

# ***“Learning to Live in the Now!”***

## **Psalm 118:24**

**Intro.** – Our text has a principle for living that is as fresh today as it was centuries ago. In fact, I’m convinced this principle is even more relevant today in our hectic, crowded schedules. What is this principle? To live in the here and now – to live A DAY AT A TIME is that principle.

Note, the inspired writer did not say, “*this WAS a day...*” how easy it is to believe God made some stunning days in the past... but then we wonder about the present and future. In our text this man was not tormented with backward glances. Nor was he anxiously looking forward. He was living in the here and now. “*This*” he says, “*is the day the Lord has made...*” Regardless of what yesterday may have been or what tomorrow will be, this man is going to live expectantly in the here and now!

Illus. – blind and deaf from the age of two, Helen Keller was asked by a young man, “Isn’t it the worst thing in the world to be blind?” She responded, “Not half so bad as to have two good eyes and see nothing.”

It is good and we ought to look forward to the coming of heaven; however, we must also anticipate the here and now. In the business of living, it is critical to learn to live in the now.

*Purpose: to learn that living in the now is the height of wisdom*

Bible teaches this is true for at least three solid reasons:

### **I Today is All We HAVE**

- Illus. – if you had a bank that credited your account every morning with \$86,400 but would carry no balance from the previous day and would cancel whatever amount you failed to use, what would you do? You’d draw out every cent and use it, wouldn’t you?!
- each of us have such an account. The account is called *time*. Every morning you’re credited with 86,400 seconds. Every day ending whatever you failed to invest wisely in the use of those 86,400 seconds is lost forever. It allows no balances or overdrafts. Each day the account called *time* opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the records of the day. If you fail to use the day’s deposits wisely the loss is yours. The same is exactly true for me! Thus, as far as time is concerned, our sole possession is today!

#### **A. Yesterday is Gone**

1. Whatever happened yesterday is beyond our reach – whether good or not so good...
2. Our past is beyond our recalls and this is true regardless of our attitudes toward it!
  - a. e.g. perhaps yesterday “bored” some of us – although can’t imagine ever being bored...
  - b. perhaps yesterdays were tiresome or even painful because of disappointments/tragedies...
  - c. others look at yesterdays with a wistful eye, referring to the “good ole days.”
    - 1) English writer and humorist J. K. Jerome: “Men have been looking back to the ‘good old days of 50 yrs ago’ ever since Adam’s 51<sup>st</sup> birthday...
    - 2) some of these “good old days” weren’t so good when we actually lived in them... Illus. – pep band... Lamar, Colorado...
  - d. others look at yesterday with longing eyes knowing they didn’t use it well:
    - 1) time was wasted and you know it...
    - 2) may have even used yesterday to rob, wound and hurt others, as well as, ourselves....
3. Regardless of our attitude yesterday – it’s history – Illus. – Even Esau sought to change his yesterday involving his birthright/blessing, but he couldn’t (Genesis 25:29-34; Hebrews 12:16-17)

#### **B. Tomorrow Has Yet to Arrives**

1. Generally speaking it’s we older ones who obsess about yesterday and you younger ones who get so absorbed in tomorrow.
2. Those living in the past obsess to the point the present and future have no appeal...
3. Those living in the future get so absorbed in tomorrow they fail to seize the moment to ready themselves for the day.

4. Only today is ours – psalmist realized this and refused to live in the past or future = realistic
5. Brethren/friend – today is all you and I have so far as resources for time are concerned.
  - Illus. – “I don’t worry anymore. I’ve hired a man to worry for me and I’m paying him \$500.00 a week to do it. First thing he gets to worry about is where I’m getting the \$500 @ wk to pay him!

*This is the day* – and in a practical sense today is all we have!

## II Today is All We Can MANAGE

- suppose it were within our capabilities to retrieve our yesterdays and project our tomorrows – wouldn’t that be a blessing? No it wouldn’t! Why? Because we’re not equipped to manage but 1 day at a time.
- A. Yesterday and Today Are Too Much
    1. Some of us seek to manage yesterday AND today at the same time = such never God’s design...
    2. Illus. – Mary and I had a neighbor couldn’t let go of a matter in her past. Tried to live and manage yesterday along with her today. It literally drove her nuts...
    3. Failing to *let go* of yesterday becomes nothing more than a hindrance to the purpose, point and potential of today!
  - B. Tomorrow and Today are Too Much
    1. Equally tragic is the attempt to live today AND tomorrow.
    2. Exactly what God is warning about in Matthew 6:34 “*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.*”
    3. Illus. – ever hear of the clock had a nervous breakdown? Was ticking along fine (keeping accurate time) but then the clock began thinking about how many ticks go through its system. 2 ticks @ second; 120 @ minute; 7200 @ hr; 173,800 @ day; 1,209,600 @ wk; 62,899,200 @ yr. Troubled by these staggering statistics overcome with exhaustion. Take to clock Dr. “I have to tick so much...” “Wait, how many ticks do you produce at a time?” “O, I operate one tick at a time” the clock responded.
    4. How many have gotten into the same rat race?
      - a. nobody is brawny enough to live 3 days or even 2 days at a time
      - b. but with God’s wisdom and power, we can live a day at a time!

With resolute confidence, we must learn to join the psalmist – “*This is the day the Lord has made...*”

## III Today is All We NEED

- often many bewail the brevity of life – but what really matters – quantity or quality of life?
  - Illus. – “We live in deeds not years, in thoughts, not breaths, in attitudes, not figures on a dial.”
  - fact of the matter is, one can live more in an hour than another in a century:
- A. God’s Promises Are for Today
    1. When is it eternal life is made available to you and me?
    2. The here and now is the beginning of eternity!
      - a. Illus. – in talking to people about becoming a Christian I’ll ask “When?” – “Some day...” or “When the time is right...”
      - b. Bible tells us the right time to become a Christian – 2 Corinthians 6:2 “*...Behold, now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation.*”
    3. What I’m saying is this: Today is all we need to live for Christ Who died for us!
  - B. God Takes Care of Yesterday
    1. What Paul meant in Philippians 3:13 “*...Forgetting what is behind and straining toward ahead...*”
    2. When God forgives He also FORGETS
      - a. Jeremiah 31:34 “*I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.*”
      - b. what God forgets, He gives Christians the privilege to forget as well!
  - C. God Takes Care of Tomorrow

1. Illus. – man came into the office in Bloomington... Told him we had a fund with the Sheriff's office... He responded, "I'd rather sit along road side and wait for God to take care of me."...
2. God expects us to do *our part* in today... AND let Him take care of yesterday and tomorrow.
3. Many see this as contradictory or at least shortsighted:
  - a. Illus. – Esau – what was his problem? Some would say he lived only for today and forgot about tomorrow... True, he forgot about tomorrow, but his real problem his misuse of today. Had he cared for today properly, tomorrow would have been covered.
  - b. Illus. – Moses (Hebrews 11:24-25) – Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Chose instead to be mistreated rather than enjoy the passing pleasures of sin...
4. Making the right choice in the present, living in today, is the best planning for tomorrow.

**Conclusion:** "The average person's life consists of twenty years of having parent ask where they are going; forty years of having a spouse ask the same, and at the end, the mourners wondering the same."

The roadway to effective living isn't that complicated We are called upon to live at fellowship with God *today*. Such is the case because *today* is all you and I have, and it is all you and I can manage. Do you see how this simplifies your life? To live correctly *today* means you can leave yesterday and tomorrow in God's hands.

Refuse to use all of *today*, refuse to live in the *now*, and all the lack of accomplishments of yesterday and good intentions of tomorrow will be of no value.

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it! Brethren let's learn to live in the now!!