

BOAST NOT THYSELF OF TOMORROW

TEXT: PROVERBS 27:1; JAMES 4:13-16

INTRODUCTION:

1. New Year's Eve is a time when we think about a new day, and a new year. But according to Scripture none of us is guaranteed tomorrow.
2. Regarding Proverbs 27:1, Matthew Henry said, "This does not forbid preparing for tomorrow, but presuming upon tomorrow."
3. In Luke 12, our Lord told the parable of the "certain rich man" (Luke 12:16-21).
4. The Lord said that rich man was a fool. And by the world's standards, most Americans are "rich." And most Americans are like that foolish rich man -- they are laying up treasures for themselves here on earth, and they do not even think about God.

I. IT IS FOOLISH TO BOAST ABOUT ANYTHING

II. IT IS FOOLISH TO PROCRASTINATE

III. IT IS FOOLISH TO PUT OFF SALVATION

I. IT IS FOOLISH TO BOAST ABOUT ANYTHING

1. Certainly this world has too many boasters (cf. 27:2)! Last week, Donald Trump boasted to a reporter: "I could fix the Tappan Zee Bridge for relative peanuts. I could get it done for so little and with so little disruption that it would make your head spin."
2. Mr. Trump's arrogance could probably make your head spin!
3. Benhadad, the king of Syria, was a proud boaster. He boasted to the king of Israel that he and his army would reduce Samaria to a few handfuls of dust.
4. The king of Israel answered him by saying, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off" (I Kings 20:11).
5. Spurgeon said, "Boasting never makes a man any the greater in the esteem of others, nor does it improve the real estate either of his body or soul. Let a man brag as he will, he is none the greater for his bragging; nay, he is the less, for men invariably think the worse of him. Let him boast as much as he pleases of anything that he possesses, he shall not increase its value by his glorying. He cannot multiply his wealth by boasting of it; he cannot increase his pleasures by glorying in them" ("To-morrow," August 25, 1856).

6. According to the Bible, the only time it is right to boast is when we boast in the LORD. Psalm 44:8 says, "In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah."
7. David said, "My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad" (Psalm 34:2).

II. IT IS FOOLISH TO PROCRASTINATE

1. Many years ago, an English poet by the name of Edward Young, said, "Procrastination is the thief of time."
2. Many years ago, Jonathan Edwards preached a message from Proverbs 27:1 entitled, "Procrastination, or The Sin and Folly of Depending on Future Time."
3. It is indeed foolish and sinful to depend upon something you do not have, and certainly none of us is guaranteed tomorrow.
4. It is foolish to depend upon something that does not belong to us. Time is a gift from God and sadly, most people abuse this gift.
5. People say they'll get around to it by and by, forgetting that the street of By-and-By leads to the house of Never.
6. Years ago I came across a little card. On one side it said, "You may tie your shoes this morning, but the undertaker may untie them tonight."
7. The other side of the card said, "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12).
8. Someone said, "Young people talk about what they are doing; old people talk about what they have done; and fools talk about what they wish to do."
9. William Arnot said, "To count on tomorrow so as to neglect the duty of today is in many respects the greatest practical error among men...Whether the work in hand pertain to small matters or great, -- to the sowing of a field or the redemption of a soul, -- for every one who deliberately resolves not to do it, a hundred tread the same path, and suffer the same loss at last, who only postpone the work today with the intention of performing it tomorrow" (*Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth*).

10. Remember, three things come not back;

The arrow sent upon its track --

It will not swerve, it will not stay

Its speed; it flies to wound, or slay;

The spoken word so soon forgot

By thee; but it has perished not;
In other hearts 'tis living still,
And doing work for good or ill.

And the lost opportunity
That cometh back no more to thee --
In vain thou weepst, in vain dost yearn,
Those three will never more return.

Translated from Arabic

III. IT IS FOOLISH TO PUT OFF SALVATION (Pro. 29:1).

1. Procrastination is not only the thief of time; it is also the thief of souls! The Bible says, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 4:7; cf. Heb. 3:8, 15; Psalm 95:8).
2. "Today (NOT tomorrow) if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." I have talked to scores of sinners who told me they intended to get saved "later on." I cannot recall even one who ever did get saved, and I know quite a few who died and went out into eternity without Christ -- lost for all eternity!
3. Spurgeon said, "Let the careless and thoughtless here remember that they do not know what a day may bring forth. Tomorrow it may not be that grand party to which you are intending to go; tomorrow it may not be that sweet sin of which your evil nature is thinking. Tomorrow may see you on a sick-bed, tomorrow may see you on your dying bed. Tomorrow, worst of all, may see you in hell! O sinner, what a state to live in, to be in daily jeopardy of eternal ruin, to have the wrath of God, who is always angry with the wicked, abiding on you; and not to know but that tomorrow you may be where you can find no escape, no hope, no comfort! Tomorrow in eternity! Tomorrow banished from his presence for ever! Tomorrow to have that awful sentence thrilling in your soul, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels'" ("Cheer for Despondency," published Feb. 3, 1910).
4. First Samuel 18:7 says the women sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." May I say that if wicked unbelief has slain its thousands, then foolish procrastination has slain its ten thousands!
5. Pharaoh procrastinated, and then in Exodus 12:29 we read, "And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto

- the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle."
6. The apostle Paul preached to Felix about the judgment to come, and Acts 24:25 says "Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."
 7. King Agrippa was another famous procrastinator. He said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).
 8. We read in Matthew 25 about the foolish virgins being shut out of the marriage supper. Matthew 25:10 and 11 says, "The door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us."
 9. But it was too late for them. In hell there are many heathens and atheists and liars and adulterers and drunkards. But I believe the largest group in hell will be the procrastinators!
 10. Alfred, Lord Tennyson wrote:

*Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.*

*No light had we: for that we do repent;
And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.*

*No light: so late! and dark and chill the night!
O, let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late: ye cannot enter now.*

*Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?
O, let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."*

8. The old song, "The Great Judgment Morning" ...

*The soul that had put off salvation,
"Not tonight; I'll get saved by and by,
No time now to think of religion!"
At last they had found time to die.*

*And, oh, what a weeping and wailing,
As the lost were told of their fate;*

*They cried for the rocks and the mountains,
They prayed, but their prayer was too late.*

8. If you read books written by the old-time preachers you see many sad stories of sinners who procrastinated and then it was too late.
9. For example, D.L. Moody said, "There was a man in Chicago who twice determined to give his heart to God but never had the courage to acknowledge Christ before his ungodly companions. When recovering from a long sickness, he still refused to come out boldly on the side of Christ, saying, 'Not yet; I have got a fresh lease on life. I can't be a Christian in Chicago. I am going to take a farm in Michigan; then I will profess Christ.'

"I asked him, 'How dare you take that risk?' He said, 'I will risk it; don't your trouble yourself any more about my soul, Mr. Moody. I have made up my mind.'

I have never left a man with a sadder heart in my life. The very next week he was stricken down with the same disease. His wife sent for me and said, 'He doesn't want to see you, but I can't bear that he should die in such an awful state of mind. He says, 'My damnation is sealed and I shall be in Hell in a week.'

I tried to talk and pray with him but it was no use. He said his heart was as hard as a stone. 'Pray for my wife and my children but don't waste your time praying for me.'

His last words were, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved,' and then the angels carried him away to judgment."

CONCLUSION:

I do not put much credence in dreams, but a long time ago I heard an interesting story about a woman that had a fascinating dream. I will share it because it illustrates Proverbs 27:1. In her dream, the woman was shown a great conference of demons, gathered around the throne of Satan. The purpose of this conference was to seek out new ways and means by which Satan and his demons could turn more people away from Christ and bring them into Hell.

One by one Satan allowed the demons to give suggestions on the subject. The demons came up with several suggestions but Satan was not pleased with any of them. One demon suggested, "I will go upon the earth and I will

tell everyone that there is no God -- and that they may live as they please, because there is no God."

The devil shook his head sadly and answered, "Try it, and you will gain a few, but we've been saying that for years and still Christianity is not extinguished."

Another demon asked for permission to speak and when it was granted he said, "I will deceive them to believe there is no hell and to doubt the veracity of the Holy Bible."

The devil laughed and said, "You will do all right, but I am still not satisfied. You see, we have already been doing that for a long time, and we must come up with a better plan to deceive more people."

Then another demon spoke up. He said, "I have a suggestion to give for your approval. I will go back to the earth and I will tell people, Yes -- the Bible is true, and yes -- there is a God and there is a Hell -- but I will whisper into their hearts -- but don't worry about your soul's salvation, -- you have plenty of time. So take your time -- you can get saved later."

The devil jumped off his throne clapping his hands in glee. "That's it - that's it! Tell them they have lots of time. Go demons, go to deceive those who are being convicted by the Holy Spirit of God and tell them to wait a little while longer. Go and we will bring many more souls to this cursed place, to share our torment."