



July 11, 2010

One Foot In The Grave

We sometimes hear this expression speaking of someone who has poor health. On some occasions we might hear it used in reference to those who may have no tangible health problems but maintain a bleak outlook on life in general. The reality is that we have both feet in the grave and will one day come to our end. The question we need to answer is how we will spend the wait. There are some who look on life negatively and see only the losses and slights they have endured. There are others that appear to be unable to engage in a sober moment and think about issues that need to be considered and perhaps resolved. There are others who become overly negatively when things are not well. At the present time we are seeing a lot of that as the economy brings new pressures and fears to a new generation. There are good things to hope for and plan for. Without these life indeed would be a barren wasteland without promise. God created man (**Gen 1 & 2**) for the purpose of populating the world. Instructions for Adam and Eve were to be fruitful and multiply as they kept the garden. From the beginning man's habit has been to destroy his own happiness God has given us the potential to achieve. Jonah mentions the self created misery that humans produce while he was praying to God from the belly of the great fish that swallowed him. ***"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."*** (**Jonah 2.8**). God created man to enjoy a long life and only limited that when humans corrupted the gifts they had been given. (**Gen 6.3**). One of humanities greatest achievements is to create misery for ourselves in almost every conceivable form. Much of the popular entertainment that appears in movies, books and magazines do not convey interesting stories of folks living well, having a good time and being peaceful. The best sellers and most widely attended films are those that are dark and filled with care. This is the mind of man and the state of the world. This has been the way of the world since the beginning. David speaks of this in his writings in the Psalms. ***"O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee: Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry; For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave."*** (**Psm 88.1-3**). David is an example of a man that meant well but strayed and created problems for himself that would trouble him for the rest of his life. The lesson to be learned here is that David became stronger due to these trials. God also used David's suffering to mirror and record the trials of the Messiah who was to come in ways that conveyed the pain and suffering of a life sacrificed completely for the good of others. As we sometimes hear, "When life gives us lemons, we need to make lemonade". David did exactly that. Note what he states in the Psalms to this effect. ***"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."*** (**Psm 119.67**). David learned a valuable lesson and realized that if he corrected his ways he would be saved eternally. Life does not have to be that way. We can be as contented as possible in the material world having the promise of a life and home beyond physical suffering. We can lean on the strength of God and navigate through the things that Satan, life and ourselves might throw in our path. Some have characterized the attitude of some who claim to serve God, representing them as morbid individuals slightly out of step with the rest of the world, clad in black and looking downward thinking of how detestable man is and seeking ways to correct that. While this is a stereotype, there are real counterparts in the world. God expects and wants us to have a peaceful, long and happy life. He has given us the tools to accomplish that. As Paul states, ***"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."*** (**Phil 4.8**). He also wants us to live in a way that will lead others to want to live that way as well.

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