

## WAY TOO SOON

I learned about a young woman's passing recently, still in her 20's, from health-related issues. The person who informed me about her death acknowledged the reality that she died "way too soon." I could not agree more. This is the way we often feel when we lose somebody at such a young age. Stories like this remind us just how fragile and unpredictable life can be. As I reflected upon this truth, I found God leading me to open my Bible so He could remind me of these words written by Jesus' half brother James in his New Testament letter:

**How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog - it's here a little while, then it's gone (James 4:14).**

Upon reading it I could see how God was reminding me just how short life can be no matter how many years we live. As I examined these words even more closely, I could see how God was also reminding me through James' message that we should appreciate life now instead of being deceived into thinking that we may still have lots of time remaining to appreciate the people and things we have in our lives.

I encounter this so often in my walk as a pastor. Some people are filled with regrets after a loved one's passing because they did not fully appreciate them while they were still alive. I wondered why God was having me spend so much time reflecting on this before realizing it was to inspire me to write this mid-week message and ask the question whether we are showing appreciation on a daily basis for all the people and blessings God has put into our lives. This is a question we do not often ask ourselves, but I think it is a good time for us to consider:

- whether we are truly appreciating the family, friends, co-workers, and acquaintances that God has put into our lives, not just with words, but in our actions too?
- whether we are appreciating the gift of each day that God is providing?
- whether we are appreciating the many blessings God provides us with on a daily basis?
- and whether we are appreciating the relationship we have with God on a daily basis?

Perhaps we have come away from looking at these questions realizing we have been so caught up in the day-to-day realities of life that we are failing to fully appreciate all of these people and things in our lives. After drawing my attention to these questions, I found God having me focus on James' instructions in this verse below meant to help us better appreciate the people and blessings we have in our lives on a daily basis.

**What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that" (James 4:15).**

We are being encouraged through this instruction to take the approach of starting off each day desiring to live it for God by seeking His direction and will for us. By taking this approach we will be more appreciative of the people and things God places in our lives on a given day knowing it is of His doing, and we will have no regrets if something or someone is taken from us "way too soon."

It is never "way too soon" to start the journey of appreciating all that we have been given by God. Taking this approach to our daily living will be appreciated by all including God.

**Keep safe and God bless,**

**Pastor Dean**