

Proverbs of Solomon – Proverbs 27:1

I wonder if the Lord with His perfect record-keeping will ever tell me how many times I have quoted this verse. I won't even venture a guess, and probably the number doesn't really matter. It contains is a very good thought which demands to be a part of a great many gospel messages. I have quoted this verse a great many times, but I have never taken this verse as my primary text. Let's correct that oversight this evening – though this will not be a deep theological discussion.

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” A good student might be able to incorporate a number of verses from Proverbs 26 and 27 to augment this statement. *“Whosoever diggeth a pit shall fall therein”* – it might be today or maybe tomorrow – so don't boast in either. *“As snow in summer... so honour is not seemly for a fool.”* Do you mean it might snow in July? Yes, so don't boast about tomorrow's weather. *“The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool and rewardeth the righteous.”* That righteous judgment or *“reward”* may come tonight while we are sleeping, or tomorrow at breakfast. *“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; “Let another man praise thee (if it is appropriate) ...”* but remember it may not come today. *“Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds,”* because *“thou knowest not what tonight may bring forth.”* This sort of verse-to-verse comparison might be a profitable study. But I've chosen a different path for tonight's little devotional – with a bit of alliteration.

This verse condemns PRESUMPTION – don't PRESUME to know what tomorrow shall bring.

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” What would it be called if you knew at this moment what will take place at 3:31 tomorrow afternoon? Wouldn't it require omniscience to know exactly what it going to take place minute by minute tomorrow? And who is the only one to possess omniscience? God, of course – Elohim – Jehovah God. Doesn't it take just a little **presumptuous idolatry** to boast in tomorrow? We may have **hopes** about tomorrow; we may have **plans** for tomorrow; but we have **no guarantees** or **foreknowledge**. And without precise knowledge there isn't really any room to boast about tomorrow.

It is presumption to boast about Thursday or Friday. Doesn't boasting imply that we have control of what will take place at 3:31 tomorrow afternoon? Despite people's insistence on personal *“free will,”* we have no control of ourselves – let alone others. So you have an appointment at which you expect to hear the praises of some important official – **verse 2**. Are you sure there won't be an accident on the highway as you go to get your award and praise? Are you sure the mayor won't have a heart attack tomorrow and the meeting won't be cancelled? Don't presume to know what will take place tomorrow, because you are not God.

It is presumption to assume that we will be alive tomorrow. There were hundreds of people around the world yesterday, who had plans for today, but last night they unexpectedly died. It happens all the time. A well-known parallel verse is found in **James 4** – *“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.”* All such boastings are evil, because they presume upon the prerogatives of deity. If you want to presume something – presume this: God sovereignly controls all things.

Now let me spring a new word on you – this verse condemns PRE-CRASTINATION.

We all know what it is to PRO-crastinate. I'd define it for you, but I'd prefer to do that later. To procrastinate is to postpone something – to delay in doing something – especially if it is important. This verse doesn't teach us anything about procrastination, but we could use it to highlight a point or two.

More to the point is *“precrastination.”* This is not a common word and perhaps it is relatively new. It means what you'd expect. A precrastinator is someone who tries to get things done in advance – before it is necessary or reasonable. It can be as problematic as its counterpart. Generally speaking, it is better to take care of today's responsibilities today, leaving tomorrow's responsibilities for tomorrow. If tomorrow there is reason to boast, then wait until tomorrow.

But here is an idea – why not PREFACE tomorrow with a PREOCCUPATION of the Lord?

The only thing we know with absolute assurance about tomorrow is that Jehovah will be there. The Lord is already present in tomorrow, and the day following and the decade following that. Jehovah doesn't occupy time – omni-moment-by-moment – or something like that. He is above time. At this moment the Lord is as present in tomorrow as He is in this moment. So that means – if we want His blessing at 3:31 tomorrow afternoon, it makes sense to lean upon Him today – right now.

Perhaps tomorrow's appointment is with your dentist, your oncologist, your lawyer, or your mother-in-law. Perhaps you aren't boasting in that appointment, but just the opposite – you are worried. What is the Biblical solution to worry? There may be nothing you can do to prepare for that meeting. You have found no solution for that toothache or that oral cancer or that law-suit against you. There is no place to turn, but to the Lord. So why not do just that? And while you are at it, remember that He controls the praises of men as well as their attacks. Not only *"frighten not thyself of tomorrow,"* but *"boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."* The best way to approach tomorrow is to *"Set your affection on things above today, not on things on the earth.... "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."* Rather than boasting about tomorrow, we should be focusing on the Lord who holds in His hand everything that tomorrow contains.

But that doesn't mean we cannot PREPARE for tomorrow.

Brother Roberts and I were talking about this last weekend. For the first time in its history, our church has a healthy balance in our bank account. We have spent a great deal on improving the electrical system in our building and installing air-conditioning. And we have other things in the works – like a sign. There are many other things we could do and perhaps should do around here. But the question has arisen – How much of a balance should we maintain in our bank account? Some people think we should keep a big bank balance, and some think that perhaps we shouldn't keep a balance at all – trusting in the Lord's future provisions.

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Both Bro. Roberts and I believe we should take a middle of the road approach – keeping a reasonable, but not excessive balance. I would be embarrassed to stand before the Lord at the Bema and confess that we were hoarding money which should have been used in the Lord's work. But boasting not in ourselves, our wisdom, our health or our bank accounts, doesn't mean that we shouldn't make plans for what might happen tomorrow. So long as our boasting is in the Lord and not ourselves, preparations are not out of place.

Some people think that life insurance is a sin – it's a lack of faith in God to take care of our loved ones when we are gone. I disagree. I suppose that an excessive life insurance policy might be sinful and a lack of faith. And of course it would be sin to take the Lord's money and invest it in insurance, the stock market, or IRAs. There needs to be some sort of balance – let every man be persuaded in his own mind.

There are a number of professing *"Christians"* at the gym where I exercise. I can picture two of them in particular who work out very, very hard. We hardly ever say more than *"hello"* to one another, but I have often wanted to ask these two why it is they work so hard? I go to the gym to exercise my heart and lungs, to keep my cholesterol down, to stir a few endorphins within my brain, and to keep my weight at a reasonable level. I do not go to the gym to become a body builder, to ruin my shirts with bulging muscles, to impress anyone. I will never boast myself in what shape my body will be tomorrow. But at the same time, I'm not planning on quitting my meager exercise regime. I can honestly say that in part I go to the gym to serve my Lord. I am not boasting in tomorrow, but through exercise I am preparing for tomorrow.

This verse adds another piece of alliteration – the word is "PREGNANT."

Perhaps this point should have been our first, but it logically follows my last. *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may BRING FORTH."* *"Bring forth"* is a very common Hebrew word – used just under 500 times. 25 times it is rendered *"bring forth,"* but close to 200 times it is translated *"bare"* and *"born."* However the most common translation is *"beget"* or *"begat."* *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may BEGAT or PRODUCE."*

You could say, today is pregnant with tomorrow's baby. You may wake up refreshed and rejuvenated tomorrow morning, but some of the effects of today will still be with you – physically, emotionally even spiritually. Going back to my experience at the gym, one young lady, who has been working out there for a couple years, is now expecting. I have never seen her use any of the equipment except two of the cardio machines. She is not trying to become a famous female body-builder; she's not training to lift 200 pounds. She is simply trying to stay healthy, and now that she's expecting, perhaps that is even more important.

Today is pregnant with tomorrow's baby. And as such, we need to take care of ourselves and our today. We need to feed on the best nutrition, because our baby's health tomorrow depends on it. We need to feast on the Lord, on the Word of God, on the preaching of the Word, on fellowship with the saints and on the exercise of service. And we

need to avoid those things which would poison our systems and harm the baby. Sins like boasting in ourselves or even boasting in our unborn. Just a little idolatry today might produce a miscarriage or a deformed child tomorrow. Remember, bringing that baby into the world might require our care for the day after that and the rest of our lives. Our sins today may produce a future which will enslave us for the rest of our lives. *“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”*

Does **Ecclesiastes 11:5** apply here? *“As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”* Leave tomorrow in the hands of the Expert – the only Expert in the things of tomorrow – the Lord. Don’t boast in tomorrow – and don’t fear in it either. Prepare as best you can and then leave the rest in God’s hands. *“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”*