

Affliction Can Be Beneficial

(Psalm 119:71)

Introduction:

1. It is clear from Psalm 119 that the writer loved:
 - a. God (vs.164)
 - b. God's Word (vs.97).
2. Even though the writer of this Psalm loved God and His Word, he was familiar with affliction (vs.107a).
3. The writer acknowledged several times that help was available from God when he was afflicted (vs.50, 92, 153).
4. The writer had learned a valuable lesson -- "affliction can be beneficial."
 - a. (vs.67) Affliction led him back to God.
 - b. (vs.71) Affliction led him to learn God's statutes.
5. As we face the effects of the virus, let us be reminded of God's statutes concerning 2 days mentioned in James 4:13-16 -- *today* and *tomorrow*.

Discussion:

- I. WE MUST AVOID CERTAIN ACTIVITIES CONCERNING *TOMORROW*
 - A. We must not boast about what we are going to do *tomorrow*.
 1. Solomon addressed this in Proverbs 27:1a -- "*Boast not thyself of to morrow.*"
 2. Solomon also showed why we must avoid this practice in Proverbs 27:1b.
 3. The Lord's parable recorded in Luke 12:16-20 illustrates this principle.
 - a. In this parable Jesus talked about a man who boasted about what he was going to do in the future; however, he never made it to the next day.
 - b. By boasting about what he would do *tomorrow*, he overlooked what he could have done *today*.
 - c. Imagine this man's regret throughout eternity.
 - d. By taking advantage of *today*, he could have been rejoicing.
 - e. This man should have loved God and his fellow man on a daily basis (Matthew 22:37-39).
 - B. We must not make plans without God (James 4:13-16).
 1. James confronted a situation in which people decide what they are going to do, where they are going to do it, when they will do it, and the outcome of their efforts -- throughout all of this God is left out of the picture.
 2. We simply do not know what will happen *tomorrow*.
 3. The right approach is to depend upon God, giving careful attention to His will.

- C. We must not be anxious about *tomorrow* (Matthew 6:34).
 - 1. Jesus was dealing with being anxious over the necessities of life.
 - 2. He showed why we must not be anxious over such things.
 - 3. We have plenty to be concerned with *today* without worrying about *tomorrow*.
 - 4. He gave us an alternative in Matthew 6:33.
- D. Let us turn our attention to some . . .

II. INSTRUCTIONS WE MUST FOLLOW CONCERNING *TODAY*

- A. God wants us to depend upon Him for the blessings that we need *today*.
 - 1. Jesus taught us to do this in Matthew 6:11.
 - 2. We must do this because all good gifts come from God (James 1:17).
 - 3. Rather than boast about what we are going to do *tomorrow*, let us depend upon God for the blessings that we need *today*.
- B. God wants us to hear His voice *today* (Psalm 95:7).
 - 1. This passage is quoted in Hebrews 3:7-8, 15; 4:7.
 - 2. Hearing God's voice *today* will prevent "hardening of the heart."
 - 3. Rather than make plans for *tomorrow* without God, He wants us to hear His voice *today*.
- C. God wants us to rejoice *today* (Psalm 118:24).
 - 1. Each day is a blessing from God, and we have many reasons to rejoice.
 - 2. Rather than worry about *tomorrow*, God wants us to rejoice *today*.

Conclusion:

- 1. There is one other matter that we need to consider -- SALVATION.
- 2. *Tomorrow* is not the time for salvation (Acts 24:25).
- 3. *Today* is the time for salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2).