

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

IF THE LORD WILLS

James 4:13-15 “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit” — yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.”

Jesus taught, “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” (Matthew 6:34) St. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:5-7, “The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Many engage in long range planning. It is as if in doing so they believe that they can control their future. Yet, the Bible focuses our attention only on today such as in Psalm 118:24, “This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.” When God provided Israel in the wilderness with daily manna, He warned them not to gather more than they needed for the day they gathered it. If they gathered more than a day’s supply, it spoiled. He wanted them to realize that it was He who promised to be their God and they would be His people. For forty years he fed, clothed and protected them one day at a time.

God’s promise to Israel is also His promise to you. “. . .thus says the LORD, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.” (Isaiah 43:1) Jesus, your Good Shepherd “calls you by name and leads you. . .”(John 10:3) He says to you in John 10:10, “I came that they (you) may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Your future is secure, not because of your long-range planning. It is secure because God sent His Son into the world to purchase and win you back to Him. Through Jesus you are a member of God’s family. God’s will is not that you accumulate all the world has, but that you will live with Him forever in eternity through the life, death and resurrection of His Son Jesus.

Prayer: Into Your hands, O Lord, I commit my body, mind, soul and spirit through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord and Savior. Amen.

Thine forever, God of love! Hear us from Thy throne above;
Thine forever may we be Here and in eternity!

Tine forever! Oh, how blest Thy who find in Thee their rest!
Savior, guardian, heav'nly friend, O defend us to the end!

Tine forever, Lord of Life! Shield us through our earthly strife.
Thou, the life, the truth, the way, Guide us to the realms of day.

Thine forever! Shepherd, keep These Thy frail and trembling sheep;
Safe alone beneath Thy care, Let us all Thy goodness share.

Thine forever! Thou our guide, All our wants by Thee supplied,
All our sins by Thee forgiv'n; Lead us, Lord, from earth to heav'n.
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