

# Knowing the Future and Living Today

Ecclesiastes 11:1-6



## Travel and moving involve a lot of uncertainty and risk

How do you respond to the risks of travel & moving?

Overprepare / Underprepare / Worry / Give up

## Following God involves risk...

How do we respond?

How should we respond?

## The Sea

Ancient Israelites were afraid of the sea

A symbol of chaos and evil

“Coastlands” and “Islands” meant “the ends of the earth”

Travel by ship was very risky: Jonah, Paul

“The king [Solomon] had a fleet of trading ships at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons.” 1 Kings 10:22

This is an expression of extravagant success

*Very risky to trade by sea*

*No communication for 3 years!*

*But when it worked, there was a big reward*



## Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

### 1-2

Maybe 7 or 8 different ships (reduce risk)

Take risks, yet wisely, and you'll get a reward

### 3-4

Nature is unpredictable and unchangeable

Trying to “outsmart” nature to get rid of risk doesn't work

Not planting or reaping is complete disaster!!

### 5-6

Merism: always be diligent in doing what is right



## The Main Point

### The uncertainties of life are no excuse for failing to do good and to obey God with wisdom, courage, and perseverance

Luke 19:11-27

Failing to do good and obey God because of risk is...

disobedience

denying the goodness of God

“No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame” Psalm 25:3a

### When God gives us instructions, He doesn't promise that...

He doesn't promise that it will be easy

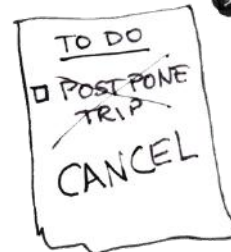
Forgiving people might hurt us

Loving our enemies might be costly

Sharing the Gospel might bring rejection

Being generous might leave us poorer

Although these things **might** not happen



## God does promise...

relationship with Him  
His good work, even in trouble  
eventual reward for following Him

## Application

### Do what God calls us to do with wisdom and courage and perseverance

If we only obey when the risks are low, we're questioning God's authority & goodness

What might God be asking us to do?

Forgive / Let go of possessions we are clinging to / Love our enemies and bless those who curse us / Seek help to battle a sin that keeps tripping us up / Have a conversation we've been avoiding / Share the Gospel with someone / Change the course of our lives / Use a gift from God that is new to us

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong." 1 Corinthians 16:13

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power." Ephesians 6:10

### Trust God through the ups and downs of following Him

If we only obey when the risks are low...

we won't "plant or reap"

we'll miss God's good work

we'll miss the rewards God promises

## In Matthew's telling of the parable:

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" Matthew 25:23

---

## Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. How do you tend to respond to uncertainty and risk? Why?
2. God calls us to wise courage. What is the difference between wise courage and foolish courage?
3. What is something that God is asking you to do that might involve uncertainty and risk? What might it look like for you to be courageous and strong, being strong in the Lord?

## Conversation starters

Are you facing uncertainty and risk? What is it? What gives you courage to keep moving forward?