

Looking Ahead

Phil. 3:13

Introduction:

- A. This is time of year when people look back and ahead.
 - 1. Romans named January for Janus (two faces looking in opposite directions)
 - 2. Business people both review and plan.
- B. It is natural to look and plan ahead.
 - 1. Animals do it instinctively: Squirrel stores food, geese fly south.
 - 2. People do it: Insurance, savings, IRA, next year.
- C. It is good to look ahead, if kept in perspective.
 - 1. Paul was ready to die. (Phil. 1:21,23).
 - 2. Yet, still looked ahead if allowed to live. (Phil. 2:23,24)
- D. Our look ahead should have three **qualities** to it.

Discussion:

I. We Should Take A *Far-sighted* View Of The Future.

- A. Plan for eternity because life is uncertain.
 - 1. Life is not guaranteed for tomorrow. (Jas. 4:13,14).
 - 2. Life is pictured a brief by striking figures.
 - a. A flower. (Jas. 1:10,11).
 - b. A vapor. (Jas. 4:14)
 - c. A shadow, grass. (Psa. 102:11).
 - d. A tale (KJV), sigh (NKJV,ASV), moan (NIV). (Psa. 90:9-10).
 - 3. Life was over for Rich Fool—had only planned for time. (Lk. 12:16-21).
- B. Plan for eternity because Jesus is coming unannounced. (2 Pet. 3:10-14)
- C. Plan for eternity because it alone is secure. (Mt. 6:19-20).

II. We Should Take A *Hopeful* View Of The Future.

- A. Faithful Christian has no reason for anxiety about future. (cf. Mt. 6:30-34).
 - 1. Knows that death does no permanent harm. (2 Cor. 5:1-10).
 - 2. Knows that good comes to him both in life and death. (Phil. 1:21).
- B. Faithful Christian has every reason for hope about future. (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15).
 - 1. He has the forgiveness of sins. (Rev. 1:5-7; Acts 22:16; 1 John 1:7).
 - 2. He has God's promises. (Heb. 6:18-20; 9:27; John 14:1-4).
 - 3. He knows the end of his labor. (1 Cor.15:58; Phil. 3:12-14; 2 Tim. 4:8).

III. We Should Take A *Submissive* View Of The Future.

- A. We will do some things **if** God wills (James 4:13-16)
 - 1. Not a mere resignation.
 - 2. But a real desire to have God's will done. (Mt. 26:42; Lk. 22:42).
- B. We will do some things **because** God wills. (1 Pet. 4:1,2).
 - 1. God's will for our salvation from past sins.
 - 2. God's will for living in this present world. (Tit. 2:11,12).
 - 3. God's will for the church.

Conclusion:

- A. How do you look ahead to next year?
 - 1. With hope?
 - 2. With consideration for God's will?
- B. Why not begin by correcting past — obey gospel.