

Future Plans

By Mark Mayberry
3/25/2007

Introduction

The future is uncertain (Proverbs 27:1). Therefore, we must exercise caution about future plans (James 4:13-17).

Proverbs 27:1 ... 1 Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth. (NASB95)

James 4:13-17 ... 13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." 16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin. (NASB95)

Plans of the Righteous

Purpose

Purpose is defined as "something set up as an object or end to be attained: intention... resolution, determination..."

The righteous act with purpose (Luke 14:25-33; Romans 1:8-12; 15:22-29; 1 Corinthians 16:5-9).

Luke 14:25-33 ... 25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and

asks for terms of peace. 33 “So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. (NASB95)

Romans 1:8-12 ... 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. 9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other’s faith, both yours and mine. (NASB95)

Romans 15:22-29 ... 22 For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; 23 but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you 24 whenever I go to Spain—for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while— 25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. 28 Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 16:5-9 ... 5 But I will come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia; 6 and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. 7 For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits. 8 But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; 9 for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. (NASB95)

Providence

Providence is defined as “divine guidance or care... God conceived as the power sustaining and guiding human destiny...”

The righteous rely upon providence (Acts 18:18-22; 1 Corinthians 4:18-21; Philippians 1:21-26; 2:19-24).

Acts 18:18-22 ... 18 Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. 19 They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent, 21 but taking leave of them and saying, “I will return to you again if God wills,” he set sail from Ephesus. 22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 4:18-21 ... 18 Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. 19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power. 20 For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power. 21 What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness? (NASB95)

Philippians 1:21-26 ... 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again. (NASB95)

Philippians 2:19-24 ... 19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. 20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly. (NASB95)

Plans of the Wicked

Plotting

Plotting is defined as “a secret plan for accomplishing a usually evil or unlawful end: intrigue...”

The wicked plot to do evil (Psalm 36:1-4; Isaiah 56:9-12; Micah 2:1-2).

Psalm 36:1-4 ... 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord. Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. 2 For it flatters him in his own eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it. 3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. 4 He plans wickedness upon his bed; He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil. (NASB95)

Isaiah 56:9-12 ... 9 All you beasts of the field, All you beasts in the forest, Come to eat. 10 His watchmen are blind, All of them know nothing. All of them are mute dogs unable to bark, Dreamers lying down, who love to slumber; 11 And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; They have all turned to their own way, Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one. 12 “Come,” they say, “let us get wine, and let us drink heavily of strong drink; And tomorrow will be like today, only more so.” (NASB95)

Micah 2:1-2 ... 1 Woe to those who scheme iniquity, Who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands. 2 They covet fields and then seize them, And houses, and take them away. They rob a man and his house, A man and his inheritance. (NASB95)

Procrastination

Procrastination is defined as “to put off intentionally and habitually... to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done.”

The wicked procrastinate to do good (Haggai 1:1-11; Luke 13:24-27; Acts 24:24-27).

Haggai 1:1-11 ... 1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, 2 “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘This people says, “The time has not come, even the time for the house of the Lord to be rebuilt.” ’ ” 3 Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?” 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, “Consider your ways! 6 “You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.” 7 Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Consider your ways! 8 “Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the Lord. 9 “You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?” declares the Lord of hosts, “Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. 10 “Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. 11 “I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands.” (NASB95)

Luke 13:24-27 ... 24 “Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 “Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’ 26 “Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets’; 27 and He will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you are from; depart from Me, all you evildoers.’ (NASB95)

Acts 24:24-27 ... 24 But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you.” 26 At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and converse with him. 27 But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned. (NASB95)

Conclusion

Peril

Life is short and fleeting (Job 7:6; 9:25-26; Psalm 103:15-16; 144:3-4).

Job 7:6 ... 6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope. (NASB95)

Job 9:25-26 ... 25 “Now my days are swifter than a runner; They flee away, they see no good. 26 “They slip by like reed boats, Like an eagle that swoops on its prey. (NASB95)

Psalm 103:15-16 ... 15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. 16 When the wind has passed over it, it is no more, And its place acknowledges it no longer. (NASB95)

Psalm 144:3-4 ... 3 O Lord, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You think of him? 4 Man is like a mere breath; His days are like a passing shadow. (NASB95)

Death is certain and could be soon (Psalm 37:37-40; 73:15-20; Jeremiah 5:30-31; Luke 12:15-21).

Psalm 37:37-40 ... 37 Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity. 38 But transgressors will be altogether destroyed; The posterity of the wicked will be cut off. 39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in time of trouble. 40 The Lord helps them and delivers them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them, Because they take refuge in Him. (NASB95)

Psalm 73:15-20 ... 15 If I had said, “I will speak thus,” Behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. 16 When I pondered to understand this, It was troublesome in my sight 17 Until I came into the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end. 18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. 19 How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors! 20 Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when aroused, You will despise their form. (NASB95)

Jeremiah 5:30-31 ... 30 “An appalling and horrible thing Has happened in the land: 31 The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule on their own authority; And My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it? (NASB95)

Luke 12:15-21 ... 15 Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.” 16 And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. 17 “And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ 18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down

my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." ' 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' 21 "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (NASB95)

Preparation

Therefore, let us prepare to meet God (Amos 4:12-13; Isaiah 55:6-7; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11; 6:1-2), and also be ready unto every good deed (Galatians 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Titus 3:1-2).

Amos 4:12-13 ... 12 "Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel." 13 For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind And declares to man what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness And treads on the high places of the earth, The Lord God of hosts is His name. (NASB95)

Isaiah 55:6-7 ... 6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 ... 1 And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain— 2 for He says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation"— (NASB95)

Galatians 6:9-10 ... 9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 15:58 ... 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (NASB95)

Titus 3:1-2 ... 1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. (NASB95)

Sources: Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 10th Edition, (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, c1993, 1996).