

©WHEN LIFE SEEMS OUT OF CONTROL!

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Ecclesiastes 8:1-9:1

Prepare for the unexpected! But don't merely prepare for the unexpected by intentionally pursuing wisdom, learn how to live rightly in the present; But don't merely learn how to live rightly in the present, anticipate the future. But don't merely anticipate the future, live wisely in the midst of God's silence.

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. It was the first day of the spring semester at SFA when a student near my age walked into my class. Successful at work and doing well as a husband and father, he decided to return to school to finish his degree. Once he discovered I was lifting weights at SFA's rec center on Monday mornings, he asked if could join me. I was excited to have him. He was a great conversationalist and a lover of coffee-two qualities I deeply admire!
- B. So, there we are one Monday morning at SFA doing an exercise he loves to do, namely, lunges, lunges, and lunges (I will never do them again!), when I turned the conversation toward spiritual things and I discovered that underneath those James Marsden looks, the massive guns he was carrying for biceps, and polo pullovers, jeans, and boots, was a broken man. He was looking for explanations; he needed to understand why. Even though he was a Catholic Christian, he was actually tilting towards atheism. Why? God was silent.
- C. I actually remember seeing the story in the news.
 - 1. It was during the holiday season when his mother-in-law borrowed his jeep. His sister-in-law and her daughter, his niece, were also inside the jeep. They were running errands when something happened to the jeep died as it was crossing a nearby railroad track. Unfortunately, they could not get out of the

jeep fast enough. Of course, trains can't just stop when pulling the weight they are carrying over the tracks. They were all killed. Nothing left.

2. What should I have told him? Should I have assured him with these sentimental words: "Even if God has not given you any answer why He allowed this to happen, know this: God will never give you more than what you can handle."

D. Should you be assured of those words this morning?

1. Perhaps you are alone. People don't want to love you as you are, they want you to become something you are not in order to love you. You are broken!
2. Perhaps you are in a relationship that you know is no good. You are out of control. But your pride is only matched by the dysfunctionality you are willfully refusing to acknowledge. So you are hoping for better days...hoping things will just work out some way.
3. Perhaps your marriage is treading miles away from shore. You are exhausted! The anger, the lack of forgiveness, and the resentment is overwhelming. You feel like you are suffocating with each wave crashing over your dreams, your hopes, your longings, and all your attempts.
4. Perhaps you are grieving over your loved ones and all of the investments you made into their lives. They have made decisions that are not only costly in the worst ways, but they also do it with no concern about you at all.
5. Perhaps you are taken in by debt and now debt has taken hold of you. Your finances are out of control.
6. Maybe your emotions are out of control. The anger, the fear, the disappointments are not only wreaking havoc on you and those you love; stability seems impossible.

- E. From my examination into the Scriptures, my life, and my ministry so far I've discovered that that the statement, "God will never give you more than what you handle," while very well meaning, is actually unbiblical.
1. To be sure, when you weary and heavy-laden, if you will go the Lord, then He will give you rest. **Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** Matthew 11:28.
 2. When you are facing temptation, God provides a way of escape from temptations as stated in 1 Corinthians 10:13.
 3. When you need wisdom, you ask God and He will generously give it to you: James 1
- F. But there is no Scripture that I know that says that God will never give more than what you can bear. Instead, when those events, seasons, or even years come about when life seems out of control, how are we to think about God? And what do these events say about you? For this fella he was swimming in the wake of grief, "the-could-have-beens," with overwhelming pain because God is not answering his "whys?"
- G. But we can think about the problem another way. Since we believe God is both good and sovereign, how is it that the wicked prosper and wicked seem to go unpunished? How is it that righteous people get what the wicked deserve and the wicked get what the righteous deserve? How do we sort it out when it seems that the wicked have a better life than those of us who know God, are contrite, and have even tasted or have been encountered horrific acts of injustice?
- H. In sum, when life seems out of control, how are we to frame our thinking as believers who believe that both God is good and sovereign? Consider these words from Ecclesiastes 8:1-9:1.

Transition:

- I. Here we will discover five wisdom principles from Solomon the King that should really help frame our understanding of those times when life seems really out of control. These principles are couched between two major truths:
1. First, Value Wisdom: verses 1-9;
 2. Second: The Limits of Wisdom: verses 10-17.

In Derek Kidner's Commentary, *The Message of Ecclesiastes: A Time to Mourn, and a Time to Dance*, summarizes chapter 8 this way:

"At every turn this chapter will face us with our inability to call the tune and master our affairs. On one level after another we find ourselves pinned down, hunted down, and disoriented."¹

<p>II. First Wisdom: Principle: Be Wise: Prepare for the unexpected by intentionally pursuing wisdom: vs. 1</p>
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Storms are coming. Prepare for those moments when life seems to go out control. In other words, anticipate the unexpected. Be wise!

Verse 1: Who is like a wise man? And who knows the interpretation of a thing. A man's wisdom makes his face shine, and the sternness of his face is changed.

This first verse gives me hope! It tells me that a person of wisdom is truly possible. Wisdom is open to all. In other words, one does not need to go to seminary in order to be wise. One does not need lots of money to be wise. It is open to any of us. One merely has to have the ability to observe, learn from, and live out what is biblically true in ever-changing situations. The best way to do so is to fear God and keep his commandments.

¹ ¹ Derek Kidner, *The Message of Ecclesiastes: A Time To Mourn, and a Time to Dance*. The Bible Speaks Today series. Leicester, Eng., and (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 74.

Why be wise? Dr. Tom Constable of Dallas Seminary puts it this way in his "Expository Notes on Ecclesiastes: A wise man understands things a fool does not. Moreover, he is able to behave appropriately."

1. A wise people are able to ...
 - a. Turn mistakes into lessons of wisdom;
 - b. Exchange bad habits for habits of excellence;
 - c. Have a trust estimate about they are; they willfully choose not to deceive themselves. No masks of self-deception.
 - d. Live every day of their lives; they are not marked by passivity.
 - e. Get up from failure; they know perseverance.
 - f. Able to control what is most poisonous, namely, the tongue.
 - g. Value friendship over self-promotion; they understand the importance of community.
 - h. Live for what matters most; they have the right priorities.
 - i. They are able to think critically. They understand the relationship between thought and actions.
 - j. They learn from others;
 - k. They don't believe everything they think; they have a broad knowledge.
 - l. They fear God and keep His commandments. See, their know their place in the universe.

2. When people look at you, do they see wisdom reflecting off of your countenance? For what a man thinks within himself, so is he. You act upon what you believe and it will be expressed in your disposition, your attitude, your outlook, and your face.

- A. Two weeks ago all of us pastors were at the Evangelical Theological Society's annual meeting. I had prepared to leave Thursday afternoon. But Wednesday night I had experienced a really terrible headache. It was so bad that morning that I found myself just heaving. I was so exhausted from all of that I decided

to stay an extra night which provided an extra opportunity for me, if I felt well enough to do it, to do a second look about at all the latest biblical, theological, and apologetic type books.

- B. While there looking with love and hope at all the books there, a sage of man, Dr. John Hannah from Dallas Seminary, one who wears wisdom very well, came up to me and asked when I was planning to return to Houston. Dr. Hannah, a former professor mine, wanted to spend time with me, and if I was leaving for Houston on Friday, he would like to ride with me so we could visit. I was so honored! He cancelled his flight and I picked him up the next day.
- C. I believe this was all in God's providence. In our conversation he brought some incredible wisdom and insight to all to that I was sharing with him...trying to make sense out of all these things. As we were talking about those who climb the academic ladder and the motives for it, whether good or bad motives, he said, that for us "believers, our significance is found in our insignificance." That road-trip affected my life in the most amazing way! So encouraged! So affirmed! Heart so inflamed for the things of God. I say that to say we need people like that in our lives. We need to spend time with sages in our church; the men and women who have walked with God intimately through the good, bad, and ugly. But you, as a believer, are also called to be that sage for others. Anticipate, meet, and exceed!
- D. I so identified with the pain of what this my SFA workout partner in view of what he was experiencing with the traumatic loss of three members of his wife's family. Having walked through a terrible year in 1988 when an uncle and cousin died, two grandfathers who unexpectedly died three weeks apart, my dad having his first major heart attack, not knowing if he was dead or alive while driving a locomotive, and my only living brother, being trained to be a US Olympic pistol shooter accidentally killed, and then to boot-camp one month later. It's tough!
- E. When it came to my turn to talk I didn't just download a whole bunch of logical, philosophical formulations about God and evil. Though I am

still learning the art of listening, I've learned a lot from listening to others.

1. These moments when life seems out of control are all too common. You and I are not alone. People everywhere are experiencing all sorts of storms no matter their background, baggage, intelligence, looks, or success. Some of these storms are in fact long-staying like what my parents are experiencing with my mom transitioning from stage 6 to stage 7 of dementia. People all around us need help. Sometimes people are only one meaningful answer away from relief, from a different way of looking at their chaotic and deeply troubled situation. Other times they just need you to weep with them. Comfort them with your presence, your touch. No words needed.

F. So identifying with his pain with my presence and touch, I first explained to him that I've sought to understand this type of pain through the cross of Calvary. We have a God who has suffered with us! On the cross of Calvary the Second Person of the one and only Triune God himself experienced evil hatred, injustice, and suffering; He became sin for us. Moreover, even Jesus experienced silence. On that cross he said:

- **Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34. ...**
- **Today you will be with me in paradise. Luke 23:43. ...**
- **Behold your son: behold your mother. ...**
- **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ...**
- **I thirst. ...**
- **It is finished. ...**
- **Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.**

On the cross he cried out in mystery, "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" So, if God the Father did not spare Jesus, why would He spare us?"

1. It is this type of wisdom that can enable us to weather the storm and not lose hope. But Jesus also said, "**It is**

finished” and “Father, into your Hands I commit my spirit.” Having said this, He breathed his last.” We can ask the questions, the hard questions, yet not behave like a fool.

2. And some of the storms we experience were never meant for us. They were meant to teach others by the way we react to them.
- G. Therefore, Storms are coming! The best way to prepare for them is to intentionally pursue wisdom! Don't let wisdom merely become an accidental byproduct in your comings and goings. Intentionally look for it. Think. Study. Observe. Be attentive to your environment. Know wise people. Learn from them. Learn from the mistakes of fools. The wise person will do the right thing at the right time, in the right way, and for the right reason.

III. Second principle: But don't merely prepare for the unexpected by intentionally pursuing wisdom, learn how to live rightly in the present: respect authority

- A. Consider vv. 2-9:

I say, “Keep the king’s commandment for the sake of your oath to God. ³ Do not be hasty to go from his presence. Do not take your stand for an evil thing, for he does whatever pleases him.”

⁴ Where the word of a king is, there is power;

And who may say to him, “What are you doing?”

⁵ He who keeps his command will experience nothing harmful;

And a wise man’s heart discerns both time and judgment,

⁶ Because for every matter there is a time and judgment,

Though the misery of man increases greatly.

⁷ For he does not know what will happen;

So who can tell him when it will occur?

⁸ No one has power over the spirit to retain the spirit,

And no one has power in the day of death.

*There is no release from that war,
And wickedness will not deliver those who are given to it.*

⁹ *All this I have seen, and applied my heart to every work that is done under the sun: There is a time in which one man rules over another to his own hurt.*

- C. Verses 2-9 reveal that when it comes to authorities over us, value prudence. Behave appropriately in the midst of changing situations. I love the way Duane Garrett explains this verse. He states:

In dealing with the king, the Teacher counsels patience and perseverance despite the arbitrary exercise of power one encounters. The reasons are (1) the courtier is bound by an oath (vs. 2); (2) to abandon one's place before the king is to lose all influence (v. 3a); (3) the king is autocratic and one cannot simply correct him (vs. 4); and (4) the one who continues to work patiently for good causes will be so recognized by the king (vv. 5-6a).²

- D. I take it to be applicable in dealing with all sorts of authorities over us. While we value rugged independence and individualism in America, the cost can be quite significant if we fail to recognize the proper place authorities have over us.

1. In particular, we are to obey government as if it were an oath unto God. Thus, our citizenship and our obedience to its laws is critical even if it is inconvenient to us! Even Paul, in Romans 13, makes it clear government is ordained by God! Thus, our relationship to government and subordination to its laws should be respected. Even Jesus said, "*Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.*" I do wish Jesus didn't make this point, especially when it comes to taxes. But there it is.
2. Second, verses 3-4 state, "Do not be in a hurry to leave the king's presence. DO not stand up for a bad cause, for he will do

² Duane A. Garrett, *The New American Commentary: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 1993), 4:326-27.

whatever he pleases" Notice: The government has the power to force us to do certain things.

3. When it comes to any authority over us, when we quickly resign from something and not attempt to work it through, we may very well lose credibility and not be able to be a voice of change. Like Ravi Zacharias often says, "Do not try to cut off somebody' nose, then try to give them a rose to smell."
 - a. Moreover, if you are not careful, a rift might not develop resulting in all sorts of calamity.
 - b. In fact, I suspect many of our storms are self-induced. It is the fall out of a foolish decision.
4. Verse 6 makes it clear that there is a proper place and procedure for every matter. Moreover, we have to be reminded that for authorities, the wellbeing of their subordinates weighs heavy upon them.

Be wise! Storms are coming! This is the best way prepare for the unexpected! But don't merely prepare for the unexpected by pursuing wisdom, learn how to live rightly in the present; respect authority. But don't merely learn how to live rightly in the present, live in anticipation of the future: fear God for all will be judged.

<p>IV. Third Principle: Live in Anticipation of the Future: (1) Fear God for all will be judged: vv. 7-14</p>
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Read Verses 7-14

1. Verse 7 plainly states that death is coming for us all. Just like no person has power over the wind, so no one has power over the day of his death. Even if one joins the enemy of the king one will not escape. The only escape from the death is the Rapture.
2. I do believe, as reflected here by Solomon that death and future judgment should occupy more of our thinking. So far in my life I've

seen five people take their last exhaling breath and each one has marked me.

3. When we think about death, we are immediately reminded of our fragility. It propels us to live for what matters most.
 1. Blaise Pascal put it this way: "Between us and heaven or hell there is only life half-way- the most fragile thing in the world."³ 152 (213).
 - b. If we are observant of loss and gain, evil and goodness, death and life that is all around us, we are repeatedly reminded to live with eternity in mind:
 1. C.S. Lewis remarks: "All that seems earth is the beginning of hell or heaven."⁴
 2. We often think of earth as being permanent and unchanging, but it is only a front porch to eternity. Heaven or hell is fixed!⁵
 - c. While it seems unfair that the unrighteous are prosperous and the righteous are not prosperous, death is inevitable to all. Verses 9-13 addresses the fact that while powerful tyrants and evil oppressors may live long lives, not appear to be held accountable, might make a pompous show of their religious observances, have magnificent funerals, and receive amazing accolades, giving the idea that people can get away with evil, a day is coming where they will die. Our lives are so vaporous.
 1. Pascal puts it this way:
 - a. Imagine a number of men in chains, all under sentence of death, some of whom are each day butchered in the sight

³ Peter Kreeft, *Christianity for Modern Pagans: Pascal's Pensees: Edited, Outlined, and Explained* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1966), 142.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ Idem.

of the others; those remaining see their own condition in that of their fellows, and looking at each other with grief and despair await their turn. This is an image of the human condition.⁶ 434 (199)

b. "We run heedlessly into the abyss after putting something in front of us to stop us seeing it."⁷ 166 (183).

2. Consider this illustration by Dr. Peter Kreeft:

a. We are locked in a car (our body), rushing furiously down a hill (time), through fog (ignorance), unable to see ahead, over rocks and pits (wretchedness). The doors are welded shut, the steering works only a little, and the brakes are non-existent. Our only certainty is that all the cars sooner or later fall over the edge of the cliff (death).

b. So what do we do? We erect billboards at the edge of the cliff, so that we do not have to look at the abyss. The billboards are called 'civilization.'⁸

3. Death is the leveling field! No matter king or peasant, wicked or righteous, death is coming!

E. But take a careful look at verses 12-13:

12 Although a wicked man commits a hundred crimes and still lives a long time, I know that it will go better with God-fearing men, who are reverent before God.

13 Yet because the wicked do not fear God, it will not go well with them, and their days will not lengthen like a shadow.

While we will all die, their lives are nothing more but shadows, a fleeting thing, all will also be judged. Solomon, who did not have the details we have in the Book of Revelation, assures his readers that it

⁶ Ibid., 142-43.

⁷ Ibid., 145.

⁸ Idem.

will fare better for the God-fearing man who implements his fear of God in the way he practically lives with reverential awe before Him than for those who pursue evil, practice injustice, and live for self-promotion even if that means exploiting others.

But there is another way to look at the prosperity of those who are wicked. That is all they have!

**V. Fourth Principle has a second part: Live in Anticipation of the Future:
(1) Fear God for all will be judged:
vv. 7-14; (2) Enjoy what God has given you in the now (vs. 15**

A. Live in anticipation of the future-fear God for all will be judged. But also live in anticipation of the future for another reason. Since death is approaching, enjoy what God has given you in the now.

1. The question is not why am I not dead? The question is why are we still living?

a. After I listened to the brokenness of this fella I worked out with at SFA, and his search for answers why God allowed this to happen, I so grieved with him. When life seems out of control and there are no answers on this side of heaven, the silence can be deafening.

b. But one thing we need to continually remind ourselves when life seems out of control is to take account of the blessings we do have. For example, this handsome fella at SFA had an amazing beautiful wife who is an incredible artist, three precious daughters, and physical disposition that many bros in the gym would covet. God may take away, but He also gives!

Solomon puts it this way in verse 15: **"So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy**

will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun."

2. Adapting a line from the movie Dr. Strange when Dr. Strange finally meets the Ancient One and arrogantly contends that all of reality is only physical, the Ancient One says: "You're a man looking at the world through a **keyhole**." Don't look at the world through a keyhole of pain or chaos. Open the door! If you do, then will find reasons to thank God! You just have to have the vision to see all that is before you. Don't be one of those who see the blessings when it is too late. Truly count all the blessings you have now! Work things out!
3. One month after my brother was tragically killed I left for Great Lakes Navy Base where I did boot-camp and medical training. After I completed my medical training outside of Chicago, I returned in just time to start my undergraduate studies at Stephen F. Austin that fall semester. While living in the dorm, historically described as the Zoo, my parents called me asked if I would not come home for the holidays. It was too painful for them to see me since I reminded them of my brother. I get it now, but it was terribly painful to receive that phone call. I was hurting too. But it was also the same semester I met Jill and she fell in love with me. In the midst of the unexplainable, the questions, and the pain, there are always reasons to hope, to trust, and to press on.
4. It was also that same semester that my personal faith began to exponentially develop. I was introduced to A.W. Tozer, Oswald Chambers, and all sorts of authors, theologians, and apologists for the first time through friends I made at the Baptist Student Missions.
5. Find enjoyment in life! Enjoy being alive! Eat, drink, and be glad! Look at those three verbs in verse 15: Enjoy the good pleasures God has given you! Life is God-given and should be enjoyed! Also, notice the link between work and pleasure. **Enjoy your work!**

15: So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of his life God has given him under the sun.

6. I told my workout bro... hold your daughters in the air, play with them! Live it up with your spouse! Build deep relationships with your friends! Feed your soul with the good things God has given you! Don't allow yourself to be swallowed up by the loss, the pain, and the silence. Applying the words of Dr. Howard Hendricks to the situation, I said, "bro, don't die before you die!" Don't allow your grief to swallow up the blessings you have around you.

- G. **Storms are coming! Prepare for the unexpected! But don't merely prepare for the unexpected by pursuing wisdom, learn how to live in rightly the present; respect authority. But don't merely learn how to live rightly in the present, live in anticipation of the future-fear God for all will be judged and enjoy the good things God has given you in the now. But don't merely live in anticipation of the future by fearing God and enjoying what He has given you, but also live wisely when God is silent.**

VI: Fifth: Live wisely when God is silent... vv. 8:16-9:1
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15: So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of his life God has given him under the sun.

16. When I applied my mind to know wisdom and to observe man's labor on earth-his eyes not seeing sleep day or night-

17. Then I saw all that God has done! NO one can comprehend what goes on under the sun, Despite all his efforts to search it out, man cannot discover its meaning. Even if a wise man claims he knows, he cannot really comprehend it.

9:1 For I considered all this in my heart [inmost being], so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their

works are in the hand of God [means "In God's control and possession]. People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them.

- a. Value Wisdom: verses 1-9;
- b. Wisdom has its limits: verses 10-17. Here the limits of wisdom really come into focus with verses 15-9:1

In other words, when God does not answer your "whys", how should you respond? Consider the following three:

- A. *First, when life seems to be out of control, cling to the truths that God is both good and sovereign (vs. 9:1). 9:1 For I considered all this in my heart [inmost being], so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God [means "In God's control and possession].*
 1. Dr. John F. Walvoord would often say to me, burning it into the creases of my thick brain, "*God will never do anything less than His infinite perfect best. So, you can trust Him.*" 9:1 makes it clear that God sovereignly controls our destinies. From other passages, we know God is also good! In those moments of chaos and silence, when God seems mysterious to me, I look at the character, words, and actions of Jesus Christ since He is God in the flesh. If you have seen Jesus, you have seen God.
- B. *When life is out of control and God does not answer, this doesn't mean that our trust in God is irrational. We intimately know Him! We know who this God is! Thus, we are able to trust Him even when no answers are provided.*
 1. Persian Rug Illustration from Melvin Tinker.⁹ It was the very illustration that liberated my workout partner at SFA. It didn't give him answers but did bring such comfort to his life to such an extent that his faith in God was restored.

⁹ See Melvin Tinker, *Intended for Good: The Providence of God* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014).

C. Finally, when life is out of control, fix your gaze on God. I think of the value of a lighthouse on a stormy night. Though the tempest may be fierce and the calamity dark and chaotic, the light pierces through the darkness to guide the way. In the midst of panic, there is hope!

1. Consider these words from A.W. Tozer's *The Pursuit of God*. He writes:

While we are looking at God we do not see ourselves-blessed riddance. The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One.... Faith is a redirecting of our sight, a getting out of the focus of our own vision and getting God into focus.... When we lift our inward eyes to gaze upon God we are sure to meet friendly eyes gazing back at us, for it is written that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout all the earth. The sweet language of experience is "Your God sees me!" When the eyes of the soul looking out meets the eyes of God looking in, heaven has begun right here on earth.¹⁰

Now, if faith is the gaze of the heart at God, and if this gaze is but the raising of the inward eyes to meet the all-seeing eyes of God, then it follows" that he will give you the peace, the strength, the hope that you need when life seems out of control.

The question becomes in the midst of silence, are you gazing upon God. If you are, then no matter how out of control your life seems, then you have all you need!

¹⁰ A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Akure, Nigeria: Millennium Publishers, 2014), 42.

VII. CONCLUSION:

As many of you know I love the military and have a deep respect for veterans. One man I know, a great man, a man's man, a man who fought valiantly in Vietnam, is a committed Christian. Off of the sweat of his brow, he built an incredible fortune and has given so much of it away for the cause of Christ. But his beginnings in East Texas were quite humble and his upbringing terribly dysfunctional.

His momma had always rejected Jesus Christ. All through her life she sought to find fulfillment, meaning, and happiness in love. But that left her with a broken heart, a scarring and marring that can be difficult to recover from.

The years passed and she still rejected Christ even after hearing all the stories of God's providence from his experiences in Vietnam, all the testimonies, and all the experiences.

Until finally, there she is! Death has now come to her. She is in the hospital. The doctors called in the family. They surrounded her bed. She is grasping for last moments of air. But this hero got before his momma's face. And he said to her something like "Momma. This is your last chance to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior. He is your God! He died on the cross for your sins and rose bodily from the dead! With her eyes closed and her frail body exhausted, he said to her, "Will you place your trust in Him? Will you, Momma? With every ounce of energy remaining, she responded with two words. In that last exhaling breath she whispered, "I believe." She died.

Prepare for the unexpected! But don't merely prepare for the unexpected by intentionally pursuing wisdom, learn how to live rightly in the present; But don't merely learn how to live rightly in the present, anticipate the future. But don't merely anticipate the future, live wisely in the midst of God's silence.