

Looking on the Bright Side

James 4:15

Introduction:

1. The optimist person sees things:
 - a. Glass as half full
 - b. When life gives you lemons, make lemonade
 - c. Every cloud has a silver lining
2. The pessimist says:
 - a. When life gives you lemons, squirt someone in the eye
 - b. When life gives you lemons, give them back because they are terrible gifts
3. Sometimes things happen, that at first we have a hard time finding anything positive.
4. Six months ago none of us could have imagined that our lives would dramatically change, maybe forever. But there have been some good things to come out of our world-wide pandemic.
 - I. Now we have more time to be home
 - A. Dangerous prayers: Many of us wanted more time with our families. Six weeks later some of us are wanting to get out of the house and away from our children.
 - B. God has placed great importance on the home and family.
 1. Ephesians 5:22-23: Husbands and wives are called to be one, love each other above oneself
 2. Deuteronomy 6:7; Ephesians 6:4: Parents are to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord
 3. Ephesians 6:1-3: Children are to obey their parents in the Lord
 - C. All this time we have been at home with our spouses and children has brought about many good things.
 1. When things get back to “normal” we should not get back to normal with our families.
 2. The world will eventually go back to investing their time in work, school and other things. But this should not be done at the expense of our families. Whether or not this pandemic is divine punishment is beside the point, the point is that we live in the moment and take advantage of the lessons we have learned.

II. Now we have more time to study God's word

- A. Many times I heard people say, "If I only had more time I would read my Bible and pray more."
- B. Now, knees are being worn out as God's children are praying more, and with much more intensity. (2 Chronicles 20:12 -Jehoshaphat cried out to God when Judah was being invaded by three kingdoms at the same time. "O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You.")
- C. As a preacher and Bible class teacher we are probably teaching more than ever.
 - 1. Churches are live-streaming more
 - 2. Preachers have opened up more to online teaching
 - 3. Preachers are preaching in countries they have never set foot on
 - 4. The Great Commission has been revived!
- D. Church members are using their church directories to call, text and write their brethren. People are more concerned about each other (Galatians 6:2 - Carry each others burdens; Matthew 22:36-40-What is the greatest commandment?...)

III. We want to go home, again

- A. For years we have heard that life is hanging by a thread, that life is but a vapor (James 4:14; Hebrews 9:27)
- B. Most people understand the frailty of life, but none of us know the when. It is important that we are prepared for eternity.
 - 1. Teach us to number our days (Psalm 90:12)
 - 2. The Day of the Lord will come when we least expect it ("You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." - Luke 12:40; The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night - 1 Thessalonians 5:2)
- C. Today, we need to make sure we are ready for eternity.

Conclusion:

- 1. Sometimes tragedies bring about the best in us (9-11), and that turns out to be great blessings.
- 2. This pandemic may make us feel helpless, but may it never make us feel hopeless.
- 3. Let us count our many blessings, name them one by one, and not take them for granted.