

## GOD'S ACCEPTABLE WORDS

By: Bill Irby – Minister, West Hobbs Street Church of Christ, Athens, AL

The preacher who wrote Ecclesiastes "...sought acceptable words" (Ecclesiastes 12: 10 NKJV). We are told by this ancient book that "The goads of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd." The words the preacher wrote were inspired. They were not his alone, but came from the Mind of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). He then added, "And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh." There are many books in the world, indeed, more today than in Solomon's day. Study is hard work and this kind of work is much harder than many assume. But the student must remember that God's Word is always superior in content and function to the written meanderings of the mind of man.

So is that the preacher looked for acceptable (literally, "delightful") words. The words written here and in Proverbs have the power to transmit truth to the mind of the reader. This is real delight, real acceptability. Living by the transient wisdom of man is like eating cotton candy. It is pleasant for a time, but it will do nothing good for you. We need the well-driven nails of truth.

### THERE ARE FIVE LESSONS IN ECCLESIASTES 12

The first is that we must *remember*. "*Remember now thy Creator in the days of your youth*" (12:1). The most profound capacity possessed by a human being is the ability to contemplate God. It is a shame not to use that ability.

The second is that *our strength will fail* (12:2-5). With the power of a poet the preacher reminds us that our hands will grow weak and so will the strongest parts of our bodies. Teeth will fail and our eyes will grow weaker. Our hearing will falter. We will not be able to sleep we'd like. We become fearful about things like height and falling in the street. Hair, what there is of it, turns gray and our appetites falter. The point is hard to miss. Life here will decline; we had better remember God.

The third is that life will end (12: 6-8). The cord that suspends the bowl of life will break. The pitcher will be broken and our lives will spill out. Dust to dust and the Spirit back to God. We'd better be ready.

The fourth is that *truth is revealed in words* (12:9-12). Don't rely on emotion. Don't trust Dr. Phil or Oprah. The only hope is in the truth God has given us in the Bible.

The fifth and best lesson is in Ecclesiastes 12:13. "*Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.*" This is life's actual and real meaning. It is the conclusion of the whole matter and the only thing that will last at the Judgment.

These are just some of God's *acceptable and delightful words*.