

**“The Mystery of Life”**

**18th in “The Good Life” Series**

**Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:6**

May 28, 2017

Pastor Mickey Klink

7) Verses 9:2-3 explains that bad things happen to good and bad people, or

 believers and non-believers. What makes Christians think that faith in

 Christ somehow makes life better in this world? Why is this perspective

 dangerous, especially in regard to how it distorts the gospel?

8) How might God actually use the equal spread of “bad things” among

 Christians and non-Christians for the good of the world and for his own

 glory?

9) Verses 9:4-6 are some of the most pessimistic (negative) verses in all of

 Ecclesiastes, maybe in the whole Bible. What is the author trying to say in

 those verses? How does the full story of the Bible (the gospel) help provide

 a more positive interpretation of those verses?

10) What difficult issue are you dealing with in your life right now? How

 might this passage encourage you to allow that difficulty to point you to

 God, to his sovereignty, and/or to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

**Further study this week**: Romans 11:25-26 on the mystery of God (Mon) Psalm 90 on the sovereignty of God (Tues); Matthew 5:43-48 on equal distribution of good and evil (Wed); Psalm 97 on God’s complete control (Thurs); 1 John 5:13-20 on living life in God (Fri).

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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**Introduction**

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In this passage God shows how the mystery of life points to God, his sovereignty, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**The Text: Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:6**

1. The mystery of life is proof that every area of life, including your life, belongs to God alone (8:16-17).
2. The mystery of life is answered by God’s sovereignty, a truth that guides and comforts in life (9:1-6).
	1. *God is in complete control (v. 1).*
	2. *Difficult things happen to all people (vv. 2-3).*
	3. *Life is better than death – and Jesus Christ is that life (vv. 4-6).*

**Response**

* Let the mystery of life push you to God … and to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Would you like to be involved in a Small group? Contact Pastor Brad at pastorbrad@hefc.net**

**The Mystery of Life**

Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:6

1. Read the text aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
2. Reflect for a few minutes on interpreting Ecclesiastes. Has this been a harder book to interpret and if so, why? How has this book helped you understand God, the gospel, and/or life?
3. In Ecclesiastes 8:16 the Preacher suggests that the search for meaning (aka, wisdom) is an exhausting human endeavor that cannot be accomplished. How have you wrestled with the meaning of life, now or in the past?
4. Let’s get more honest. How have you wrestled with life’s difficulties – like the really hard stuff? If you were open and vulnerable right now, what things have happened or could happen to make you question life and God?
5. In Ecclesiastes 8:17 the Preacher says all this “wrestling” with the mystery and difficulty of life pointed him to God, specifically “the work of God.” What does he mean by that phrase?
6. Ecclesiastes 9:1 makes a clear statement: God is in complete control (“in the hands of God”). How can a person start believing that truth in practice and not just in principle?