

## **Uncertainty: It's the New Certainty**

### **By Barry Shafer**

#### **The Word**

“For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on You” (2 Chron. 20:12).

After he prayed, God's Spirit prompted one of Jehoshaphat's priestly leaders, who said:

“This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's’” (2 Chron. 20:15).

#### **The Backdrop**

You've probably already caught a whiff of it. It's too close not to. It's something you look so forward to there's no way it will sneak up on you. You've probably figured out what we're talking about: summer vacation.

While the end of the school year is one of the most eagerly anticipated calendar dates of all time, it can bring some anxiety. The wrap-up of a school year means you're one year closer to the end of high school, which means you're one year closer to deciding on your next life step: College? Job? Learning a trade?

For some, this next life step can be nerve-racking, especially if you have no idea what you want to do when you grow up. The reality is, we often find ourselves in situations where we don't know what to do, whether it's serious life choices or simple daily decisions. The thing is, that's not a bad place to be; in fact, it can be good and maybe even preferred.

#### **The What**

God's people in the Old Testament faced a similar predicament—not with regard to making a career choice, but with regard to not knowing what to do. Their king, Jehoshaphat, got word that some enemies had unified and were marching their way. By the time he got the news the enemies were close by and advancing from several directions. Things looked bleak, so he prayed to God.

#### **The So What**

OK, you may not have a vast army surrounding you ready to attack, but you are surrounded by an array of forces that can defeat you: anxiety about the future, decisions about dating relationships, pain from hurt or loss; and on top of all that, confusion from the enemy who tries to deceive you. In all of these situations, you may find yourself saying at some point, “I do not know what to do.”

As you now know, you're not the first person to feel this way.

When Jehoshaphat prayed, there was one thing he and his people were certain of in the middle of the uncertainty: their eyes were on God. You might want to check out 2 Chronicles 20:18-30 to see how the story ended. Things turned out really well for Jehoshaphat and his people.

Take a minute to think of all the situations you have in your life in which you could say right now: I don't know what to do. In fact, make a list of these situations.

Now picture yourself going through each situation of uncertainty with the one certainty that Jehoshaphat had: His eyes were on God. How does this one certainty change things in each situation?

Take time to meditate on how you can resolve to keep your eyes on God no matter how much uncertainty you're facing. Try to picture what this can look like in your life, getting past the familiar phrase to just "turn your eyes upon Jesus." (It's a great phrase and classic hymn but it can sound like a tired cliché). Read the passages below from your Bible and let them help you see what keeping your eyes on God can look like in your life.

Exodus 14:13-14

Micah 7:7

2 Corinthians 13:11

Hebrews 12:1-2

### **Questions to Ponder**

What personality traits might you possess that would make it hard for you to stay focused on God during uncertainty (i.e., impatience; the need to fix things; the need to be in control)?

What faith activities might help you keep your eyes on God? Circle any that you'd like to commit to or ramp up in your life:

- More meaningful Bible study
- More intentional prayer time
- Joining a discipleship group, or more being more engaged in the one I'm in
- Enter more deeply into worship

When you find yourself saying, "I don't know what to do," you can start by doing one thing you do know how to do: Keep your eyes on God. By starting there, you might be surprised at how many other things fall into place. This gives God a chance to do His work. Before long, you will know what you're doing.