
Words of Truth

Concerning Tomorrow

By: Brian A. Yeager

Learning from the Scriptures requires us to be able to reason (Acts 17:1-3). In many ways, the ability to reason properly ties to a person's spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:5-14). The Scriptures are not always easy to understand and that often leads the unlearned to twist those Scriptures to their own destruction (II Peter 3:15-18). Our subject of study in this article is one that can be very confusing. When you study the Bible concerning thinking about the next day of your life you will find that there is plenty to confuse ourselves with.

Consider this: *“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. **Take therefore no thought for the morrow:** for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof”* (Matthew 6:25-34).

If you read the above context, you can err by taking a literal approach to it. If you take NO THOUGHT for tomorrow, you would err in many ways. You would not properly provide for yourself and/or your family (I Timothy 5:8). You would not properly look to the work of the church. Think about elders for example, isn't the training of an elder all about reaching a future point in this lifetime (Titus 1:5-9)? The church in Corinth was instructed to take up a collection for a future time to help needy saints (I Corinthians 16:1-4). Later, they were instructed to look to the future for men to come and take those funds to help poor saints (II Corinthians 8:1-9:14). We could go on and on, but you can see that there has to be much thought for tomorrow to fulfill many of God's instructions. What is missed is that the context of Matthew 6:25-34 starts earlier than I quoted and the point is made therein.

If you start studying one verse prior to what I quoted above this is what you find: *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matthew 6:24). With that verse, you can see that the contextual instruction is concerning not worrying about physical

means in our lives to the destruction of our spiritual priorities. In other words, don't worry about money. Serve God faithfully and you'll have what you need (Psalms 37:25). Serving God faithfully means all other things will line up properly. This even includes your secular work (Romans 12:11). Therefore, don't stress over what you'll eat or wear tomorrow. If all else fails, your brethren will be there to aid because of God's commands (Romans 12:13). Now, can you see how easily a contextual point can be missed because of one statement in that context? Consider this with other like instructions concerning tomorrow.

A Mistaken Context About Tomorrow

I have seen the following text mistaken many times in many ways. Consider what is said: *“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: 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. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil”* (James 4:13-16). All that is meant in this context is easily explained in another verse. Consider: *“**Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth**”* (Proverbs 27:1).

I have seen people think that James 4:13-16 means that the Lord must “will” something for it to happen. That is false. Time and chance happens to us all (Ecclesiastes 9:11). What God does control is whether or not the planet earth will physically exist tomorrow (Matthew 24:35-36 and II Peter 3:10). What God wants us to do is live, in a non-boastful manner, as though each day could be the last day we are living in this world. The erring Christians James was writing to were acting like they controlled life in general. They erringly were boastful of tomorrow.

The inspired words that we read from the pen of James were not condemning having future plans. Other Scriptures prove we can plan for things to come (Romans 15:25-28, I Timothy 3:14, II Timothy 4:9, and III John 1:13-14). In future planning though, we must not be boastful.

Another misconception is that we must plan something with the statement, “if the Lord will” included in that plan. That is not true (the examples in the previous paragraph prove that). Understand something, Paul made statements such as, “if the Lord will...” at times when he made future plans (Acts 18:21 and I Corinthians 4:19). He didn't always say that. One thing we must realize about Paul stating that is, he literally had plans altered by God (Acts 16:1-10). Thus, Paul literally did things by the direct will of God (Romans 15:32). That is not the case with any of us today. None of us are Apostles being directly guided by the Holy Spirit (i.e. Acts 10:1-21).

Conclusion

Concerning tomorrow, it may or may not come. Any of us could die (Hebrews 9:27) or the Lord could end the earth (II Peter 3:10-14). However, to live faithful lives, we do have to consider what we are doing tomorrow if it does come. We have to plan on things such as proper spiritual growth (I Peter 2:1-2), working (II Thessalonians 3:10), being living examples to others (Titus 2:1-8), and many more things. Thus, look to tomorrow, but keep in mind it is not promised!

Milkshakes

According To The Scriptures, What Is Unity?

By: Brian A. Yeager

I cannot count how many times I have heard erring members of the church of Christ say things such as: “we will just have to agree to disagree” or “we cannot all see things the same way”. The unity we are commanded to have (Ephesians 4:1-6) is defined as: “oneness, i.e. (figuratively) unanimity; agreement” (Strong’s # 1775). Two cannot walk together unless there is agreement (Amos 3:3).

God expects this: *“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment”* (I Corinthians 1:10). There is nothing unclear about what you just read. By the authority of Christ (Colossians 3:17), we are to have NO divisions among us (I Corinthians 12:25). That does mean we are to be unified (Psalms 133:1).

God commands us all to speak the same thing (Romans 15:5-6 and Ephesians 4:25). God commands us all to have the same mindset (Romans 12:16 and Philippians 2:1-4). God expects all Christians to have the same judgment (John 7:24). God expects us to be perfectly joined together in these things (II Corinthians 13:11). If any of us choose not to be united in speech, mindset, judgment, etc.; God expects us to mark and avoid that individual (Romans 16:17) if they do not adhere to multiple admonitions to change (Titus 3:9-11).

Jesus prayed to our Father in Heaven before His arrest. In that prayer, He said this: *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me”* (John 17:20-23). Our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven are perfectly united because Jesus does the will of the Father without wavering (John 8:28-29). Our being one as the Father, Son, and the Spirit are one (I John 5:7); comes down to the same way Jesus is one with our Father. Jesus does the Father’s will (John 5:30).

We have a great opportunity to aid in fulfilling the prayer of Jesus. We can choose to be unified as Jesus and our Father are. We can choose to serve God with a singular mindset in accordance with His will (Philippians 1:27). Yet, many have failed because they think it is not possible. Many have failed because they don’t know how to arrive at and maintain perfect unity. If we adhere to God’s plan, we will not fail in being unified.

When Paul and Timothy wrote the saints in Philippi, this statement was made: *“Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing”* (Philippians 3:16). By walking according to the same standard, without wavering (Hebrews 10:23), we will be perfectly united. This is how we can have and maintain perfect unity. Walking by the same rule is, according to the Scriptures, unity!