

## **Ecclesiastes 11** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Ship your grain across the sea;  
after many days you may  
receive a return.

<sup>2</sup> Invest in seven ventures, yes, in  
eight;  
you do not know what disaster  
may come upon the land.

<sup>3</sup> If clouds are full of water,  
they pour rain on the earth.  
Whether a tree falls to the south or  
to the north,  
in the place where it falls, there  
it will lie.

<sup>4</sup> Whoever watches the wind will  
not plant;  
whoever looks at the clouds will  
not reap.

<sup>5</sup> As you do not know the path of  
the wind,  
or how the body is formed<sup>[a]</sup> in a  
mother's womb,  
so you cannot understand the  
work of God,  
the Maker of all things.

<sup>6</sup> Sow your seed in the morning,  
and at evening let your hands  
not be idle,  
for you do not know which will  
succeed,  
whether this or that,  
or whether both will do equally  
well.

<sup>7</sup> Light is sweet,  
and it pleases the eyes to see  
the sun.

<sup>8</sup> However many years anyone  
may live,  
let them enjoy them all.  
But let them remember the days of  
darkness,  
for there will be many.  
Everything to come is  
meaningless.

<sup>9</sup> You who are young, be happy  
while you are young,  
and let your heart give you joy  
in the days of your youth.  
Follow the ways of your heart  
and whatever your eyes see,  
but know that for all these things  
God will bring you into  
judgment.

<sup>10</sup> So then, banish anxiety from  
your heart  
and cast off the troubles of your  
body,  
for youth and vigor are  
meaningless.

a. [Ecclesiastes 11:5](#) Or know how life (or the spirit) / enters the body being formed

# Discussion Questions

1. Is the business advice offered in v.1-2 still valid from an economic perspective? What are the applications with respect to helping to spread the Gospel?
2. The primary direct application of v.3-6 is for the farmer, but what is the larger message for those of us engaged in other vocations?
3. How are we to interpret the apparent inconsistencies of v.7-10, especially the encouragement to enjoy our youth – while at the same time being wary of coming judgement?
4. What does the author mean by the expression: “cast off the troubles of your body” (v.10)?