

BOAST NOT THYSELF OF TOMORROW

PROVERBS 27:1; JAMES 4:13-16

Text: Proverbs 27:1

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¹ Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Introduction:

May I say as we begin to consider this truth “Boast not thyself of tomorrow,” that it is an extremely foolish to boast at all.

Boasting never makes a man any greater in the esteem of others, nor does it improve his bodily or spiritual condition. Let man brag as he will, he is none the greater.

To-morrow is a thing that we have not yet obtained, and therefore, not only if we had it would it be foolish to boast of it, but because we have it not, and may never have it, it becomes extremely foolish to glory in it.

Remember tomorrows come from God and we have no right to glory in them.

James states it like this:

James 4:13-16

¹³ Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: ¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. ¹⁵ For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. ¹⁶ But now ye rejoyce in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

James is addressing those who plan their lives without any thought or regard for the will or work of God.

There are many today who are living their life as a practical atheist. What I mean by that while they may profess a belief in God they live their life as if He doesn't exist.

There is nothing wrong with making plans, setting goals, and thinking about the future.

The problem comes when you fill in the date book of your life without ever considering the fact that God alone knows the future, and He alone knows what is best for you.

There was a time when Christians would sign letters and correspondence with the initials "D.V." The Methodists were known to put the same letters on posters and flyers advertising their events.

What does “D.V.” mean? It is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase, “Deo Volente”, which simply means “God Willing”. No doubt, the practice of using that phrase arose from the passage of Scripture before us.

I was reading recently some statements about time that I thought were very interesting.

- A day is a span of time no one is wealthy enough to waste.
- A day is a miniature eternity.
- The day will happen whether or not you get up.
- He who provides for this life, but takes not care for eternity is wise for a moment but a fool for eternity.

Notice with me some truths regarding this principle:

1. THE FOLLY OF COUNTING ON THE FUTURE (VS. 13)

James 4:13

¹³ Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

Illustration:

A doctor called one of his patients into his office to deliver some very important news. "I have received the results of your tests and I have some bad news and some good news", said the doctor. The patient was quiet for a moment, sensing the severity of the announcement. "Let me have the good news first, doc", said the patient. The doctor took a deep breath and said, "You only have 24 hours to live." "Oh my goodness", shouted the patient, "If that's the good news what could the bad news possibly be?" The doctor replied, "I was supposed to tell you yesterday."

This is addressed to the wealthy merchants who traveled all over the ancient world, buying and selling in the major trade centers of that day. Because of the extensive shipping involved, it could easily take a year or more to set up a business. Their sin was not that they engaged in business, but that they were counting on the future, without any recognition of the God who controls the future.

They had most figured out:

- They had the "when" figured out – Today or Tomorrow
- They had the "where" figured out – A City

- They had the “time” figured out – A Year
- They had the “what” figured out – Buy and sell
- They had the “why” figured out – Get gain

But in all their planning, they forgot the most important – the “Who.”

God was nowhere in their plans. Like the rich farmer in the parable that Jesus told, who wanted to tear down his barns so he could build bigger ones, these businessmen were not bringing God into the details of their life.

Quote:

Planning is great, but planning without prayer is presumptuous.

Psalm 90:10

¹⁰The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

2. THE FRAILTY OF LIFE (VS. 14)

James 4:14

¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

These individuals made no allowance for unforeseen circumstances because they mistakenly thought they were going to be around forever.

None of us know what will happen in the future.

There are two important reasons why we should never presume upon the future:

A. Life is unpredictable

We don't even know what will happen tonight, much less next week or next year. The truth is that no one can predict the future.

I attended a funeral yesterday of a 20 yr. old young man who had plans on being on vacation this week. His parents went in to wake him Saturday prepared to leave for a week at the beach and found him dead in his bed.

Someone has said in the middle of "LIFE" is the word "IF"

Life at best is “IF’Y”

Proverbs 27:1

¹ Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

B. Life is unmeasurable

Our life is like a vapor that appears for a little while and then it vanishes away.

Our life in the Bible is compared to:

- The Wind

Job 7:7

⁷ O remember that my life *is* wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

- A Shadow

1 Chronicles 29:15

¹⁵ For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding.

- The Width of a Hand

Psalms 39:5

⁵ Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

Note what the Psalmist said:

Psalm 90:12

¹² So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

3. THE FAITH NEEDED TODAY FOR TOMORROW (VS. 15-16)

There are many who try to control today in order to ensure their tomorrow.

We need to realize that we are not in total control of our lives – God is. No amount of money, influence, power or planning can guarantee tomorrow. Only God can grant us another sunrise or another breath.

Illustration:

Young man going to the live stock sale to sale a mule meeting a man who ask where he was heading with that mule.

James is challenging us here to demonstrate an attitude of submission to God, to acknowledge that all of our life is to be lived out in recognition of the fact that God is in charge of everything.

He commands the future and He runs my life.

We have considered: The Folly to Count on the Future, The Frailty of Life, and The Faith Needed Today for Tomorrow, lastly notice:

4. THE FERVENCY OF TODAY'S OBEDIENCE (VS. 17)

James 4:17

¹⁷Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

Did you know that you can sin by doing nothing?

Someone has said:

Procrastination is my sin,
It brings me nothing but sorrow,
I know that I should stop it,
So I will but wait until tomorrow.

Have you noticed...when you procrastinate doing the right thing; you end up doing the wrong thing. Knowing what should be done obligates a person to do it.

Remember delayed obedience is disobedience

Illustration:

Every parent knows that delayed obedience is really disobedience. If you tell your child to wash the dishes

and they say, “Sure dad, we’ll do it in two days,” that’s not obedience. That’s disobedience.

Some need to be baptized. Some need to put the Lord first in your finances. Some need to love their kids more. Others need to start serving others by using the spiritual gifts God has given you.

Whatever your next step of spiritual growth is, do it now! Don’t put it off. No one has the promise of tomorrow. All we have is the moment.

Close:

May we not boast especially of that which we are not guaranteed to have.

Proverbs 27:1

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Psalms 90:12

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