

Ecclesiastes

Living in Light of the End

Certainty in the Midst of Uncertainties

Ecclesiastes 8:14 – 9:12

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Aug. 6, 2023

I. One Thing Is Absolutely Certain

Ecclesiastes 9:2 “It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean...”

He says it doesn’t matter who you are, where you are, what you have, or what you’ve done. Death will happen to everyone.

II. So Many Other Things Are Unpredictable and Inexplicable

A. You Cannot Discover or Explain Everything

Ecclesiastes 8:17 “Then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.”

Solomon wrote this book to smash into pieces that idea that we can be like God, equal to God, have it all, know it all, achieve it all, and never be left scratching our heads.

He uses a similar phrase three times in that one verse: “Man cannot find out,” “he will not find it out,” and “he cannot find it out.” God is God and we are not! This truth is woven all through the Bible.

Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Job 11:7-8 “Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? ⁸ It is higher than heavens—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?”

Romans 11:33-34 “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable are His ways! ³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?”

Isaiah 55:8-9 “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,’ declares the LORD. ⁹ ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.’”

B. You Cannot Predict or Control Everything

Ecclesiastes 9:12 “For man does not know his time. Like fish that are taken in an evil net, and like birds that are caught in a snare, so the children of man are snared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them.”

C. You Can Rest and Trust in a Sovereign God

We see five life-changing words in Eccl. 9:1 — “in the hand of God.”

In the midst of so much Solomon does not know, there's one thing that he still knows for sure: God is in control.

III. Get Busy Celebrating the Simple Things that You Do Have

- A. Slow Down to Enjoy Meals – v. 7
- B. Find Ways to Enhance the Ordinary – v. 8
- C. Take Time to Enjoy People – v. 9
- D. Throw Yourself into Your Work – v. 10

Solomon is saying “Stop bemoaning what you can't predict, can't control and can't stop...and start celebrating what you do have that God has given you in a fallen, broken world.”

IV. Good Gifts and Uncertainties Were Meant to Make Us Homesick

Uncertainties were meant to dislodge us and cause us to release the white-knuckle grip we have on so many things as we try to make this our home. Incredible joys were meant to serve as a foretaste or a signal that something better is coming!

See 2 Corinthians 4:16 – 5:7

A. Where You Fix Your Eyes Will Affect Your Heart

2 Corinthians 4:16 “So we do not lose heart...”

2 Corinthians 4:18 “As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”

B. Where You Think is Home Will Direct Your Hope

2 Corinthians 5:1 “For we know that if this tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Your body and your life right now should always remind you that you're not home yet and there's something better coming. If you're not reading your Bible and not staying filled with the Spirit, you'll start trying to make camping as good as it gets.

When you know you're not home, you can go from complaining about how bad it is to longing for and groaning for what's coming next.

2 Corinthians 5:2-4 “For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.”

You actually serve God best when you groan most because you acknowledge you're not home yet!

John 14:2-3, 6 “...I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁶...I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”