

- I. Let's start with a couple of quotes. *"Time, time, time, see what's become of me while I looked around for my possibilities; I was so hard to please."*

The other quote is?

"Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans."

- A. Who said these?
 1. Paul Simon
 2. John Lennon
- II. Looking at your possibilities and planning for the future, either to increase or decrease our worrying about tomorrow; such a task requires some ability to see into the future.
 - A. The more we can extend our horizon the better we will be at doing this.
 1. For instance it's very hard to know what lies ahead when you're driving through a very dense fog and all you can see is the front of your car.

- a) I remember a time when driving down highway 93 out of Coal Creek Canyon toward highway 72 in fog so dense that the only way we could progress at 5 miles per hour was for my passenger to open her door and watch the white line beneath her on the side of the road.
 - b) Having such a limited horizon is definitely scary.
2. But what about just driving at night and all you can see is what your headlights make available to you.
In such cases, in absolute terms you may have about a 50 yard horizon, but if you're traveling at 65 miles per hour or 95 feet per second you're horizon for all practical purposes is much shorter. So by slowing down, relatively speaking, you can increase your functional horizon.
But even the absolute 50 yards doesn't let you see very far into what's up ahead.
3. How about a clear day from Mt. Evans when it seems that you can see all the way into Kansas.
 4. Or, how about a clear day from a military satellite with optics that allow you to see what people are eating.
- B. The farther out we can see, the better we can determine what our future may hold.**

1. If I'm driving through the desert and I see a rainstorm up a head I can be pretty sure that in about 5 to 10 minutes I'll be driving through a rainstorm.
There might be some things I can do to get prepared; like closing the window.
 2. With the help of meteorological tools you can even extend your horizon out so far that you may have a pretty good idea of what the weather will be in two days.
That's time enough to board up the windows before the hurricane, or buy a new snow shovel.
- C. So imagine -- God's horizon is so far out that God may know exactly how it all comes out.
- D. But there's a problem here.
Extending our horizon is not really giving a view of the future.
What does it do?
It is extending our ability to see into the past.
- E. So based on this, God's extended horizon may give God an increased probability of knowing what will happen, but not a definite knowledge.
- F. That is, if God is bound by the same laws of nature that we are.

III. Here's where the possibilities get really weird, or exciting, depending on you. You see, God may be bound by the same laws of nature, or perhaps those laws of nature are a manifestation of God; in either case, God as Spirit, as non-material, is not bound by the limits of the speed of light.

A. Non-material things, such as a photon or graviton do travel at the speed of light. So from God's perspective, from a God's eye-view, as spiritual, mass-less, non-material, all time and space is collapsed.

B. That means that God is outside the bounds of time and space; namely eternal.

And, as such, all that appears to be happening to us at the **speed of life**, has already been completed in the mind of God. This means God does know exactly what will happen to us.

From God's perspective, this universe has already lived out its life.

IV. God has already seen what will happen.

- A. It's not that God is determining it; but our lives, the life of the cosmos, is already complete in God's eyes.
 - B. It's like a CD that already been burned and God knows the whole CD, but we only know it as it unfolds, note by note.
- V. If I've totally, lost you at this point, well, reboot and join us again, because this has all been to emphasize the point that worrying about tomorrow is a pretty useless endeavor.
- A. It's a useless endeavor because no matter how far out our horizon is, we still have no certainty of what's going to happen in even the next second.
 - B. And on top of that, there's a good chance that God does know and has this all under control and has your redemption all worked out even before you mess up.
- VI. Now I was inspired for this sermon, by the Spirit of course, but also by some of events of this past month that have so incredibly reinforced the idea that worrying about tomorrow is so pointless;

because we just really have no idea what will happen tomorrow. Even with an extended horizon so we can see more of what's up ahead; we have so little idea of what's coming, much less any control of it.

A. Just a few examples from the past weeks.

1. Who among you would have guessed a month ago that Google, Facebook, and Twitter would be the catalyst for revolution in the Middle East.
 - a) Tunisia
 - b) Egypt
 - c) Bahrain, Lybia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan,
 - d) Wisconsin – Op, that's mid-west.
2. We have seen a revolution made possible by the modern day equivalent of the invention of the printing press and the nailing of the 95 Theses on the Wittenberg door by Martin Luther, that gave rise to the Protestant Revolution that changed the entire Western world.
3. Except that these tools are working thousands of times faster and accelerating the speed of revolution beyond the capabilities of even the best intelligence services in the world.

4. What happens tomorrow or maybe in the next few seconds in any one of those volatile places can totally change our future.

B. Then there was Watson – the Jeopardy playing computer.

1. So some of you must have watched it; can anyone tell me who won?
2. You see, the control by our computer overlords has already begun, as we answered “Who” rather than “What.”
3. Yes, Watson definitely put humans in their place.

C. And there was the article in Time magazine last week about the Singularity.

1. You see computers are getting faster, faster. Yeah, I said that right. Computers are getting faster ---- faster; and in a short while they will be smarter than humans.
2. As Time Magazine reported:
It's impossible to predict the behavior of these smarter-than-human intelligences with which (with whom?) we might one day share the planet, because if you could, you'd be as smart as they would be.
But there are a lot of theories about it.
Maybe we'll merge with them to become super-

intelligent cyborgs, using computers to extend our intellectual abilities the same way that cars and planes extend our physical abilities.

Maybe the artificial intelligences will help us treat the effects of old age and prolong our life spans indefinitely.

Maybe we'll scan our consciousnesses into computers and live **inside them** as software, forever, virtually.

Maybe the computers will turn on humanity and annihilate us. (Like in Gov. Schwarzenegger's *Terminator* movies.)

The one thing all these theories have in common is the transformation of our species into something that is no longer recognizable as such to humanity circa 2011.

This transformation has a name: the Singularity.

3. This isn't science fiction any more than a weather forecast is science fiction.

It's what those in the know are expecting.

And will this happen in a hundred years?

No – the conservative date for it, meaning it may happen sooner – is 2045 – 34 years from now.

4. The possibilities for better or worse are mind blowing.

- D. **How many of us are already running on information overload and are struggling just to figure out how to use our phones?**
The phones maybe smart, but they just make

us feel dumber.

We should have known this was coming when we couldn't get the VCR's to stop flashing 12:00.

- E. The ethical and moral questions that will arise in this strange new world we are quickly entering -- haven't even begun to be addressed.
- F. The spiritual and faith crises that will explode on the scene -- theologians haven't even begun to address.

VII. A bit closer is Dec. 21, 2012.

1. That's the date on the Mayan Calendar that some folks say is really important.
2. Some say that it marks the day that the earth or humanity will come to an end.
3. Others, including Mayan religious teachers say that it marks the end of the current age, but the also the beginning of the new age.
4. Now I don't know if that date is really gonna be any more significant than any other date in the coming year, but I do sense that we clearly are moving into a new age.

VIII. If you're feeling a bit out of control at this point, well that's probably good; it means you're facing reality.

But for those of us who may be feeling an accompanying increase in anxiety from that sense of being out of control; let's return to where we started.

That is Jesus telling us:

Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear.

Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not of more value than they?

And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?

And why do you worry about clothing?

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will she not much more clothe

you—you of little faith?
Therefore do not worry, saying,
'What will we eat?' or
'What will we drink?' or
'What will we wear?'

For it is the unfaithful who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

But strive first for the kingdom of God and her righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

"So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.

Today's trouble is enough for today."

IX. Yes, for sanities sake, recognize that ultimately you are out of control. But also recognize, God's got your back.

It might be good for us to end this sermon joining together in the prayer written by the UCC theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr; the prayer known as the Serenity Prayer – please join me.

**God, give us grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,**

**Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.**

**Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things
right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this
life,
And supremely happy with You forever in
the next.**

Amen.