

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

H. Rondel Rumburg, ThM, DMin

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What shall I wish thee?
Treasures of earth?
Songs in the springtime?
Pleasure and mirth?
Flowers on the pathway?
Skies ever clear?
Would this ensure thee
A Happy New Year?

What shall I wish thee?
What can be found
Bringing thee sunshine
All the year round?
Where is the treasure,
Lasting and dear,
That shall ensure thee
A Happy New Year?

Faith that increaseth,
Walking in light;
Hope that aboundeth,
Happy and bright;
Love that is perfect,
Casting out fear;
These shall ensure thee
A Happy New Year.

Peace in the Saviour,
Rest at His feet,
Smile of His countenance
Radiant and sweet,
Joy in His presence!
Christ ever near!
This will ensure thee
A Happy New Year.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879)

Boast Not of Tomorrow

“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

Proverbs 27:1

Solomon by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit begins *Proverbs* by introducing himself as the son of David, king of Israel who sought “To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty (cleverness) to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion” (Prov. 1:2-4). Then he began to speak of wisdom and understanding. So by sanctified wisdom from the Holy Spirit, Solomon presents to us a warning from the Lord.

This brings us to our text which warns us against boasting of tomorrow as though we have control over it. This text does not preclude preparing for tomorrow, but it does speak of presuming on tomorrow. The text is dealing with presuming you have tomorrow, and that you will do certain things on that day. Thomas Manton noted, “First we practice sin, then defend it, then boast of it. Sin is first our burden, then our custom, then our delight, then our excellency.”

There was a prescription given on “How to be miserable.” It began, “Think about yourself. Talk about yourself. Use ‘I’ as often as possible. Mirror yourself continually in the opinion of others. Listen greedily to what people say about you. Be suspicious. Expect to be appreciated. Be jealous and envious. Be sensitive to slights. Never forgive a criticism. Trust nobody but yourself. Insist on consideration and the proper respect.

Demand agreement with your own views on everything. Sulk if people are not grateful to you for favors shown them. Never forget a service you have rendered. Be on the lookout for a good time for yourself. Shirk your duties if you can. Do as little as possible for others. Love yourself supremely. Be selfish.”

Why should we not boast about tomorrow? *First*, negatively, we are commanded to not do so by the inspired Word of God. The text asserted “Boast not thyself of tomorrow.” Therefore, the Lord prohibits it. Remember the boast of Belshazzar as he desecrated the vessels of gold taken out of the House of God. He led the orgy in drinking wine and praising the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone from the sacred vessels of the Lord. Then a hand started writing on the plastered wall of the palace. The king was frightened and troubled. Finally, Daniel was called to interpret the wall writings, “*mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*” interpreted meant, God has numbered your kingdom and finished it, you are weighed in the balances and found wanting, and your kingdom is divided between the Medes and Persians. The Bible then added, “in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain” (Dan. 5:30). *Second*, positively, we are given a reason not to boast of tomorrow. The reason is “for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Boasting or presuming is outside the prerogative of finite man, but is in the scope of the will of the infinite God.

The *Epistle of James* gives some great instruction as to the fallacy of thinking men determine the future or that they have a right to boast of it. *First*, James gave a warning, “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 passes away” (James 4:13-14). *Second*, James’ warning was followed by words of wisdom, “for that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that” (James 4:15). *Third*, James witnessed, “But now ye rejoice in your boasting: all such rejoicing is evil” (James 4:16). The word “evil” refers to such boasting as being ethically wrong. James concluded this subject, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). Thus, James had pointed out: The presumption of the future (vv. 13-14a); the brevity of life (v. 14b); the will of God (v. 15); the evil of boasting (v. 16); and the context of sin (v. 17).

C. H. Spurgeon noted, “And, moreover, the Christian may await to-morrow with even more than simple hope and joy; he may look forward to it with *ecstasy* in some measure, for he does not know but that to-morrow his Lord may come. To-morrow Christ may be upon this earth, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." To-morrow, all the glories of millennial splendour may be revealed; to-morrow, the thrones of judgment may be set, and the King may summon the people to judgment. To-morrow, we may be in heaven; to-morrow, we may be on the breast of Christ; to-morrow, ay, before then, this head may wear a crown, this hand may wave the palm, this lip may sing the song, this foot may tread the streets of gold, this heart may be full of bliss, immortal, everlasting, eternal. Be of good cheer, oh, fellow-Christian; to-morrow can have nothing black in it to thee, for it must work for thy good, but it may have in it a precious, precious jewel. It is an earthen pitcher, and it may have in it some dark black waters, but their bitterness is taken away by the cross. But mayhap, also, it may have in it the precious jewel of eternity; for wrapt up within to-morrow may be all the glories of immortality. Anoint thine head with fresh oil of gladness at the prospect of each coming day. Boast not of to-morrow, but often comfort thyself with it. Thou hast a right to do

so; it cannot be a bad tomorrow to thee; it may be the best day of thy life,
for it may be thy last.”