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One Minute Sermon

Lyle A. Berry

I hope to see you tomorrow, or I hope to see you in church on Sunday are expressions of thought very common to all of us. Looking forward to a future time is as common as the word may be and as much as we may use it in everyday life. We also see it often used in the Bible. It is very important in the life of every Christian. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:24-25).

Hope is a looking forward to, or in expectation of. Hope will sustain us in trials. We look in the future for everlasting glory. What we now have in our possession we do not hope for. We do not now see eternal life and eternal glory. But we hope for it in the future. Therefore hope is a desire with expectation. What is the Christian's hope? Not that he is a Christian. His hope reaches beyond this life. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: But the righteous hath hope in his death" (Proverbs 14:32). "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19). As indicated above, a Christian's hope is eternal life. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). It was God's eternal purpose. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7). The foundation of our hope is by the resurrection of Christ. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." (1 Peter 1:3-5). We have a living hope made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Savior. The Lord will not fail to keep His promises (1 Timothy 4:10; 2 Peter 3:9). 1 John 2:25 — "and this is the promise that he had promised us — even eternal life."

Are you glad you are a Christian? Don't you want to remain one?

See Revelation 2:10: "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*" Friend, don't you wish you had this hope of eternal life? It is conditional. "*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*" (Hebrews 5:9). Now is the time to obey Him. Jesus said that night would come when no man could work, when no man could work. 

Should I Worry About This?

Larry Rouse

Over the years I have carefully noted the circumstances surrounding Christians that fell away from the Lord. Some of these I knew very well, with some even being family members. Most of them started believing and professing things they had ardently opposed in the past. As time passed, some became more aggressive and even denied the plain gospel way of salvation calling it "traditionalism." These departures caused me great grief and I became determined to help others avoid this terrible "slippery slope." I often have asked the question: "Why did these departures occur?"

Even though these departures were later characterized by radical doctrinal compromise, I do not know of one individual whose departure came solely from a doctrinal influence. If these individuals had studied and became convinced that these doctrines were true to the scriptures, some of these people would have talked to me with an open Bible. One thing that I found characteristic, but puzzling, about my friends was that they would no longer even talk to me about their change, even though we had good relationships in the past. Again I asked: "What causes a person to act this way?"

The answer that I discovered is the answer the scriptures supply when it describes the "works of the flesh," which in essence is the arsenal of Satan. All of these people, I strongly believe, lost control of their hearts to issues such as

uncontrolled anger, covetousness, unbridled lusts and other temptations. One of the tools Satan used to destroy their faith and allow the flesh to dominate them was the stressful burden of worry.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus describes the unrelenting war that Satan has waged against a living faith, a faith that must be fed by the word of God. The plant that began by the sowing of the powerful seed of God's word, was made unfruitful by the later choking off of the sustaining word of God. Jesus said: "Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity." **(Luke 8:14)**

Jesus taught about taking on unnecessary burdens when He plainly warned: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." **(Matthew 6:34)** The Greek word that is translated "worry" in this passage has this root meaning: "to care for, be concerned about," but also can be used in a bad sense where it denotes to "be anxious, be overly concerned about, be worried about." (Louw-Nida Lexicon) Paul plainly showed that a living faith can overcome worry when he wrote: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." **(Philippians 4:6)**

How can we know the difference between the legitimate cares that God wishes us to handle and the burdensome cares that we take on ourselves through a lack of faith? The answer is very simple and very comforting. We need to open our hearts completely to Jesus and let Him sift every thought, priority and goal that is in our hearts and then let Him discard most of them, leaving us with the burdens that we can handle. Do you really trust the Lord? If you do, you can certainly live a worry-free life when you trust God like this. "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light." **(Matthew 11:28-30)**

Consider some of the needless burdens we bear:

We cannot control, or even know all of the consequences of every possible choice that we face each day. Those men who think they can actually control "what may happen" are either blinded by pride or are simply foolish. The heart of faith simply asks "What does the Lord want me to do?" The burden of possible consequences is left to the God who sees and knows the very number of hairs on my head. "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. ³⁰But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." **(Matthew 10:29-31)**

We cannot control what people think or how they might act. Some have become slaves of men with heavy burdens to bear because they fear "what others might think." What burden does God give us? He simply wants us to live for Him and let His power and His word speak to others through us. The apostle Paul knew that he had no power over the will of others but there was one thing he could do. "Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." **(1 Corinthians 3:5-6)**

What list of unnecessary burdens could you list? Here is a short one to consider:

1. I must not worry about who will be the leader of our country. **(Rev 2:26-27)**
2. I must not worry about how I will pay the bills. **(Heb 13:5-6)**
3. I must not worry about my health. **(Lk 21:16-18)**
4. I must not worry about the wellbeing of my family. **(1 Cor 7:32-35)**

What happens when a person fails to develop a faith that learns to take the light yoke of Jesus? In time, that faith will break down and that person will seek relief. This was the one characteristic I found in the departure of my friends. Some had become embittered by others and refused to let that burden be the Lord's. Others had burned themselves out through the pursuit of things that cannot last.

My friends ran to Satan with his false promises and his quick condemnation of the way of God as being "too hard." The sad truth is that the departure from God's way leads to a path of real hardship and trouble. Satan wants you to close your eyes and pretend that all is well. Many churches today will encourage you to cast off the commandments of God as "burdensome."

Which burden will you choose God's or Satan's? Please see clearly the path of a living faith and stand there! "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." **(1 John 5:3-4)**

