

## CHANGING OUR OUTLOOK

We can change our outlook on life by trusting in the divine will of God.

### KEY POINTS

- ❖ There are many things that can affect one's posture. Among those things is a stiff neck, which can be caused by physical posture...or by the spiritual outlook we may possess.
- ❖ At times in our Christian walk we may find ourselves in situations that cause us to have a negative outlook (attitude or point of view). That negative outlook may then manifest itself as a spiritual stiff neck.
- ❖ David found himself in that kind situation. (See 2 Samuel 15.)
- ❖ David's son, Absalom, after killing his brother Amnon, had fled from Jerusalem. After his return to Jerusalem, he began plotting to take the throne from his father by stealing the hearts of the people of Israel.
- ❖ It was quite a scene: David, in what must have been indescribable humiliation, was driven from his throne not by a neighbouring king, but by his own son. And if this wasn't bad enough, his son's supporters were from among David's own inner circle!
- ❖ Some of us have experienced pain not from strangers, not from those afar off, but from the people closest to us. And like David, our outlook is initially not on God (2 Sam. 14:1).
- ❖ But we can change our outlook.
- ❖ David recognized this fact. He remembered that God, the lifter up of our heads, "makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the beggar from the ash heap, to set them among the princes and make them inherit the throne of glory. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's and He has set the world upon them" (1 Sam. 2:7-8).
- ❖ In what we perceive to be our darkest hour, the Lord will be our light (Michah 7:8b).
- ❖ In our perceived weakness, the Lord is the strength of our life. "Now know I that the Lord saves His anointed...." (Psalm 20:6).
- ❖ Let's turn our focus to Jeremiah, God's prophet. Because Jeremiah tells of God's judgment, he is beaten and locked up. After he is released, we read of his discouragement and depression—his lament. (See Jeremiah 20.)
- ❖ He was disgraced, God was dishonoured, and no good was done. Jeremiah concluded to himself that it was better to be silent, to neither mention the name of God nor any message he had received from Him since it was to no purpose (v.9).
- ❖ Some of us have been called to the ministry, or we may have specific gifts and callings. At the onset of the journey we're excited about the work of God. But then our labour does not bear the fruits we had imagined and so, like Jeremiah, we begin to lament. But.
- ❖ "But *His word* was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones" (v.9).

### KEY SCRIPTURE:

Psalms 3:1-4

- ❖ And so Jeremiah's outlook changed. He acknowledges that the Lord was with him as a MIGHTY, AWESOME One (v. 11).
- ❖ Changing our outlook involves having the word of God shut up in our bones. We must use the word of God as a shield to block those darts that want us to have a continual negative outlook.
  - Dart—financial hardship; Shield—Psalm 37:25
  - Dart—sickness; Shield—Isaiah 53:5
  - Dart—trouble: at work, in the home, trouble everywhere; Shield—2 Corinthians 4:8-9
- ❖ Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, laments that His soul was sorrowful unto death. Knowing what was to come, He wanted the hour to pass from Him. (See Mark 14:32-41.)
- ❖ We, too, know what it feels like to be sorrowful, to want the situation to pass over us. Yet Jesus said in His prayer, "Nevertheless, not what I will but what You will" (v. 36).
- ❖ It is only when we realize that it is not our will but God's that we will experience a change in posture. This change will occur because we know He works to do His good will and pleasure in our lives (Philippians 2:13).
- ❖ We can change our outlook by trusting God's will.
- ❖ Changing our outlook is important. As long as we are focused in a negative zone, we will be in a place of defeat. And that is exactly what the enemy wants. Remember—he only comes to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10).
- ❖ But if we ever make the decision to change our outlook—to trust His will, to draw upon His Word, to praise Him in whatever tough issue we are dealing with—victory will be ours.
- ❖ Let us make the decision to cast all our cares on the Lord and change our outlook on life.

### DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Was there an instance in your life where, like Sarah (see Genesis 16:1-5), you tried to do God's work in your own time instead of waiting on Him? What was the result? Conversely, what happened when you waited on the Lord?
2. "We can change our outlook by trusting God's will." What are the scriptures you refer to when encouraging yourself/others to trust in God? (For example: Romans 8:28.) How did that particular scripture help in your/their situation?

### Prayer Time

Lord, no longer will I walk through life with my head hanging down. I will look to You and trust in Your will for my life. I choose to change my outlook.

## WEEK OF SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2019

### NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🧠 (Think about)

👉 (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↺ (Must share)

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### PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

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Go deeper with your Life Group family.  
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD  
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: Have you ever tried on another person's glasses? When you did, how did your outlook change (better or worse)?