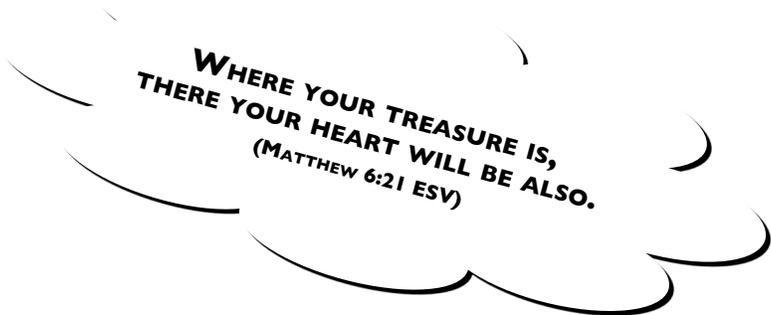
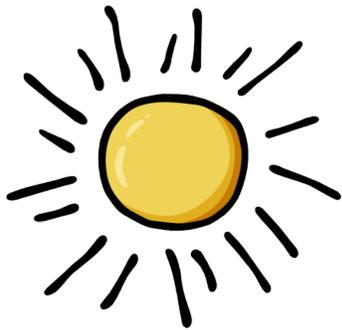

**YOU GUIDE ME WITH YOUR COUNSEL,
AND AFTERWARD YOU WILL RECEIVE ME TO GLORY.**
(PSALM 73:24 ESV)



**WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS,
THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO.**
(MATTHEW 6:21 ESV)



NAVIGATING OUR BEST LIFE UNDER THE SUN

(HINT: WE SET OUR COORDINATES BY THE WORD OF GOD.)



We navigate our best life under the sun (and beyond) when we set specific coordinates which allow us to live freely, fearlessly, generously and cheerfully in the life God has given us.

- To **navigate** means to determine a path or course; to choose a path; to plan and direct your route or course; to find the way to get to the place to which you are traveling.
- A **coordinate** is any of a set of numbers used in specifying the location of a point on a line, on a surface, or in space; any one of a set of variables used in specifying the state of a substance or the motion of a particle or momentum.
- In our study I will use the word *coordinate* figuratively in the sense that our variables are specific wisdom instructions in the Bible by which we set the course of our lives toward God and the abundant life that Christ offers. The context in which we are to obey these specific wisdom instructions is the life that he has in his infinite wisdom chosen for each us for our time on earth.

COORDINATE #1: Make the best use of our lives with the bread (resources) we have been given, 11:1.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:1 ESV) **Cast your bread upon the waters**, for you will find it after many days.

Our lot in life is a divine stewardship chosen and given specifically to each person by the sovereign will of God himself. In our text it seems as if the Preacher uses bread as an analogy for our lot in life—our lot in life being the lives God has given us with all the accompanying resources.

These resources include every aspect of our lives—physical, mental, spiritual, social, material, geographical, etc. So this means that what we look like, when and where we were born, how smart we are, how tall or short or skinny, etc. is determined by what God gives us.

- (Ecclesiastes 3:22 NLT) So I saw that there is nothing better for people than to be happy in their work. **That is our lot in life.** And no one can bring us back to see what happens after we die.

Most likely the advice given here does not have one precise meaning. Instead, Qohelet is inviting his readers to embrace a certain way of looking at the world. They are to take a long-term view of life, which accepts the good with the bad; they are to sit loose to their lives and their possessions, not becoming too attached to them. [Provan, I. (2001). *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (p. 206). Zondervan.]

- (Ecclesiastes 5:18–20 NLT) Even so, I have noticed one thing, at least, that is good. It is good for people to eat, drink, and enjoy their work under the sun **during the short life God has given them, and to accept their lot in life.** 19 And it is a good thing to receive wealth from God and the good health to enjoy it. **To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life—this is indeed a gift from God.** 20 God keeps such people so busy enjoying life that they take no time to brood over the past.

- (Colossians 4:5–6 ESV) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, **making the best use of the time.** 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

COORDINATE #2: Invest our resources liberally from the heart with patience, confidence and joy, 11:1, cf. 2 Corinthians 9:6-9.

- (2 Corinthians 9:6–8 ESV) The point is this: **whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.** 7

Each one must give **as he has decided in his heart**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver**. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

IT IS AS TRUE for the Christian as for the pre-Christian reader of Ecclesiastes that none of us understands what God does in his world and none of us has any control over it. We still dwell in significant ignorance about what is and will be happening in the world. [Ibid. (p. 206).]

despondency; a state or period of inactivity, stagnation, or slump.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:3 ESV) If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth, and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie.

COORDINATE #3: Invest our resources diversely and courageously not allowing threats of disaster to dictate the course of our lives, 11:2.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:2 ESV) Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth.

We must not hoard resources because we live in fear of the next disaster that may come our way.

Diversely means in various ways. We must invest our lives in a variety of ways, and we must be courageous in the choices we make. Such as, a person may choose to invest his life in a minority family in the community and risk losing friendships and social influence.

As we truly live in our freedom in Christ as we are led by the Holy Spirit of God, we become the strong and courageous followers that our Lord calls us to be.

- (Philippians 2:14–16a NIV) Do everything without grumbling or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, “**children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.**” **Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky 16 as you hold firmly to the word of life.**

COORDINATE #4: Faithfully carry on through the doldrums— the inexplicable, unforeseeable, uncontrollable monotony of our life, 11:3.

The "doldrums" is a popular nautical term that refers to the belt around the Earth near the equator where sailing ships sometimes get stuck on windless waters. A spell of listlessness or

The wise thing to do is to adjust ourselves to reality. We are to turn to God in repentance for all our foolish vanity about ourselves and for all our mad schemes for gaining control of his universe and using it for our own selfish ends. We must learn to be content with the life God has actually given us to live, rather than pursuing the life that we imagine we might have preferred, and in our contentment learn to live each moment well and to be generous to others. ... **All must be judged in the light of the Truth and not in the light of self-serving myths**, in the sure and certain knowledge that it is living in the context of the long term that is also best for human beings in the short term. [Ibid. (p. 210).]

COORDINATE #5: Plant our seeds unhindered by the winds and clouds of our physical, personal, social, economical, political environment, 11:4.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:4 ESV) He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

COORDINATE #6: Plant our seeds knowing that God is the one who brings the harvest, 11:5.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:5 ESV) As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, **so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.**

- (1 Corinthians 3:5–7 ESV) What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, **but God gave the growth.** 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, **but only God who gives the growth.**

- (2 Corinthians 9:10–11 NLT) For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. **In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.** 11 Yes, you will be enriched in

every way **so that you can always be generous.** And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.

- (Galatians 6:6–10 ESV) Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. 7 **Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.** 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the

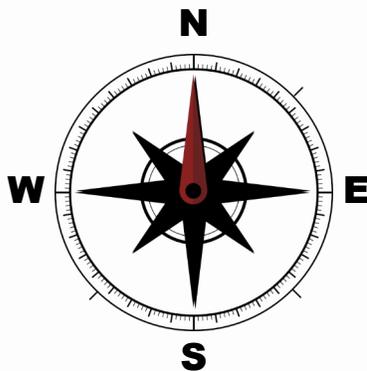
Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 **And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.** 10 **So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

COORDINATE #7: Plant the seeds God gives us every day and morning and evening knowing that he is the one who chooses what will prosper, 11:6.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:6 ESV) In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, **for you do not know which will prosper**, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.

COORDINATE #8: Enjoy the sweet light of life remembering that many days of darkness will come and also remembering that everything that happens is vanity under the sun, 11:7-8.

- (Ecclesiastes 11:7-8 ESV) Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun. 8 **So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all;** but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. **All that comes is vanity.**



- (Psalm 119:25 ESV) My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to **your word!**
- (Psalm 119:105 ESV) **Your word** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- (Psalm 119:114 ESV) You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in **your word**.
- (Psalm 119:130 ESV) The unfolding of **your words** gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.
- (Psalm 119:147 ESV) I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in **your words**.
- (Psalm 119:162 ESV) I rejoice at **your word** like one who finds great spoil.
- (Psalm 119:169 ESV) Let my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to **your word!**