

Live For Today

Lately I have been mulling over yesterday, today and tomorrow. As I have meditated in the Scriptures about this, it has become clear to me that God wants me to live in today. I may have some memories about yesterday, and I may even have some plans about tomorrow, but even these thoughts are tempered in the Scriptures.

I like the thinking of Paul, the apostle, on *yesterday*, “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead ...” (Philippians 3:13-15) The word that Paul uses, which is translated “forgetting,” can also be translated “to neglect.” I made a few comments about this in my last sermon, but I think it begs to be touched on one more time.

If we could learn to neglect our yesterday we would position ourselves to be able to live in the peace and joy which God intends for His children. Yesterday’s memories, regrets, mistakes and decisions are past now and they deserve nothing but neglect. Oh, I hope we have all learned from yesterday, and I hope that yesterday has made us better, more God honoring people today. Beyond that, yesterday is good for nothing but to be neglected. There are not a lot of things we are encouraged to neglect in our day, but yesterday is one of them. As a matter of fact, you should neglect only what you want to hurt, damage or lose. Neglect is an underrated power in our lives. Normally, it is a power which is used in a negative context, but here neglect is freeing.

Toby Keith sings a song called, “Yesterday’s Rain.” Here are some of the lyrics to his song:

*I don't care what the future holds
And don't care about what you've been told
Don't want to hear what the weatherman has to say
'Cause I'm standing knee deep in yesterday's rain*

I have the real potential to stand knee deep in yesterday’s rain, do you? It really does not take much for me to walk out into yesterday’s rain and become saturated in bad memories, mistakes I have made and regrets, but that is just not what my Daddy in heaven wants me to do.

He also does not want me to worry about tomorrow. God does not want His kids to fret about what could be or what will be in the morrow. Do you remember that Jesus taught us to pray about today’s needs only? “Give us this day our daily bread ...” (Matthew 6:11) I find it very interesting that Jesus does not necessarily teach us to expand our prayer requests into tomorrow.

When God led the Israelites out of Egypt He supplied them with their needs each day. As a matter of fact, when He rained down bread from the heavens for them, He specifically instructed them to only gather enough for the day. “Then the LORD said to Moses, Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.” (Exodus

16:4) If you remember, some of the people disobeyed this (probably worried about tomorrow!) and kept some extra for themselves. The result? It putrefied on them.

When it comes to worrying about tomorrow, Jesus had this to say, “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) Isn’t that so true? There is enough on my plate today to occupy my mind, so just keep it to today and do not even think about tomorrow. As we like to say today, “don’t go there.”

This is another area that seems to trap me too often. My mind wants to race into tomorrow and the next day after that, and before I know it, I am imagining myself bagging groceries at Publix in my retirement. Is this really what God wants me dwelling on?

Here is a thought that is becoming quite freeing for me these days: God wants to be my God for today. I know He was with me yesterday and I know He will be there tomorrow, but as for my walking with Him -- it is just about today. I believe that is just how He wants me to be. “Live in the now,” is the cry of so many new age people. Have you heard that said before? God longs for His children to “live in the now.” Living in the now has nothing to do with new age philosophy; it has everything to do with walking with Jesus the way He wants.

Why don’t you put it in your lap for a moment, yesterday, tomorrow or today -- what will it be? Or maybe a better question would be, yesterday, tomorrow or today -- what will it take?

I Love You,

Tony

