
ECCL 12:1 : REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

EE27

Let us look only at the first part of Ecc 12:1: "Remember your Creator..."

In this case the admonishment is directed specifically at young people: "... before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them' ".

But this is, of course, a general principle which applies to us all no matter how old we are. So let us look at our text in this way. After all, every Christian, old or young, owes his or her existence and preservation to God our Creator.

THE WORD "CREATOR"

The Biblical concept, *to create*, is of fundamental theological importance. Throughout the Bible the word has only God as subject - simply because only He can create. We find the verb in the very first verse of the Word: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

- The word conveys the meaning of bringing about something - out of nothing. *It therefore implies that the sovereign God is the Source, Owner, Ruler and Maintainer of everything that exists.*

- The word is often used in the second part of Isaiah's prophesy (chapters 40-66), in fact 20 times out of a total of 49 in the Old Testament. This part of the book is one of the most comforting portions in the whole of the Old Testament. These two truths, taken in tandem, underline a most important

principle: *those of us who truly remember our Creator, should not regard the fact that He rules sovereignly over us as a threat, but as a wonderful source of comfort!*

Isaiah 45:17-18 puts it in these moving words: "But Israel will be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; you will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting. For this is what the LORD says - he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited - he says: 'I am the LORD, and there is no other.' "

- Here in Ecclesiastics the word "Creator" is used in the plural form. This is often the case in the Old Testament (Job 35:10; Ps 149:2; Isa 54:5). It also brings to mind Gen 1:26: "Let us make man in our image..."

Without a doubt this is an allusion to the three Persons of the Trinity - who were indeed involved in the creation of all things, and are still involved in their preservation.

- The concept "Creator" emphasizes the most basic relationship in which man can stand to God. This is true of each and every person: He made me!

- The words, "Remember your Creator", are not meant to imply that each one of us has his own creator. There are no other creators! What the writer wishes to stress is that every human being must personally and individually think about the Creator of all. He is therefore saying to his readers, you too are a creation of this Creator!

THE WORD "REMEMBER"

The word is intended to convey more than just thinking, reminding yourself, or remembering that you have a Creator. It has a much wider and fuller meaning. Of course we must be mindful of God, but more than that, we must value and cherish our

relationship with Him.

But it goes even further than that: *the Christian must, with loyalty and faithfulness, live a life that is evidence of the implications and responsibilities that such a relationship implies.*

It indicates an attitude of the heart, not just a mental exercise.

God called upon His people continuously to remember Him. But they failed persistently. Hence His reproach that they had forgotten Him.

In Dt 32 the Lord rebukes His people because of their idolatry with the words, "You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth." (18).

And in Isa 51:12-13 He comforts and encourages them (with a mild reproof): "I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass, that you forget the LORD your Maker, who stretched out the heavens ...".

HOW WE REMEMBER OUR CREATOR?

Our attitude towards our Maker finds expression in at least five attitudes of heart and ways of living.

1. Acknowledgement

In Him, and in Him alone, you and I have our origin.

By Him I was "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps 139:14), He formed my spirit within me (Zech 12:1), He "knit me together in my mother's womb" (Ps 139:13).

These are the things we must think about and meditate upon over and over again. Look, for instance, at your hands and feet. More than half the bones in your body are located in these four limbs. The hand is capable of an almost unlimited number of functions. The concert pianist uses them to play as many as 120 notes per minute, the surgeon to perform the most delicate of operations. A caressing hand can communicate intense emotion and tenderness. And that same hand is capable of driving a heavy axe deep into a log. And then we

have not even considered the brain behind it all!

Marvel at the capabilities of your Creator - and worship Him!

And if you are a true Christian, never think about Him as your Creator without reminding yourself that he is also your Re-creator. Is the greatest of wonders not the heart transplant that you underwent at the moment of your regeneration? That was, after all, the most glorious, was it not!

2. Subjection

God is your Creator and therefore also your indisputable and sovereign Owner. He has absolute authority and say in and over your life. He is the Potter, you are the clay (Rm 9:20-21). He can and will do with you and me as He pleases!

We have no choice but to accept it patiently and submissively - together with all its theological and practical implications.

How threatening this all would have seemed had God not revealed Himself to us as the Most-Benevolent and All-Bountiful. Those of us who are truly His children can trust in Him completely. Those of us who are in Christ can rest assured that everything that happens to us happens for our own eventual good, namely conformity to the likeness of the Son (Rm 8:28-30).

All this takes nothing away from the fact that you and I are answerable to Him and will have to give account to Him. After all, if He is my Maker, I owe Him everything!

Of course this gives rise to the burning question: How can I as sinful being one day stand blameless before Him (Job 4:17; 9:2)? Can there possibly be a more important question?

Let those of us who are in Christ rejoice endlessly that we have in Him the perfect Mediator - that we will indeed stand blameless before our Creator one day, credited with our Substitute's righteousness (Rm 4).

3. Dependence

God is not only my Creator, but also my Keeper -

physically, emotionally and spiritually. Would God create someone and then neglect or forget about him or her?

Let us therefore with the greatest confidence offer our prayers and requests and trust and thanks. Approach Him with every need; it pleases and glorifies Him.

To live for yourself and in your own strength is to forget your Creator. To remember Him is to joyfully lay down your so-called independence, and to peacefully and trustingly place yourself in His care.

What a consolation: I have a Father in Christ who looks after me and cares for me - always.

4. Gratitude

Take note of your Creator's kindness. Acknowledge it. Meditate upon it. Train yourself in showing gratitude. What is there in your life that you have not received from Him?

And never forget, you owe it all to the mediatory work and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Devotion

If then everything you are and what you have comes from your Creator, there can be only one suitable response: unqualified and loving obedience. Let it be the single-minded passion of your life. Then you will remember your Creator in the way that pleases Him.

And remember, you cannot devote yourself to your Creator without at the same time devoting yourself to the Son, Jesus Christ. After all, God made the universe through Him (Hb 1:2). And this finds expression in a life of persevering discipleship.

THE ESSENCE OF THE LIFE OF A CREATURE

There can be no deeper or more fundamental transgression before God than to live only for yourself. Not to devote yourself with everything that you have to your Creator in acknowledgement, subjection, dependence, thankfulness and devotion, is criminal to the utmost degree. To ignore your Creator, doing your own little thing, is the most basic

and worst of all sin.

The essence of what God demands of us is that we walk with Him. And effectively this means to acknowledge Him in all our ways (Pr 3:6) - in submission, dependence, gratitude and devotion. This is the childlike life of faith on which the Bible so strongly insists.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR NATURAL MAN

To remember his Creator by no means comes naturally to fallen man. On the contrary, since the Fall he has fled from his Creator like a bug from the light. In his fancied independence he pats himself on the back under the illusion that he will be able to cope and work out his own salvation. He either replaces his Creator with all manner of gods made up in his own mind, or else hides himself in religious formalism.

Look around you. If you see a man or woman or child who remembers his or her Creator in faithfulness - whose life is controlled by it from A to Z - you see a person who bears the fingerprints of the Holy Spirit, someone redeemed from the curse of the Fall by Christ's death of atonement. You see a pardoned sinner, lovingly elected by the Father before creation.

Whether you are young or old, do you remember your Creator?

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