

FALSE BELIEFS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Int.

1. Aim: To show that we must emphasize the spiritual in this life on earth.
2. James 4:13 - James 5:6
3. When you hear the word "future" what comes into your mind?
 - a. New car, beautiful home, family - farm
 - b. Do you think about life on earth - death judgement -Heaven or hell
 - c. Heb. 9:27
 - d. Mt. 25:46
4. Too many think falsely about the future and therefore are not prepared.
5. James discusses 4 false beliefs of the future.

Discussion

- I. **"I CAN PLAN MY FUTURE WITHOUT GOD'S HELP"** James. 4: 13-16
 - A. Boasting of a definite future on the earth is evil
 1. "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:" v. 13
 2. It denies God's power and will
 - a. Jews were restless and nomadic - skill in buying, selling and trading as they traveled - prone to plan future without God.
 - b. This was an imaginary band of travelers saying when we get ready, we'll go to a certain city and sell and trade and make a profit.
 - c. Was not sinful to plan ahead but to plan without regard to God was sinful
 - d. They assumed the whole matter was in their own hands

3. Application - this is common to all of us
 - a. We assume we will be here tomorrow and we will be doing what we want to do
 - b. We feel that death is always distant to us
 - (1) In youth we think it is a long way off
 - (2) In middle age we act as if we have plenty of time in the future
 - (3) Aged - see those older and say old age is 10 or 15 years older than I
 - c. We are not assured that we'll be living the next minute, much less the next day, or week or year

B. V. 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."

1. They were making plans for a year of tomorrows
2. They said they would be alive in a certain city pursuing a profitable business.
3. Acted as if the future were in their own hands. What is your life ? A vapor
 - a. Before making plans for the future consider what kind of life you have. Is it permanent?
 - b. It is as a vapor - mist - here for a little while and then vanisheth away
 - c. Appear and then disappears — uncertain
4. Job 7:6-10 "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. 7 ¶ O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good. 8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not. 9. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. 10 He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."

- C. V. 15 "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."
1. If the Lord will - we will live and do this or that - Refers to every act we do
 2. Attitude - does not mean we must say if it's God's will continually
 3. Understand that God's will must take precedence over our own will
 4. Paul frequently mentioned "If the Lord Will " "If the Lord Permit " 1 Cor. 4:19, 1 Cor. 16:7 - Now I will come to you shortly...but I trust to tarry a while with you.
 5. Not just a phrase but a sentiment - that governs our purposes and plans
 6. Heb. 6:3 "And this will we do, if God permit."
 7. When we have this attitude toward all things we undertake we can be content.
 - a. If they are failures then we can be content knowing that it was not God's will to do it. Nothing can be done without his permission
 - b. Every purpose will succeed when he favors it, if we do our part properly
 8. Pro. 3:5-6 "Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and lean upon thine own understanding; in all ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths."
- D. V. 16 "But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil."
1. Disposition to ignore God in life's affairs
 2. Sought to leave Impression on others that they did not need God.
 3. Assumed man was self-sufficient
 4. This glorying or boasting is not good.
 5. We must always remember that God is the superintendent of the universe!
 6. This attitude "I can plan my future without God's help is evil because it forgets life's uncertainties.
- E. Prov. 27:1 "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

II. **"MY FAILURE TO LIVE UP TO WHAT I KNOW WILL BE EXCUSED."** Jas .4:17

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

A. The Jews of Paul's day reasoned falsely on this matter. Rm. 2:1-11

1. God will judge every man by his works. Rom. 2:6 "Who will render to every man according to his deeds."

2. God does not pick favorites Rom. 2:11 "For there is no respect of persons with God."

a. Money, or a lack of it, does not excuse us from obeying God.

b. Education, or lack of it, is no excuse for falling to do God's Will

B. We must know and do God's will to please him.

1. Jas. 4:17 - teaches that it is sinful to know and not perform

2. Many in the church today know but do not perform

a. Overlook the fact that there are sins of omission as well as commission

b. Careful to observe the "Thou shalt not's",

c. But little concerned with the "Thou Shalt's"

d. Assume they are good because they are not bad

3. Barren fig tree - Mt. 21:19 "And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away."

a. It was not a bad tree - no evil growth, not poisonous

b. It was not harmful

c. When Jesus found no fruit on it he pronounced a curse upon it and it withered,

4. Some on the judgment will argue with the Lord that they should go to heaven because they have done nothing bad. Mt. 25:42,43
5. Every judgment parable reveals that punishment was given not because of something bad but for something good he did not do.
 - a. One talent man was wicked - Matt. 25:26
 - b. We define wickedness as doing bad
 - c. God defines wickedness as failing to do good
- C. James 4:17 "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
- D. To know what is right and not do it, aggravates and increases our guilt.

III. "IF I GET ENOUGH OF THIS WORLD'S GOODS I SHALL BE SECURE."

Jas.5:1-3 NKJV "Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days."

- A. Their life was being destroyed
 1. They felt that these material goods were all that they needed to be secure.
 2. James says that miseries are coming upon them;
 - a. Miseries = hardships & sufferings
 - b. Their eternal destiny would bring great distress

B. Material goods are not permanent.

1. Riches corrupted
 - a. Earthly possessions
 - b. Rotten - they are perishable
2. Garments moth-eaten - eventually be destroyed
3. Gold and silver rusted
4. Shall eat your flesh as fire.
 - a. All riches that are hoarded will eventually be destroyed
 - b. Likewise punishment will come to those who are miserly and greedy with possessions.

C. Application

1. This does not mean that it is sinful to be rich
 - a. Some rich men are good Christians and a blessing to the church
 - b. But those who are rich must not feel secure in their riches and I keep them all for themselves. - Stock Market, Banks, Land = these are not secure
2. Likewise, it does not follow that a person is good because he is in poverty.
 - a. Some of the most wicked persons on the earth are poverty stricken.
 - b. No virtue to be poor
 - c. Being a beggar did not guarantee Lazarus an entrance into Abraham's bosom.
3. What determines our salvation is the condition of our soul not our financial condition.
4. But James here is warning those who are rich that this will not give them security.
5. 1 Tim. 6:6-10

IV. **"HOW I GET RICHES IS NOBODY'S BUSINESS"** - Jas. 5:4-6 "Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter 6. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.."

- A. When men reject God they deny any standard of right or wrong
 - 1. Men become their own gods.
 - 2. Situation ethics - the situation becomes the factor to decide what is right or wrong.
- B. There is a law of sowing and reaping. Gal. 6:7-8
- C. All men should practice the Golden rule - Mt. 7:12
 - 1. James. 5:4-6 describes employers who kept the money of their workers.
 - 2. God is keeping a record of these things and will guarantee justice in the end.
- D. How we get what we get is God's business and we must be honest in how we obtain all our possessions.

CONCLUSION

- 1. We can have false beliefs about the Future:
 - a. I can plan my future without God's Help
 - b. My failure to live up to what I know will be excused
 - c. If I get enough of this world's goods I shall be secure
 - d. How I get riches is nobody's business

2. But true beliefs about the future include:
 - a. Jesus says. Matt. 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - b. God's people are to set their mind on heaven. Col. 3:2 "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
 3. This is the correct way to look into the future.
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SOURCES

1. God's Good Gifts - Sermon Outlines from James by Thomas H. Holland
 2. Commentary on James by Guy N. Woods
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