

“Meaning in the Midst of Uncertainty.”

March 5, 2023

Scriptural Text: Ecclesiastes 9.1-18

Pastor Dave Hentschel

Intro: A recent article in *The New Yorker* magazine notes that we’re seeing a dramatic spike in the popularity of **astrology**.¹

Question: What is your strategy for dealing with Uncertainty?

“He (Solomon) wrote his book to smash into tiny pieces our idea that we can be like God. We aspire to have it all, know it all, do it all, achieve it all, be happy forever, have all the answers, never be left scratching our head, and be remembered by all for all time.” (David Gibson, *Live Life Backward*, 107)

I. The One thing in life that is Certain (9:1-6)

“The preacher will argue that wisdom, pleasure, work, and possessions are very often the bubbles we live in to insulate ourselves from reality. And his needle, the sharp point he uses to burst the bubbles, is death. It is the great reality facing all human beings as they go about their business on earth. Death is the ultimate certainty that we erase from our minds and busy ourselves to avoid facing.” (David Gibson, *Live Life Backward*, 36)

“Left to our own devices, we tend to live life forward. We plan and hope and dream of where we will be. Ecclesiastes teaches us to live life backward.” (David Gibson, *Live life Backward*)

II. The Many things in life that are not Certain (9:11-18)

13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”— 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. (Js 4:13-16, NIV)

Wisdom provides an edge but it does not provide immunity.

III. All the things in life that don’t require certainty to still enjoy them (9:7-10)

Seize the day before the day seizes you.

Life is a gift to be enjoyed, not a game to be mastered.

¹ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/10/28/astrology-in-the-age-of-uncertainty>