

## WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD ?

### Int.

1. Aim: To show that what the future holds is decided by the things we do today.
2. II Tim. 4:6-8 - Paul was thinking about the future
3. When we think about the future we sometimes get a little scared
  - a. Both a thrilling and a threatening age
  - b. Thrilling because of the many new discoveries - space travel, computers, information explosion
  - c. Threatening - atomic bombs, rebellions, war, famine
4. We do not know what the future holds, but we do know that our own future is in one sense in our own hands.
  - a. Acts 2:40 "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."
  - b. III. Man drowning. Another man throws him a rope and pulls him to safety. We say that the second man saved him, but in one sense he saved himself by taking the rope.
  - c. Our future will be what we make it, nothing more.
  - d. "Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." Acts 1:25
    - i. Where Judas went after death was to his own place
    - ii. Who determined that place? Judas determined it by the life he lived.
  - e. We determine today the place we shall occupy tomorrow.
  - f. Each man determines his own future

## 5. Your Today Holds your future

- a. Past, present, and future tied closely together. No present if there were no past, or no future if there were no present.
- b. Can't change our past, but we can change our future by changing our present.
- c. Tomorrow will bear the fruit from the seed planted today.
- d. If a man takes good care of his present his future will take good care of itself!

## 6. TODAY HOLDS YOUR FUTURE

### Discussion

#### **I. TODAY'S TRAINING**

##### A. Training is important

1. Christ trained his apostles
2. Pro. 24:27 "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field: and afterwards build thine house."
3. Pro. 27:18 "Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof."

##### B. Training might be compared to building a foundation

1. Lk. 6:48 "...built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock."
  - a. What kind of foundation are you laying?
  - b. Some build on the snow and then cry when it melts
2. I Cor. 3:10 "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

##### C. Today's training will determine your tomorrow

1. You can chart your own course - You can train, educate yourself on the word of God, so that your future will have hope and promise.
2. To end up right you must start out right.
3. Your training can put something into your future.

## **II. TODAY'S OUTLOOK HOLDS THE FUTURE**

- A. We will never rise any higher than our thinking
1. Pro. 23:7 "For as he thinketh in his heart so is he."
  2. Mt. 12:35 "A good man out of the treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things."
  3. Our position tomorrow will be determined by our disposition today!
- B. Outlook's vary according to the person
1. Ill. Negro boy fell into a barrel of molasses. Prayed, "O Lord, make my tongue big enough for the occasion."
  2. Some are chronic pessimists - "I feel good today, but I always feel my worst when I feel my best, for I get to thinking about how bad I'm going to feel, when I really get to feeling bad again."
- C. Have a good outlook and learn to make the best of any situation.
1. Phil. 4:11 "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content ."
    - a. He was not born with this ability to be content
    - b. He trained himself to have the right outlook about all matters  2. We can handle any situation, no matter how difficult, if we have the outlook that God is our helper
    - a. Rom. 8:28 all things work together for our good
    - b. Rom. 8:37 "more than conquerors" with Christ
    - c. "Lord, Help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that You and I together can't handle."

3. III. A boy was in an airplane going from New York to L.A. and they had to make an emergency landing. Everybody was scared except this one boy. Someone asked him how he could be so calm. He answered, "Because my daddy is the captain of this plane, and he knows just how to land it safely."
4. Christ is the "captain of our salvation" (Heb. 2:10) and with this outlook we have no fear of the future.

### **III. TODAY'S DEDICATION HOLDS THE FUTURE**

- A. All else is vain without dedication, but with dedication there is hope for your future
  1. Rom. 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
  2. Zeal in living the Christian life will make a difference
- B. VOLUNTEERS - an I II.
  1. I NEVER VOLUNTEER - I am not so gullible as to volunteer for anything in the church work. I never volunteer because I do not want to give my time, my energy or effort. This gives me more time to do as I please. There are plenty of others to do the work, why should I volunteer. A few times I have been asked to do things. I am not asked any more. I took care of that. I simply did not do it or sometimes I only half-way did it.

2. I DO VOLUNTEER - I often volunteer for things I have the ability to do. I have been well paid but not in money. I have had the satisfaction of knowing I am doing something for My Lord's cause. I have found the joy of service. I know the thrill of helping others. I have had fellowship with the most zealous, active and consecrated members of the Church. Contentment is mine for I am occupied with that which is good. I have also learned that I grow spiritually and by the use of my talent, God will give me increase. I volunteer because in that Great Day I will be judged by my work and I want good works.

C. There is no substitute for dedication

1. With the right kind of dedication life ends in a mighty conclusion
2. Without it life results in a messy confusion.
3. Today's dedication holds the future.

#### **IV. TODAY'S ASPIRATION HOLDS THE FUTURE**

A. Aspiration

1. Purpose, ideal - goals, dreams, desires
2. A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder.

B. People in the Bible who were successful had aspirations

1. Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself - Dan. 1:8
2. Barnabas exhorted the disciples to purpose in their souls that they would cleave to the Lord. Acts 11:23 -- Cleave = keep on remaining loyal
3. Paul said "This one thing I do...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13,14

C. Aspirations are the blueprints of your life

1. If the blueprint is correct and it is followed then your life will take shape in the future
2. Nehemiah said "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Neh. 6:3

Notice 3 things about this statement:

- (1) He knew a great work when he saw it. DO YOU?
- (2) He participated in that great work. ARE YOU?
- (3) This work had priority over all other works. WHAT DO YOU PUT FIRST?

3. "The men who try to do something and fail are infinitely better than those who try to do nothing and succeed." - Lloyd Jones

D. Your future is determined by your aspirations of today.

E. No one can ever rise above that at which he aims !

**V. TODAY'S YIELDING HOLDS THE FUTURE**

A. Life is made up of the sum total of the things to which you yield

1. There is no such thing as indecision - when one fails to decide, he has already decided - Matt. 12:30
2. Where you will be tomorrow depends upon what you yield to today.

B. Rom. 6:16 "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

1. Yield = means to place at disposal, serve, assist

2. Don't yield to sin:

- a. Lust - for lusts war against the soul - I Pet. 2:11 "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;"
- b. Crowd - leads away from Christ - Mt. 7:13,14

3. But yield to righteousness

- a. Moses did - Heb. 11:24-26 "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward."
- b. Moses never regretted the cause to which he yielded his life
- c. Will You?

C. "Choose you this day whom you will serve" Joshua 24:14,15

- 1. Be sure you make a wise choice, or your future will be vain
- 2. Isaiah asked people to "refuse the evil, and choose the good." Isa. 7:15
- 3. You'll have a better future if you yield to righteousness TODAY.

**CONCLUSION**

- 1. What does the future hold? We don't know?
- 2. Who holds your future? You do.
- 3. Today: Holds your tomorrow
- 4. Your future could be changed by a decision you make today: Obey the gospel - Come back

<p><b>T</b>rainig - Study the Bible  <b>O</b>utlook - optimistic  <b>D</b>edication - hard worker  <b>A</b>spiration - goals</p>
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