

HOW CAN WE FACE THE FUTURE WITH ASSURANCE AND HOPE? HEBREWS 13:5-6

How in the world can we live with assurance and hope especially in the day in which we are living? The world is uncertain. Life is uncertain. Jobs are uncertain, and so many look at the future with a spirit “defeatism”. How in the world can we walk into a new year with any sense of joy, excitement and anticipation? Because there is a sobering and wonderful truth from the pages of the most precious Book in all the world...the Bible...and they are the very words of our Lord through the Hebrew writer 13:5-6 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

1. BY REMEMBERING THAT JESUS IS OUR CONSTANT COMPANION. Sadly, the day and age that we live in is an age of coveting, greed, discontent, with a sobering sense of frustration. A candid revelation of what has and is happening in the landscape of America reveals “greedy mankind”, “money hungry mankind”. We hear of “bailouts” by the billions of dollars during these days. But the call of God to everyone that names that name of Jesus is this, “be content with such things as you have”. The truth is money, things, possessions will never bring comfort, or true companionship...true comfort comes through remembering the very truth that Jesus is our constant Companion. We can face the future with assurance and hope, because Jesus, the very Son of God declares on the oath of His Word that “He will never leave us.”

He is The Source of Contentment. No matter what will happen in or to our lives in the next 12 months, Jesus has already decreed to us, that He will not leave. Since God didn’t spare His one and only Son in order that we could have everlasting life...He will not allow us to go by a single day with unmet needs as we petition Him, and ask Him. God declares by His very Word that He will richly give us all things. The world may talk about recession, depression, lay-offs, but the Bible declares that we have a loving Heavenly Father, who deliberately, intentionally, purposely meets all of our needs.

As a matter of fact God wants us to know how microscopic His knowledge is of us. He declares in Matthew 6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? The Bible makes it clear that God is concerned about the grass of the field. Grass doesn’t have a soul, and will not live for eternity...but God is interested in the grass. And if God is interested in the grass...how much more is He interested in us...who will live for all eternity. We may live in a world where people forget one another, where family abandons family, but we will never for one second, apart from the loving overshadowing of our heavenly Father.

He Is The Spirit of Contentment. Why is it there are so many countless millions that are not content...the answer is found in the fact that there is no relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul put it this way, “godliness with contentment is great gain.” The state of a true Christian is a state of contentment, Paul declared, “I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. Paul discovered that true happiness, joy and tranquility was not found in money, possessions, things, but in knowing more and more of His precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because there is something about that person who genuinely walks with God.

First, there is physical contentment. King David said, “I have been young and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread (Ps.37:5) Why? Because God makes it His business to provide every need to His children as any good father is able

to provide for his family. Why should, we God's children be worried over our lives, and future, since our God is still on His throne, His nature has not changed, His sources are unlimited, His supplies are inexhaustible, and His finances are uncomprehensible. We may forget from time to time...but it was for us that He died...and He will never forget one of His children.

Second, there is spiritual contentment. The truth about every person on the face of the earth is that there is a God shaped void in our lives. There will never be true lasting satisfaction until that spiritual hunger is satisfied. But when we make it our business to fill that God shaped void with a personal relationship with God, He makes it His business to fill it. That person who chooses to know Jesus more and more is captivated less and less by what this world offers. Why is it that seemingly people who may have nothing want nothing? Because those who may have "nothing" have found the joy, the thrill, the excitement of having a personal intimate relationship with Jesus, the very Son of Almighty God!

Third, there is vocational contentment. Only God knows the countless many who are in jobs where they are miserable...but listen to Paul the apostle, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Even if life meant a Roman prison, Paul found that Christ could and would make even the most odorous prison a joy, as he knew that He was serving and obeying the risen Christ. There is something mysteriously wonderful that takes place when your life is captivated in Christ. Life is different, jobs are different work is different...because there is a reminder that all we do...for Christ WILL LAST.

2. BY REMEMBERING THAT JESUS PROVIDES A LIFE OF COMPANIONSHIP.

Jesus is not just our Savior, our Lord, but He provides Loving Companionship. Scripture declares that: *He is A Personal Companion.* The actual rendering of Hebrew 13:5 is: "...**He Himself has said**, I will never leave you nor forsake you." It would be wonderful if the angel of the Lord would be with us, or His angel Gabriel...but God goes further than any angel...He gives us the divine, heavenly promise of His presence. With each and every passing day, we are promised that Jesus, the very Son of God is with us...not matter what may happen along life's journey. In the Old Testament God would visit His people and He would have His people mark those places with special markers...as a reminder of His presence. Today we have the permanent marker of God's Holy Spirit. (Jn. 14:16)

He is A Perpetual Companion. The announcement of God to man is, "I will never leave you or forsake you." No matter how dark the night may become, there is no darkness that prevents His companionship. When the children of Israel were met with darkness and didn't know where to go...God led them through the night with a pillar of fire. The truth is, God knows completely how to lead us in the dark times and seasons of life. We may not understand them, we may not figure them out on this side of eternity, but God will never leave us...in all the dark times of life...He remains faithfully God. No matter what may happen in society, in government, in the world, no events on this earth alter the wonderful, matchless eternal words of the Living God to His children. The truth is, Scripture is filled with many "seasons of darkness", but in the darkness, shines the mighty overwhelming and powerful presence of Almighty God.

3. BY REALIZING THAT JESUS COMPANIONSHIP GIVES US COURAGE FOR LIFE.

When the Hebrew writer realized that he could go nowhere without the presence of God, here is what he said, "The Lord is my helper I will not fear. What can man do to me? The truth is there is nothing that can happen in us or to us apart from the governing hand of Almighty God. The reality is, the New Year may come with a thousand unknowns for each of our lives, but the fact is they are not unknown to our God and the One who Redeemed us from our sins. All throughout Scripture God wants man to know that He is divinely in control.

In the life of Jacob, in the Old Testament, he was one who deceived his brothers, but as he

ran for his life, one night during sleep God revealed to him a ladder that stretched to heaven. It was in that dream that God revealed to Jacob that He had plans for his life...and He would see them through. Wherever Jacob went... God declared, "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go." (Gen. 28:15) It is that same God that is God today. The same God that kept Jacob during his times of life will keep us.

In the life of Moses, as he gave his final message to the children of Israel. As Moses set before them life and death, he told the people that whatever opposition they would face in Canaan, they could be assured of the presence of Holy God...if they kept His commandments. No doubt Moses saw many changes to his day and time... but he knew the future was always bright and hopeful to that people of God that followed the will of God and obeyed the Word of God. Moses declared, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them, for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you. (Deut. 31:6) The same God that honored obedience in the days of Moses, and saw His people through the most unique set of circumstances, gives to His people the promise...that He will never leave us nor forsake us.