

Lessons Learned at a Funeral

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14

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And the day you die is better than the day you are born.

² Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties.

*After all, everyone dies—
so the living should take this to heart.*

*³ Sorrow is better than laughter,
for sadness has a refining influence on us.*

*⁴ A wise person thinks a lot about death,
while a fool thinks only about having a good time.*

⁸Finishing is better than starting.

I. Character counts.

*A good name is better than precious ointment
(v.1).*

II. Helpful are the hurtful words of a wise friend.

It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools. (v.5)

III. Even the wise don't have all the answers.

*Surely oppression drives the wise into madness,
and a bribe corrupts the heart. (v.7)*

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Rom.8:28)

IV. Pride is the enemy of patience.

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. (v.8)

“On this journey from birth to death and beyond, one of God’s greatest desires is the development of our character. The achievement of this objective involves replacing our pride with patience. Haughtiness tends to push wisdom aside, while forbearance can encourage its development.”

- Chuck Swindoll

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (1 Peter 5:5b; James 4:6)

V. A quick-tempered person is a fool.

Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the heart of fools. (v.9)

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A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control (Prov.29:11).

VI. The good old days weren't really all that good.

Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?" For it is not from wisdom that you ask this. (v.10)

“Wisdom . . . learns from the past, lives in the present, and looks forward to the future.”

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VII. It good to have both wisdom and money. But if you can have only one, pick wisdom.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance, an advantage to those who see the sun.

For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money, and the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who has it.

(vv.11-12)

VIII. Consider how God is involved in everything.

Consider the work of God: who can make straight what he has made crooked?

In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that man may not find out anything that will be after him. (vv.13-14)