

The Hidden Future

I am going ...not knowing what shall befall me ...

Acts 20.22

I believe in goal-setting...in knowing where we're going...and planning, as best we can, the steps it will take to get there. But I'm glad we don't know in advance all the things which will happen en route.

Think of where you have been. If you had known all the road-blocks, struggles and pains which have accompanied the journey, you likely would never have started. Thankfully, you were venturing into the unknown.

Less than a year ago I had a pleasant visit with some friends of years past. They had a glow about them as they spoke of the achievements of their son. They were justifiably proud. Six months later that fine boy lost his life in an electrical storm.

If those parents had known in advance that they were to lose that splendid son it would have cast a gloom over all their days. Their happiness would have been shattered. They couldn't even have enjoyed their time with him because of the dread of their approaching loss.

We want to know the future. We make careful analyses and detailed plans. Yet, God is good to shield us from the future. Otherwise, we would be paralyzed with dread. God gives us life a bite at a time. How wise and loving of Him.

*He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.*

Do not be anxious about tomorrow, Jesus said. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day. Matthew 6:34. Don't borrow trouble from the future. Enjoy today.

- Joe R. Barnett, via *Lifelines*, Bella Vista, AR

Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to an all-knowing God. - Corrie ten Boom

News & Notes

CONFESSIONS: Don & Donna Parsons, Lori States.

NEW YEAR'S EVE GATHERING: Tomorrow evening, Dec. 31st, 6:00 p.m. at the Multipurpose Building. All are invited to bring a covered dish and enjoy this evening of food, fellowship, and singing.

CARE & SHARE BEARS: Canceled this Tuesday, Jan. 1st. Work will resume next Tuesday, Jan. 8th.

NURSING HOME VISIT & DEVOTIONAL: Sat., Jan. 5th, 2:30 p.m. at Fox.

PANTRY: Tuna & noodles.

CONTINUE TO REMEMBER: Mary Nelson, Bette Gentry, Dan Williams (Sharon's husband), Jim Smith (preacher at Langeloth), Bill McKeen (friend of Don Spencer), Cole Bellon (Michelle Hanlon's nephew).

SICK & SHUT-IN: Weirton Medical Center: Jean Larrimore. AT HOME: Geraldine Barrett, Ruth Brewer, Gene Miller, Helene Wilson, Fred Rayl, Harry & Imogene Nice, Doris Dunham, Ella Beagle, Diane Robinson, Lloyd & Virginia Ferrell, Bette Gentry, Dan Williams, Lloyd Cowdery, Mabel Sprout, Virginia Rickerd, Fred Larrimore, Sr., Fred Larrimore, Jr., Cheryl Stackpole. NURSING HOMES: Fox: Ray Baker. Pleasantview N. Retirement & Rehab., Salem: Ruby Kenney. Weirton Geriatric Center: Edna McKitrick, Ila Plum. Aspen Manor, Wellsburg: Ione Asher.

The New Year: How Shall We Enter?

Two thousand eight is upon us. How shall we approach it? No two people enter into the new year with exactly the same emotions. Some enter with fear and reluctance while others enter with optimism and enthusiasm. None of us can look into the future, for God in His great mercy and wisdom has kept the future veiled from our eyes. Thus, we must make our entrance into 2008 in faith. Paul stated, (2 Cor. 5:7) "*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*"

Looking to the future will be governed by the way we look at the present. Looking around us today we must not permit the successes or the failures of the past to defeat victorious living in the here and now. Neither must we allow the fear of the future to rob us of contentment today. The prayer of serenity should express our attitude: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference."

Today is all we have. The past is gone. The future never comes because it is always made up of todays. Thus, to insure that all of our todays are worthwhile we must be people of faith. The writer of Proverbs admonishes us: "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

- Roger Massey, via *Bulletin Digest* (adapted)