

GNITN

#1287

Living Day To Day In Faith: We're Not Given Tomorrow

Tomorrow Is Not Promised

We plan vacations, careers, retirements, even what we'll do next weekend - and there's nothing wrong with planning. But somewhere along the way, planning can quietly turn into *presuming*. We start to live as if tomorrow is guaranteed, as if our next breath is something we're owed rather than something we're given. Scripture takes a different posture. Again and again, God invites His people to walk with Him one day at a time - not because the future doesn't matter, but because faith is built in the present tense. Today is the only day we actually have. Today is where trust gets exercised:

"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow... Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'" ([James 4:13-15, NKJV](#))

James isn't condemning planning - he's condemning planning *without God*, as if life were entirely in our hands. The phrase "you do not know what will happen tomorrow" is the hinge of this whole lesson. Our certainty about the future is an illusion; our security has to be in God, not in our calendars:

Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth. ([Proverbs 27:1, NKJV](#))

Two Very Different Lives, The Same Conclusion

What makes these two verses so striking is *who* said them. Solomon wrote *Proverbs* from the height of human prosperity. He inherited a peaceful, unified kingdom from his father David, built the Temple, and accumulated more wealth, wisdom, and influence than any king of his era (see [1 Kings 3:12-13; 10:23](#)). He had armies, alliances, a treasury, and a dynasty already underway. By every human measure, his tomorrow looked secure. And yet, from inside that abundance, he's the one who warns, "you do not know what a day may bring forth." His later reflection in *Ecclesiastes* - calling his life's achievements "vanity" (see [Ecclesiastes 1:2](#)) - shows this wasn't theory for him. He had tested whether wealth could buy certainty about the future, and found that it couldn't. James wrote from the opposite end of the spectrum. He led the Jerusalem church in the years after Jesus's death and resurrection - a season marked by poverty, scattering, and persecution for believers (see [James 1:1; Acts 8:1](#)). He wasn't writing from a palace; he was writing to people who had lost homes and security for following Christ, and early church tradition holds that James himself was eventually killed for his faith. He had no illusions about safety. And yet he lands on the exact same conclusion as Solomon: hold your plans loosely, because tomorrow isn't yours to promise. That's what gives their shared conclusion its weight. One man had every reason to feel secure; the other had every reason to feel desperate. Wealth didn't make Solomon's tomorrow guaranteed, and hardship didn't make James despair of God's care for today. A king at the peak of prosperity and a persecuted pastor on the run arrived at identical wisdom - which tells us this truth isn't a product of one man's circumstances. It's simply true, regardless of whether you have much or little:

"So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom." ([Psalm 90:12, NKJV](#))

Notice - this isn't a call to despair over how short life is. It's a prayer. Moses asks God to teach this. Numbering our days rightly doesn't come naturally; it's something we have to learn, on purpose, from God.

Manna in the Wilderness

One of the clearest pictures of "daily faith" in the entire Bible is the story of manna ([Exodus 16](#)). After God delivered Israel from Egypt, they were hungry in the wilderness. God responded by raining bread from heaven - but with a catch. He told them to gather only enough for *that day* ([Exodus 16:4](#)). If anyone tried to hoard extra overnight "just in case," it bred worms and started to stink by morning ([Exodus 16:19–20, NKJV](#)).

Think about what God was training into His people: He wanted their dependence on Him renewed every single morning. Not once a month. Not "stocked up for the year." Daily. The miracle wasn't just the bread - it was the rhythm of trust God was building into them. This is exactly why, generations later, Jesus taught His disciples to pray:

"Give us this day our daily bread." ([Matt 6:11, NKJV](#))

Not "give us a year's supply." Daily bread, for today, trusting Him again tomorrow for tomorrow's portion.

The Rich Fool

Jesus told a parable specifically about a man who lived as though tomorrow - and many tomorrows - were guaranteed. In [Luke 12:16–21](#) we're told about a wealthy farmer who has such a good harvest that his barns can't hold it all. His solution: tear down the barns, build bigger ones, and say to himself, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." God's response is sobering:

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'"

The man's mistake wasn't saving or working hard - Scripture elsewhere praises diligence ([Proverbs 6:6–8](#)). His mistake was planning his soul's security around years he was never promised, while ignoring God entirely. He talked to himself about "many years" and never once talked to God about *tonight*.

Daily Bread For Elijah And The Widow

Two more stories from [1 Kings 17](#) show what it looks like to actually live this out - not just hear about it. We see it in two examples, first in the ravens ([1 Kings 17:2–6](#)). When God hid the prophet Elijah during a drought, He didn't give him a warehouse of food. He sent ravens to bring him bread and meat - every morning and every evening. Elijah didn't know about tomorrow's delivery. He simply showed up at the brook each day and God met him there. And then in the widow's flour and oil ([1 Kings 17:8–16](#)). The widow in Zarephath was down to her last handful of flour and a little oil, expecting to make one final meal for herself and her son before they starved. Elijah asked her to feed him first, trusting God's promise that her jar of flour and jug of oil would not run out. Scripture says:

"The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah" ([1 Kings 17:16, NKJV](#)). Not because she got a huge reserve all at once — but because God refilled it day by day, exactly enough, for as long as she needed it.

Don't Borrow Tomorrow's Trouble

Jesus addresses this head-on in the Sermon on the Mount in [Matthew 6:25–34](#) when He tells His listeners not to worry about their life, what they will eat or drink, or about their body, what they will put on. He points to the birds of the air, who neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and

the lilies of the field, which are arrayed more gloriously than Solomon ever was - and neither of them is anxious. Then He lands the point:

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" ([Matthew 6:34, NKJV](#)).

This verse is almost startlingly practical. Jesus isn't promising an easy life - He says today already has enough trouble of its own. But that's the point: you were only given grace for today's troubles, not tomorrow's. Trying to carry tomorrow's weight today just means carrying two days' worth of burden with one day's worth of grace.

New Mercy Every Morning

This way of living isn't meant to feel fragile or fearful - it's meant to feel *secure*, because of who's in charge of tomorrow:

"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness." ([Lamentations 3:22-23, NKJV](#))

This verse is found in a hymn we sing all the time and we need to remember the context of it to get its full impact. You see, this was written in the middle of devastating loss - the fall of Jerusalem. And yet the writer's anchor wasn't "things will get better eventually." It was that God's mercy resets every single morning, regardless of circumstances. You don't need to borrow strength from a future day. God will be just as present, just as faithful, and just as merciful when that day arrives. This is what daily faith looks like. Daily faith doesn't hoard security for an unknown future - it prays:

"Give us this day our daily bread" ([Matthew 6:11, NKJV](#))

It doesn't boast about tomorrow's plans - it holds them loosely, as James tells us:

"If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that" ([James 4:15, NKJV](#)). It doesn't carry tomorrow's worries today, because Jesus already told us that today has trouble enough of its own ([Matthew 6:34, NKJV](#)). It doesn't trust in stockpiles, but in the God who sent manna, who sent ravens to Elijah, and who kept a widow's flour and oil from running dry. And instead of living for "someday," it asks God to teach it to number today rightly, so it can gain a heart of wisdom right now ([Psalm 90:12, NKJV](#)).

A God Who Already Sees Tomorrow

This kind of daily trust isn't a blind leap - it's built on a God who has already proven He knows what tomorrow holds. Isaiah quotes the Lord declaring "the end from the beginning" ([Isaiah 46:10, NKJV](#)), and Scripture backs that claim up with hundreds of specific prophecies - from the time and place of the Messiah's birth to the details of His death - fulfilled centuries after they were written. That track record matters here: the same God who tells us not to presume about tomorrow is the God who already sees the whole story. So living one day at a time isn't trusting an uncertain future to a guessing God - it's trusting an unknown future to the One who has never once been wrong about it. Now I want you to ask yourself these questions so you can focus on the value of trusting God daily. Where in your life are you "building bigger barns" - relying on accumulated security instead of daily trust in God? What would it look like, practically, to ask God for "today's bread" instead of worrying about next month? Is there a worry you're carrying right now that actually belongs to tomorrow, not today? How does knowing God's mercies are "new every morning" change how you face a hard season? Israel had to gather manna fresh every day - what's the modern equivalent of going out each morning to "gather" what you need from God? I don't need to hear your responses, but God does. I end with this: living day to day in faith isn't about refusing to think ahead - it's about refusing to let tomorrow steal today's trust, and refusing to let today's anxieties borrow from tomorrow's unearned grace. God didn't give Israel a

year's worth of manna. He gave them Himself, daily, and asked them to come back the next morning and trust Him again. That's the invitation: not a leap of faith taken once, but a posture of faith renewed every single day - because today is the only day we've actually been given:

"This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it." ([Psalm 118:24, NKJV](#))