

Facing The Future With Lessons Of The Past

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts. For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little. (Isa 28:9-10) We all have to live by faith of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, we come to realize that life is a big school, a large university that teaches us to live by faith from one day to the next, from one year to the next, from one step to the next, from glory to glory. We cannot advance to the next step until we have tackled the tests and tasks of the present just as students cannot be promoted to a higher grade level until the present level is successfully tackled. Just as a school's graduation exercises is a celebrated event, reaching another landmark 2010 and entering another period in the times of our lives is also celebrated. It is a time to review the past and to plan the future. But when you look at the events around us, you are forced to come to grips with the fact that our future here on earth is not under our control, it is uncertain. In the meantime, we have to move on, because life goes on. There are two major pitfalls of human thinking we must avoid:

1. The first is a life stuck in the past. With a degrading world we live in, usually the past is a place that is more safe, you are more familiar with, and you feel more secure in. Because of this, too often, we find ourselves living solely in the past. (Sabi natin, ang ganda, ang tahimik ang buhay ko noon. Bakit ba ako napasok-pasok sa buhay na ito?) It would be like the Israelites who wanted to go back to Egypt than to venture out in faith through the desert and eventually claim the land of milk and honey promised by the Lord Jesus Christ. (Sabi nila, Bakit mo kami dinaladala dito Moses. Walang makain, walang mainom. Sa Egipto, may karne, may isda, may pipino, may bawang, may sibuyas. Dinala mo ba kami dito para mamatay?) Focusing on the past that often leads to discontent.
2. The other extreme is a life spent wholly in the future, caught up in daydreams. Nanaginip kang gising, and, therefore, failing to fulfill your daily responsibilities. But we are overtaken more by fears of the unknown in the future rather than sweet dreams of the next year or dreams of a nice and profitable job or a sheltered family. Then we are caught up not only in our dreams of the future but worse in the worries of the future. In the meantime, life moves on, and there are tasks and responsibilities of the present that we fail to tackle them because we are preoccupied with daydreaming or the fears and uncertainties of the future.

How do we live by faith then? ([Phi 3:13-14](#), [16](#)) Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus... Only let us hold true to what we have attained.) We are called to live in the present, instead of in the past or in the future. The Lord does not change our past. Instead, He works in the present to mold us and prepare us to face the tasks that we have at hand. The challenges, opportunities, tasks and responsibilities that Jesus brings into our lives cause us to grow and to rely on Him even more. As we grow in our faith, we come to realize that we need Jesus more and more and we cannot do the increasing task He gives us without Him. ([Jn. 15:5](#)) But it is when we feel weak and incapable to the task when we are strong because our strength is not of ourselves but the Lord Jesus'. And we can say "I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens

me. ([2 Cor. 12:10](#); [Phil. 4:13](#)) Furthermore, the increasing tasks show us that we are progressing, we are growing and we are advancing in our Christian lives. Helen Keller spoke about how we are to live today. She said, "It is for us to pray not for tasks equal to our powers, but for powers equal to our tasks." We are called not for a life with no challenges. Our job is simple: we are to do the work that the Lord Jesus has set before us. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." ([Joh 14:12](#)) We may not know now what we will be called to do; we may not understand why we were chosen for that task. Our understanding is not important. What is essential is that we are to obey the Lord and do what He calls us to do. We must remember to "keep our eyes on Jesus" as we make plans for the future. ([Heb. 12:2](#)) Attaining our goals are ultimately dependent on Him, "for the steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his steps and He delights in his way." ([Ps. 37:23](#); [Prov. 3:5-6](#)) For us, we are all enrolled in this university of life. Life's university teaches us to move ahead step by step. The only way to finish school is to move beyond the previous year. I realize of course that some of us are newly born, some are in the Nursery, some are in the Kindergarten, some Prep, some are graduates of the Elementary Level and are now in High School and so on. However, we are expected to progress as we move on. We as parents are so concerned about our children when they do not advance to the next class. Are we concerned when we remain in the pre-school level in the Lord's university of life. The Lord expects us to grow in faith. May we not hear the Lord say to us, "Act your age my child." Thankfully, in the school of life, we do not face this challenge all at once. Instead, we move from one lesson to the next as we push toward the goal of being completely in the Lord's will. Each year we learn something new; we build upon the knowledge we gained the year before. The only way to grow in our Christian faith is to embrace the next lesson given to us. This is stepping out in faith, moving from the known to the unknown, from your zone of comfort to a seemingly unsecured zone. But as we live each day by the faith of the Son of God, He brings us from glory to glory, grace upon grace miracle upon miracle. Each day He gives us a new task, and each day we have a choice: to face the task and ask Him for the strength or do we complain about the work required and decide to remain where we are? To experience the miracle of doing greater things for Jesus, we have to get out of our boat or our comfort zone[1]. Peter got out of the boat and he experienced the miracle of walking on water, a feat that we do not experience every day except by the miracle of Jesus. If we want to experience the miracle of Jesus, we have to get out of our boat or our comfort zone. It is very scary; it is a very fearful experience. But you can hear Jesus saying, "Come, it is I; be not afraid." In times of trouble, He is "a very present help in times of trouble." ([Ps. 46:1](#)) Just be still and know that Jesus is God. ([Ps. 46:10](#)) A song goes like this: "When the oceans rise and thunders roar; I will soar with You above the storm; Jesus You are king over the flood; I will be still and know You are God." Jesus wants us to experience His miracles by walking the stormy waters with Him and letting Him into your boat to be the Captain of your ship, In the passages in [Matt. 14:22-33](#), note that when Jesus got into the boat of His disciples, the last verse says, "the (stormy) wind ceased." Jesus did not promise us smooth sailing but He promised us safe arrival. He takes full responsibility of your life you have committed to Him. ([2 Tim. 1:12](#)) Today, we celebrate the end of another year thanking the Lord for having been faithful in providing all our needs in the past year. As we close another school year in the Lord's university of life, we also ask ourselves, have we thanked the Lord Jesus for a day, a year that we have progressed because we relied on His strength? Do we continue to face opportunities, challenges and tasks placed before us by the Lord that we may grow stronger for future tasks? And if we ask ourselves what

the future holds, do we look at the future with fear, unsure of what will come or are we confident that our future is in the Lord's hands and He is just preparing you for His best? You may not see it but Jesus holds the future. Just as the song goes: "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow; Because He lives, all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the future and life is worth the living just because He lives. If you have not received the Lord Jesus in your life and Jesus is not reigning your heart, the future is not only uncertain but it is doomed. ([Matt 12:30](#)) The prophet Jeremiah says ([Jer. 8:20](#)), "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Does that describe you? Are you sure you are saved? The Lord has given us seasons and years of our lives for an ultimate purpose. The purpose is obvious: that we may be saved. How? Learn to commit your all to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith, hope and love and in doing so, you may receive from Him the assurance of an abundant eternal life. There is a time to be saved and that time is now. [2 Cor. 6:2](#) – "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." It is not next year, not next season, not next month, not tomorrow but today. And when you have Jesus in your heart, and your faith is in Him, you are confident of the future. I, therefore, challenge all of you to not only place your past and your present and your future in the hands of Jesus but to commit your all to Him. Let Jesus hold your future, your whole life "for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. ([2 Tim 1:12](#)) Let us learn our lessons well; let us learn to trust Jesus even more with the growing challenges, opportunities, tasks and responsibilities. Then our lives become totally secured in the hands of Jesus not only for now, not only for the future but for eternity.

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