

Thank you, again...John Buttrey!  
Speaker for today

**“Faithful Until Death”  
Requires Maintaining Priorities**

*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you.”* Matthew 6:33

*“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”* John 14:15

*“Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth.”* Colossians 3:2

*“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”* Deuteronomy 6:5

**No July Birthdays**

**Regular Meeting Times**

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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# Indio Informer

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## Climate Change

By John M. Buttrey II

The climate has certainly changed. I remember much better weather. When I was younger, I enjoyed more physical strength and energy. However, as I have steadily advanced in years, moving through the various seasons of my life, I now find myself in a very different kind of environment. It is a safe guess that the same is true for many of you.

Life's weather has changed. It changes for every one of us. The once youthful spring turns into summer, and summer into fall, and fall into the difficult and cold winter of life. There is no stopping or even slowing the changing climate of life.

Solomon described the changing seasons of our life with great poetic ingenuity. Listen to some highlights from his inspired pen in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes. The chapter begins with these words of encouragement:

*“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, ‘I have no delight in them’.”* Ecclesiastes 12:1

The evil days of which he speaks are the later and more difficult years of one's life. He encourages everyone to remember their Creator in the fairer climate of their life. This becomes clearer in the next verse, where he writes:

*“Before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain”* Ecclesiastes 12:2

Get to know God before the weather of life turns darker. I like how he speaks of clouds returning after rain. When you go through the

stormy weather of life, you hope for some sunshine, for some relief from the storm. However, oftentimes, tomorrow only brings more rain.

In the verses which follow, Solomon uses rich imagery to describe how our bodies age with the passing of life's seasons. Here are some of his poetic descriptions in verses three through six, along with possible applications for each.

- The Watchmen Trembling: Our legs becoming weaker.
- The Mighty Men Stoop: Inherent back problems that come with age.
- The Grinding Ones Becoming Few: Losing our teeth.
- Those Who Look Through Windows Dimming: Failing vision.
- The Sound of the Grinding Mill is Low: Our hearing failing.
- Daughters of Song Sing Softly: Hearing problems (Notice it's repeated).
- The Almond Tree Blossoms: The greying of our hair.
- The Grasshopper Dragging Himself Along: No more spring in our step.
- The Silver Cord Broken, Bowl Crushed, etc.: The failing of our organs.

All of these natural and unavoidable processes lead to a common reality for every person:

*“Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.” Ecclesiastes 12:7*

In light of the reality of death, the grand conclusion of Ecclesiastes is stated very clearly:

*“The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*

If we are waiting for better weather in life to become more involved in serving God, to attend more, to study more, or simply to obey the Gospel, I have some difficult news for us. Life is not going to get easier. The climate is going to continue to change, and not for the better.

That sounds like a very negative way to close out an article that is meant to encourage. However, it is indeed encouragement. The changing climate of life is a reality for every one of us. It is why Solomon encouraged all who would read his inspired writing, to remember their Creator in the days of their youth (Ecclesiastes 12:1). It is why Paul, quoting from Isaiah, encouraged the Corinthians and us, noting, *“Behold, now is the acceptable time”* (2 Corinthians 6:2). It is why the same apostle encouraged us in Ephesians 5:16 to make *“the most of your time, because the days are evil.”*

Now, where did I leave my umbrella?

### **Faithful Until Death**

Excerpts from article by Gary L. Hutchens

Many churches teach that once a person is saved he/she can never be lost, no matter what. If that is true, why did God guide the writers of scripture to include so many exhortations to saved Christians to remain faithful? Why Jesus, in His letter to the church at Smyrna, instruct those Christians to *“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* (Revelation 2:10)? He said He would give them *“the crown of life”* (eternal life, synonymous with salvation) after, as a result of, their having remained faithful unto (up until and even including dying for their faith) death. Why *“faithful unto death”* if, having already been saved, they could not be lost?

That was not the only time Jesus spoke along this line. Matthew quotes Jesus twice saying, *“But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”* (Matthew 10:22; 24:13).

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