wise to sow in the *morning* and also in the *evening*. Only God knows which *will succeed*. It could be both! Industry and striving is an essential element for good investing.

The phrase *and do not be idle* literally means "do not rest your hand." God gave us energy to strive, so we should be intentional about wisely investing in every moment. To have a purpose for each action we might take (including rest). One of our most valuable resources to steward is our time. Solomon advises us to spend our time wisely, to not waste time but to sow at all available times.

Solomon does not seem to be a fan of keeping a 9 to 5 schedule when it comes to investing our resources. He advises our industry begin in the *morning*, then continue into the *evening*. One of the resources the ancient farmer had to steward was daylight. Solomon advises the farmer to use it all, from sunup to sundown. By application, each human is allocated the exact same number of hours in a day, and days in a week. Ecclesiastes urges us to use our time wisely. This point is made throughout the Bible. [Ephesians 5:15-16](#) states,

"Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

Our investment orientation should not relate solely to work or financial planning. We should apply an investment orientation toward all our resources, most particularly how we spend our time.

Transitioning from the theme of taking full advantage of our resources (the farmer not wasting the light of day), Solomon makes a statement about a proper attitude toward our lifespan. The "daylight" of our lifetime. As we grow

old, we progress toward the end of day, the darkness of death. But life has episodes of darkness scattered throughout. *The light is pleasant, and it is good for the eyes to see the sun.* But there will be *days of darkness* as well. In fact, the *days of darkness will be many.* But we should learn to choose a perspective of gratitude for both.

Solomon notes that *if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all.* Our proper attitude is that it is a privilege to be alive. We should choose to enjoy every day of our lives. We should not just try to forget the dark days, but to *remember the days of darkness.* It is from the *days of darkness* that we can learn and grow. In many respects, the *days of darkness* bring potential for added gratitude for the light. Growing old with gratitude is evidence of wisdom. One of the few things we control is the attitude or perspective we choose. Solomon urges us to choose to be grateful for all circumstances, choosing wisely as we navigate among the various terrains of life.

This passage ends with a statement that summarizes our investment approach to thinking about the future: *everything that is to come will be futility.* The word translated *futility* is “hebel,” which means vaporous, mysterious. What is to come in the future is unknown, a mystery. Which is why we ought to focus on the present, where we can actually make choices. We cannot make choices in the future. But our choices in the present can impact what the future will become.

We know the future will include *days of darkness* and days of *light.* When we live with an investment attitude, we won't dread what might be. We will not agonize over possible future days of darkness. Rather we will resolve to apply our industry to improve upon whatever circumstances we encounter. As the farmer sows his *seed in the morning* as well as *the evening,* we should remain industrious and keep investing, whether or not we are living in days full of *light* or *darkness.*

Biblical Text:

⁶Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good. ⁷The light is pleasant, and it is good for the eyes to see the sun.⁸Indeed, if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all, and let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. Everything that is to come will be futility.