Facing The Future

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday January 5th, 2020

Text: Js. 4:13-17

### Intro

1. As one year fades into the archives of history, many people turn their attention on the New Year.
2. Many will make resolutions – most or all won’t be kept.
   1. Resolution: To declare one’s opinion, intent or purpose; determination (Webster’s)
3. While many resolutions are silly or in jest, there are resolutions that saints must keep if we are to spend eternity with God! (II Cor. 13:5)
4. Many people seem to live in regret of the past, emptiness of the present, and fear of the future.
   1. Jn. 10:10: Jesus came to give man life abundantly.
   2. To have a happy life we must be able to face the future with confidence.
5. James 4:13-17:
   1. Because of the uncertainty of the future, God must be in our plans since He holds the future in His hands.
6. To face the future confidently, we must resolve to Hear ***and*** Obey God’s Word!

#### Uncertainty of the Future

* 1. Physical Fact:
     1. The future of our lives is uncertain.
        1. Js. 4:13-16: It is because of this fact that one must have God in the plans for the future – our lives are short, like vapors.
        2. Prov. 27:1: The uncertainty of tomorrow is we don’t know what will happen!
        3. We can plan (as we all often do) but can’t know!
        4. Life on earth is so brief (sometimes it feels long), and people of all ages can die unexpectedly (All their “planning” stopped short)!
     2. This fact causes people to take precautions for their families & possessions:
        1. Life, house & car insurance; insurance in general is for the unknown!
        2. Men make provisions and wills for their heirs, etc.
  2. Spiritual Fact:
     1. We don’t know when the Lord will come – I Thess. 5:1-3
     2. As people take precautions in the physical with their health, possessions, and family, so men ought to take precaution with their souls!
        1. Mk. 8:36-37: Jesus made the point that one’s soul is the most precious of one’s belongings – can’t afford to lose it!
     3. I Thess. 5:4-6: Christians are to be “alert and sober” so as to not be overtaken “like a thief.”
  3. Concern for the uncertainty of the future should cause us to strive to be pleasing to God!

#### Certainty of the Future

* 1. Physical Fact:
     1. “Two certainties of life: Death & Taxes!”
        1. Life is brief – Job 14:1-2; Js. 4:14
        2. Life is spent working to pay taxes – Lk. 20:22-25; Rom. 13:6-7
     2. Life on earth is temporary:
        1. We are pilgrims on earth – I Pet. 2:11 *(“Aliens & strangers”)*
        2. Death is inevitable – Heb. 9:27
     3. No matter how great a person is, nor how lowly, how rich or poor, educated or illiterate, death overtakes them all!
     4. Though uncertain the timing, the end result of physical death awaits all men.
  2. Spiritual Fact:
     1. Two eternal destinies – Mt. 25:31-34, 41, 46
        1. Eternal punishment (Hell) & Eternal life (Heaven).
     2. Eternal punishment for:
        1. The wicked that do not know God and those who have not obeyed the gospel – II Thess. 1:7-9; Rom. 2:8
        2. Those who have claimed to know God but acted outside the authority of Christ, thus proving to be wicked themselves – Mt. 7:21-23
        3. Those with unrepentant hearts – Rom. 2:5
     3. Eternal life for:
        1. Those who have obeyed the gospel – Mk. 16:16; Heb. 5:9
        2. Those who seek to do good (by God’s standards) – Rom. 2:7, 10
        3. Those who remain faithful till death – Rev. 2:10
  3. Paul was certain of his future destination – II Tim. 4:6-8
     1. Also certain of the future destinations of “all who have loved His appearing.”
     2. ***Are you one of those who has loved His appearing?***
  4. When the certainty of physical life catches up with us, we will take but one thing out with us into the spiritual: the character of our soul (with all its deeds)!

#### Preparation For Facing the Future

* 1. Knowing God’s word is essential!
     1. Jn. 12:48: Jesus said His word would judge mankind – important to know it! (Ps. 119:105: God’s word is a lamp to our feet!)
     2. Rom. 10:1-3: There are those who have a zeal for God not according to knowledge, because they don’t subject themselves to God!
        1. Lie of the world: “What you don’t know won’t hurt you!”
     3. Js. 1:18-21: The word of God can save souls so receive it with humility; meaning to submit to its will (the will of God – I Pet. 4:2).
     4. I Thess. 4:3-7: The will of God is for man’s sanctification (to be set apart) from immorality (we know from His word).
  2. Doing!
     1. **In order to please God, one must *know* (hear) and *do* (obey) God’s will** – Rom. 2:13; Js. 1:22-25
     2. Once one knows the will of God, he must do it! – Eph. 6:6 (we work for God, not for men, Eph. 6:7); Heb. 10:36 (after ***doing it***, one receives the reward)
     3. I Jn. 2:17: The one who ***does*** the will of God lives forever!
  3. By knowing and doing the will of God, we can be certain of our spiritual future, thus confidently facing our uncertain physical future!

## Conclusion

1. Man often fears the uncertainty of the physical future, so takes precautions.
2. Even scarier is to face an uncertain eternal future!
3. God’s word provides the means for facing both the physical and eternal future with confidence, knowing our souls are secured!
   1. Like the apostle Paul, we can know where we are going *(II Tim. 4:6-8)!*
4. If you haven’t taken the precautions with your soul, do so now! *(II Thess. 1:7-9)*
5. If you have obeyed the gospel, are you living in obedience? (Phil. 2:12-13)
6. Let us Hear & Obey by being ***doers*** of the word so that we may face the future boldly!
7. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized (obey the gospel)!
8. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
9. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!