**Message Notes Pastor Dave Gudgel**

**Date:** May 7, 2017 **Bible Focus:** Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:10

**Current Series:** The Chase

Message Title: In His Hands

1. **When \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ecc 8:16-17 -** When I applied my mind to know wisdom and to observe man's labor on earth—his eyes not seeing sleep day or night—17then 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.

1. **When \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ecc 9:1-6 -** So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no man knows whether love or hate awaits him. 2All share a common destiny—the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not. As it is with the good man, so with the sinner; as it is with those who take oaths, so with those who are afraid to take them. 3This is the evil in everything that happens under the sun: The same destiny overtakes all. The hearts of men, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward they join the dead. 4Anyone who is among the living has hope—even a live dog is better off than a dead lion! 5For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. 6Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.

1. **When \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ecc 9:11-12 -** I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all. 12Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.

**Ecc 9:7-10 -** Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for it is now that God favors what you do. 8Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. 9Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun. 10Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:10

1. In what way do you identify with C.S. Lewis’ palace building analogy? How does knowing God’s plan is to build a palace with your life encourage or threaten you?
2. Have you ever been able to make sense of that which makes no sense? How does Solomon’s “no one can comprehend” statement strike you? Do you find this comforting or troubling? Will remembering your life is in God’s hands give you enough to trust God more than you do right now?
3. Have you ever felt like God should have given you a better deal than someone else? Especially someone who is intentionally living an unrighteous life? Does death seem unfair to you? Why or why not? Does knowing the day of your death is in God’s hands give you living hope?
4. Can you think of a time in your life where you were caught up in a “if I do this” then “I can expect this” mindset? Did things work out as hoped? Have they always worked out as hoped in these situations? How have you seen time and chance changing the course of a person’s dreams and aspirations? Has that person been you?
5. Are you living with enjoyment and gladness? Would you say joy is a significant part of your life? If not, can you pinpoint what’s standing in the way of you experiencing what Solomon is focused on in 9:7-10? In what way could knowing your life is in God’s hands, and there is no better place for it to be, give you more life and enjoyment in the days to come?