

Casting Bread on the Water Part 2

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of giving generously, trusting God's provision, and living in fellowship with Him.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 11:1-12, 2 Corinthians 9:6

Topics: "Trust"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith emphasizes the importance of living a life of eternal value. He warns that it is tragic to live a whole life without anything of eternal significance to show for it. He encourages young people to enjoy their youth but also reminds them that they will be held accountable by God for their actions. Pastor Chuck also reflects on the cultural changes of the 1960s and how he shared the love of Jesus Christ with a generation searching for love in the wrong places.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
And now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Cast your bread upon the waters, But thou shalt find it after many days. Now, the idea is that of receiving by giving away.

He who sows sparingly, in other words, if you go out to sow your wheat, and you just drop a seed here and drop a seed there, and you sow very sparingly, I want to be very careful how I sow my wheat, you know. Then you're going to have just a little shoot here, a little shoot there, you know. You're not going to have much of a crop.

But if you go out and just throw out the seed everywhere, you know, as you're sowing the wheat, then you're going to have a bumper crop of wheat. You're going to have wheat coming up all over the place. So the more you give, the more you get.

So cast your bread upon the water, for you will find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, also to eight. Be giving, for you know not what evil shall be upon the earth.

You don't know what's going to happen to you in days to come. It may be that you're going to need help one of these days. If you're generous, if you're giving to people, then if you are in need, they will be helpful

and generous to you.

And you don't know what the future may hold for you. And thus, the encouragement to go ahead and be generous with others. Because it may be in the future they'll be in a good position and you'll be in a poor position, and they'll be able to return then the favor to you.

If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth. And if the tree falls toward the south or toward the north in the place where the tree falleth, there it lies, there it shall be. Now he that observes the wind, you see there are always difficulties that we can imagine if I give what I have to others.

And if you start considering the difficulties of these things, many times you will not do them. He that observes the wind will not sow. Looks like it's a windy day today.

I better not plant the seed. I'll just stay in, you know, and sit by the fire and kick back today. It's too windy to sow.

But if you don't sow, you can't reap. And so he that regards the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds shall not reap. You can't let problems or difficulties stop you from doing what is necessary in life.

Now, even as you don't know what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones grow in the womb of the mother who is with child, even so you do not know the works of God who makes all things. We don't really know or understand the works of God. We don't really know the way of the Spirit.

Jesus said concerning the Spirit in John 3, the Spirit blows wherever it wishes. You hear the sound of it, but you can't really tell where it's coming from or where it's going. So is he that is born of the Spirit.

And so talking about the Spirit, the Spirit moves in interesting ways. We don't understand the moving of the Spirit. There are some times when I feel, oh, the Spirit ought to really move now, and it doesn't seem to move.

And then there are other times I think, man, what a quench, the Spirit sure can't move here. And he does. And we just don't understand the moving of the Spirit.

And that's what Solomon is saying here. So in the morning, sow your seed, whether it's windy or not. In the evening, do not withhold your hand.

That is from helping others, giving to others. For you know not whether it will prosper either in this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. So get out and do your work.

Give to others. Don't slack. And you really don't know what may come of it, but it isn't necessary.

It's just necessary that we do what the Lord has commanded us to do. It's necessary that I sow seed. It isn't really necessary that I reap the harvest.

God has called us to be His witnesses. Whether or not people accept or reject is not your problem. You are to just share the truth of God.

You're just to share the love of God. You're to share the Word of God. Plant the seed in their hearts.

Sow the seed of God's Word to people and then leave with God what comes of it. Truly the light is sweet, and it's a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun. Daytime is a great time.

But if a man lives many years and he rejoices in all of them, let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that come is vanity. You might live a good life, a long life, see a lot of daylight and all, but a day of darkness is coming, man, is what Solomon is saying.

And there are going to be many too. And all that you've done is going to come to nothing. And so the whole idea of this section is that of the importance of us just doing the things that God has called us to do.

Now, if you're not a child of God, then this does apply to you. You know, rejoice in the blessings or what you have because in the days of light, the days in which you're alive, because, man, when you go to the grave, you're going to be in the days of darkness for a long time, and everything that you've done is empty. It's all gone.

There's nothing to show for your life of eternal value or of eternal good. But that's rather tragic, to live a whole life and not have anything of eternal value to show for your life. So his conclusion is to rejoice, oh, young man, in your youth.

Let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart, in the sight of your eyes, but know this, that for all of these things, God is going to bring you into judgment. Someday you're going to answer for it.

Just remember that. You will give an accounting to God for your life, and you will receive the rewards for those things that you have done that were for eternal benefit and glory. Therefore, he said, remove sorrow from your heart, put away evil from your flesh, for childhood and youth are emptiness.

So remember now your Creator in the days of your youth. Before those evil days come and the years draw nigh, when you will say, I have no pleasure in them. Now, he's saying, while you're young, remember your Creator.

Serve God. Take advantage of your youth in serving the Lord. Before those evil days come not, or before they come, nor the evil years draw near.

Now, evil is not the sense of wicked evil, but just the days of older age when you just can't get around as easy as you used to get around. Those days when you wake up and you ache all over and you say, oh my, you know, my aching body. The days in which you have no pleasure in them anymore.

It's not, you know, you don't wake up excited and say, man, you know, wonder how the surf is today. But you say, oh, you know, it's hard to roll out of bed. While the sun or the light or the moon or the stars be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain.

Now, he gives some interesting figures of speech for some of the problems that a person experiences as the body begins to wear out. The keepers of the house are your arms, your hands. In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble, you notice how people, when they get older, begin to tremble.

I've noticed that my writing is beginning to get trembly. And I used to always think it was rather funny when my aunt would write to me in trembling script, but it's catching up with me now. The keepers of the house begin to tremble.

And the strong men shall bow themselves. You begin to sort of hunch over, you know. And the grinders, that is your teeth, cease because they are few.

Man, you're getting in bad shape now. No more steaks or corn. And the windows, being your eyes, they begin to get darkened.

You can't see so well. And the doors shall be shut in the streets when the sound of the grinding is low. And he shall rise up with the voice of the bird, and all of the daughters of music shall be brought low.

You can't hear very well. Eh, what was that? Say it again, you know. Daughters of music brought low.

You wake up early. You don't sleep soundly all night long anymore, you know. But you wake up with the birds in the morning.

Also, when they shall be afraid of that which is high. Ooh, you know, stand up on the chair. No way, it's so high up here.

And fears shall be in the way. The almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper becomes a burden. You know, you just, you look out, and that grasshopper just is a burden to you.

And the desires shall fail. It used to be that surfing was important to me. Someone asked me, have you been surfing lately? No, it's been years, you know.

Desires fail, you know. Things don't mean the same to you as you get older. I mean, it's just stuff that used to be so, you know, oh my, yes, let's go for it.

Well, are you sure you want to go for it, you know? Because man goeth to his long home, going home, going home. And the mourners go about the streets. You know, man, one day, you know, you go home.

They lay you in the ground, and the mourners go about the streets. The silver cord is loosed. The golden bowl is broken.

The pitcher is broken at the fountain. Or the wheel is broken at the cistern. The wheel was the thing that they would use to put the rope down to pull the water out of the cistern.

Broken. The pitcher is broken at the fountain. The golden bowl, silver cord, picturesque speech concerning death.

And then shall the dust, the body, return to the earth as it was. Dust thou art, God said, and to dust you shall return. Speaking of the body of man, not speaking of the soul.

As Longfellow put it so well, tell me not in mournful numbers. Life is but an empty dream, for the soul is dead that slumbers. Things are not what they seem.

Life is real, and life is earnest, and the grave is not thy goal. Dust thou art, to dust returneth, was not spoken of the soul. Spoken of my body.

Goes back to the dust. But the spirit shall return to God who gave it. Body goes downward into the earth, but my spirit soars upward to God who gave me life.

So here he is. End of the road. Vanity, he's about ready to go back to dust and leave this life.

And how does he see it? Vanity of vanities, or emptiness of emptiness. Saith the preacher, all is empty. So true of a life that is apart from Jesus Christ.

It ends up empty, unfulfilling, unsatisfying, frustrating. And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge, and he gave good heed, and he sought out and set in order many proverbs. As we pointed out, there were some 3,000 proverbs.

He was wise, and he set things out in order so that you could understand. He set them in a way that made them attractive and teachable. And he sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, for they were words of truth.

The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. Now, the truth, the words of the wise are like goads. That is, the goad was the thing they used to use.

They had a nail on the end of a stick, and when they were plowing with the oxen, if the oxen was getting lazy, they would take this stick with a nail on it, and they would hit him in the flanks. They'd goad him, and he'd get moving again. And so, remember the Lord, when he apprehended Paul on the road to Damascus, he said, It's been hard for you to kick against bricks.

There's one thing that you don't want to do when you're being goaded is kick against it. You, you know, man, that thing really gets you then. So, and Paul had been kicking against the goads, is what the Lord said.

It's been hard for you to kick against those goads, Absolutely, Paul. And some of you have been kicking against the goads, and you find that you're the one that hurts. You're the one that suffers when you kick against the goads.

But the wisdom is set out in ways that sort of challenge you. They catch your attention, and that was the purpose of setting them out in Proverbs, and all, to capture your attention, to be a goad, to be a challenge to you. And the masters of assemblies, the masters were the teachers.

Remember, they called Jesus Master. They were the teachers in the assemblies, but there is only one real shepherd, and that's the Lord. And so, that's what he's saying here.

The words of the wise are like goads. They're like nails that have been fastened by the masters of the assemblies to stimulate you to think, to get you thinking, and yet there's just the one shepherd. And further, by these, my son, be admonished.

Now, in the making of many books, there is no end, and in much study is weariness of the flesh. All of you that are in college, say amen. Much study, weariness of the flesh.

I remember that in the books that I inherited in school, you know, you inherit it from the class above you. Your books have been used by others. I remember one of my Latin books in Santa Ana High School here had written in it, Latin is a language dead, as dead as dead can be.

First it killed the Romans, and now it's killing me. Another history book that I had had written in it, the more you learn, the more you know. The more you know, the more you forget.

The more you forget, the less you know. So what's the use of learning? And that's pretty much what Solomon is saying here. With much learning is weariness to the flesh.

Much study. So, let's hear the conclusion of the whole matter. He says, this is it, just fear God and keep the commandments.

For this is the whole duty of man. This is why you exist. This is the purpose for life.

God created you that you might fellowship with Him and living in fellowship with Him, standing in reverence of God and in awe of God. The idea of fearing is worshipful fear or reverential fear of God. In the worship of God, awe of His greatness, of His power.

Just fear God, keep His commandments. For this is the whole duty, this is the purpose of man. For, God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

Someday, you're gonna stand before the eternal God and all of the things that you have done will be brought, whether they be good or evil, unless you're a child of God and the evil is all erased. I love that. There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus.

He's erased the negative aspect of my account, taking away my sin. But this is the whole duty of man. One day, you'll stand before God.

So fear God, keep His commandments. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the book of Ecclesiastes in our next lesson as Pastor Chuck Smith begins The Song of Solomon. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us.

But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Ecclesiastes chapter 11, verse 1 when visiting the thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck. You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast or sign up for our email subscription. Once again, all this can be found at thewordfortoday.org. If you wish to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-WORD and our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

Again, that's 1-800-272-9673. For those of you preferring to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628. And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support.

And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here, on the next edition of The Word for Today. And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing comments.

May the Lord bless you this week and prosper you in all that you do for Him. And may we follow the exhortations of sowing the seed, of fearing God, keeping His commandment, doing the work of the Lord, and trusting God for the fruit that will come, committing those things to Him. And so go out this week and sow seed.

Cast your bread upon the waters. Give to seven or to eight. Take advantage of the opportunities that you have now in knowing God, in serving God.

And for you younger ones, remember the Creator in the days of your youth. Give your youth to Him, your strength of your youth, to serve Him. You'll never be sorry.

The 1960s became one of the most colorful periods in American history. The counterculture was dropping out and turning on. The Summer of Love was the stage for many dramas of change.

And the most popular musical group in the world was singing, All You Need Is Love. But one man in Southern California was reaching out with the answer, and the truth began to set people free. Author and pastor Chuck Smith began to share the love of Jesus Christ with a generation that was looking for love in all the wrong places.

Now some 40 years later, the gospel of love is still changing lives. In his book simply titled, Love, The More Excellent Way, Pastor Chuck Smith expounds upon the love that can change your life now and forever. For more information on how to obtain your copy, visit a bookstore nearest you.

Or call 1-800-272-WORD. Or visit us online at thewordfortoday.org. That's thewordfortoday.org. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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