Week of Nov 8, 2026 | 5 Day Devotional Guide

Schooled | The Son and Everything Under the Sun

THE BRANCH CHURCH

Day 1: Remember Your Creator Now
Reading: Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

It is easy to assume that a relationship with God is something we will get around to later, once life slows down or once we have exhausted every other option. But Solomon, writing from the far end of a long life, urges the young to remember their Creator now, before the body weakens and the seasons of ease pass. The gifts of strength, energy, and vitality are not accidents. They are provisions from a generous Creator. To remember Him in youth is to recognize that every good thing you currently possess has a Giver. Do not wait until loss teaches you what gratitude could have.

- **What gifts of this current season of your life have you been treating as ordinary rather than as provisions from God?**
- **Write down three specific abilities or blessings you currently have that you have taken for granted. Spend time in prayer thanking God for each one by name.**

Day 2: Wasting Away and Being Renewed
Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Solomon's list of aging's effects is honest and even sobering. Teeth go. Vision dims. Strength fades. But Paul, writing on the other side of the resurrection, adds a dimension Solomon did not yet possess. The outward wasting away is real, but it is not the whole story. Inwardly, the person who walks with God is being renewed every single day. This is not wishful thinking. It is the testimony of every believer whose spirit has grown more radiant as their body grew more frail. The aging body is not a tragedy to be denied. It is a signpost pointing toward what is unseen and eternal.

- **Where in your life are you tempted to fix your eyes on what is visible and temporary rather than on what is unseen and eternal?**
- **Identify one person in your life whose spirit appears to be growing stronger as their body grows weaker. Reach out to them this week and tell them what you observe in them.**

Day 3: The Conclusion of the Whole Matter
Reading: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

After twelve chapters of honest searching, Solomon arrives at a conclusion that is both simple and staggering. Fear God. Keep His commandments. This is the whole duty of human beings. It can sound like a legal obligation stripped of warmth, but it is anything but that. To fear God is to take Him seriously enough to orient your entire life around Him. To keep His commandments is to trust that the One who made you knows how you were meant to function. Like a limb in a cast that cannot be used for its purpose, the human soul atrophies when cut off from the relationship it was designed for. Purpose is not found. It is returned to.

- **In what areas of your life are you still searching for fulfillment in things beneath the sun rather than in the One beyond it?**
- **Choose one of God's instructions that you have been resisting or delaying. Take one concrete step toward obedience in that area today.**

Day 4: Coherence, Purpose, and Significance in Christ
Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Modern research confirms what Solomon discovered through painful experience. Human beings need coherence, purpose, and significance to sustain genuine happiness. We need life to make sense. We need to know why we are here. We need to know that we matter. What Solomon could only gesture toward, the gospel makes explicit. In Jesus, the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe are being fixed and fitted together. Your story is not ruthlessly random. You were sent into the world by a force that has a face, a name, and nail-scarred hands. You are not an accident searching for meaning. You are a beloved creation being called home.

- **Which of the three needs, coherence, purpose, or significance, do you find hardest to hold onto? How does the gospel speak directly to that need?**
- **Meditate on Colossians 1:15-20 slowly. Write one sentence about what each of the three needs, coherence, purpose, and significance, looks like when it is grounded in Christ rather than in circumstances.**

Day 5: The Yoke That Fits
Reading: Matthew 11:28-30 and John 6:28-29

When the crowd asked Jesus what God required of them, He pointed them to Himself. Believe in the One He has sent. This is not a passive, intellectual agreement. It is a way of life. It is the daily decision to follow Jesus, to take His yoke upon you, and to learn from Him. The word for easy in the original language carries the meaning of something custom-made, something that fits perfectly. The life Jesus calls us to is not easy in the sense of requiring nothing from us. It is easy in the sense that it is the life we were always built for. Everything else chafes. This fits.

- **Where in your life does following Jesus feel like an ill-fitting burden rather than a custom-made yoke? What might that reveal about where you are placing your trust?**
- **Spend ten minutes in silence today. Bring one area of weariness or striving to Jesus in prayer. Receive His invitation in Matthew 11:28 not as a theological concept but as a personal word spoken directly to you today.**