



The Southeast Sower

Southeast Church of Christ

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“Permanent Wealth”

“Ours is a land rich in resources stimulating in its glorious beauty and blessed with comfort and opportunity. In no nation are the institutions of progress more advanced. In no nation are the fruits of accomplishment more secure. No country is more loved by its people. I have an abiding faith in their capacity, integrity and high purpose. I have no fears for the future of our country. It is bright with hope.” Those are the words spoken by newly-elected President Herbert Hoover in his March 4th inaugural speech in the year 1929. Eight months later, the stock market crashed.

But even just before the big crash, as the market floundered, financial leaders were as optimistic as ever, more so, in fact. Just five days before the crash, Thomas Lamont, acting head of the highly conservative Morgan Bank, wrote a letter to President Hoover. “The future appears brilliant. Our securities are the most desirable in the world.”

But all the hope and faith and optimism in the world made little difference: disaster was coming. And even after the Great Crash, people thought the worst was behind

them—they looked optimistically toward 1930. At the end of 1929, Americans, as usual, celebrated New Year’s Eve, and all the prosperity that lay in the future. Nobody knew that the Great Depression was coming — unemployment, bread lines, bank failures — this was unimaginable. But the bubble had burst. Gone would be that innocent optimism, that confidence, that illusion of “permanent wealth”. One era had ended. They toasted the coming of the 30s, but the party was over.

The president was devastated along with the country he served. Herbert Hoover spent much of the early 1930s fishing. He later explained in a speech that fishing is a constant reminder of humility and of human frailty, “for all men are equal before fishes.”

Herbert Hoover and the rest of the nation was given a hard lesson; a lesson that all mankind must face, but very few actually learn. *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,”* (Matthew 6:19-21).

The Southeast

Church of Christ meets at:

35 Walnut Court

Mogadore, OH 44260

Phone: 330.628.7432

SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study: 10:00 am

Worship: 10:50 am

6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 pm

It took financial disaster to remind Herbert Hoover, and the nation, of the fragility of this world and the things in it: health, happiness, wealth, and good fortune. It took economic ruin to remind this nation that we all enter into this world and leave it with nothing. We are all equal in the sight of not only fishes, but God, our creator.

During these tough economic times we are experiencing now, it is difficult to keep focused on the real assets in our lives; the assets that

cannot be taken away, but can only be given away by us. In the midst of worries about our financial future, we often lose sight of our spiritual future. *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own,”* (Matthew 6:25, 31-34).

If you want a rock solid investment for your *real* future, put your trust into something that never fails, put your faith in a proven performer, put your stock in God; buy and never sell, and only then will you finally experience “permanent wealth”.
-Paul Seely

Focus

A lot of what we accomplish in life depends upon our focus. The story is told of the golfer Arnold Palmer, who, in the 1961 Master’s finals was approached by a friend and congratulated on his victory a few shots prior to his finish. Palmer is on record as saying that in that moment he lost his focus and he ended up losing by a point. It happens time

and again; there is the football player who looks toward the goal line and drops the ball; the ice skater who falls and simply can’t recover to conclude the performance; the politician who misspeaks and ruins his political career all for a lack of focus.

Out of all of the kings of Israel, David was arguably the greatest; he had his problems, but he always ultimately sought to put his trust in the Lord. Nevertheless, because David was a man of war, his greatest desire, to build the Lord a house, could not be accomplished by him. David, however, purposed to do all that he could toward the construction of the temple prior to his death. He made agreements with nations for materials; he collected materials; he assembled workers. Before his death, David commanded the princes of Israel to help Solomon build the temple (1 Chronicles 22:17). He exhorted them, “Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD” (1 Chronicles 22:19). Do we see the focus in the words, “Set your heart and soul to seek the Lord your God”? Because they focused upon seeking God, they were able to accomplish the task at hand. Oscar Hammerstein II wrote the following lyrics in 1928:

“Give me some men who are Stouthearted Men Who will fight for the right they adore. Start me with ten, who are Stouthearted Men And I’ll soon give you ten thousand more, Oh! Shoulder to shoulder and bolder and bolder They grow as they go to the fore! Then there’s nothing in the world can halt or mar a plan, When Stouthearted Men can stick together man to man!”

Where is our focus? Is it upon God or upon the world? John wrote, *“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him”* (1 John 5:14-15). It is so often the case that we don’t accomplish the things that we desire to accomplish because we have not adequately focused upon God and His word in our lives. However, intensifying our focus upon God will bring us further along than any other thing.

So, do we find ourselves at our wits end because of the countless tasks that are before us? Focus on God. Do we fail to get anything accomplished due to the many distractions that come our way in life? Focus on God. Do we have godly goals and aspirations that we seek to accomplish? Focus on God. Whatever our situation is, we can improve it by focusing upon God and refocusing our life upon His priorities.
-Jeff Haught