

THE RIGHTEOUS WILL NEVER BE MOVED

REV. DON GUICO

Covid surge, Abra earthquake, monkey pox, and rising cost of commodities - these had been the headlines this past week, and people are getting more nervous each day because of the many unknowns that they know will inevitably come and will have to confront. And when people are nervous, they tend to do crazy things.

The phrase "kapit sa patalim" pretty much sums up these crazy, desperate actions people make when they are in dire situations. It only magnifies the fact that we are all, indeed, powerless. And powerlessness, the feeling that you have no control over what is happening and what is going to happen next, can be so overwhelming that it leads to more actions that could further be detrimental to the soul and spirit. That is, if you have no hope. For Christians, there is always hope. We find it in the person of Jesus, our living hope.

For Christians, there is power. We find it in the person of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us daily to meet every challenge head on. So why do we Christians still do crazy things when we are in crisis situations? It's because we are undeniably forgetful, fallible, and fickle, among other things. And Psalm 112 has an encouragement for us today.

In a nutshell, the psalmist writes about three things: (1) the characteristics of a righteous man, (2) the blessings of righteousness, and (3) the future of the wicked. Let me start with the blessings. But a word of caution for us: these are not promises that are guaranteed, nor do they happen overnight. These are but assurances

that God is a rewarder of the faithful, and the dispensation of blessings is His prerogative.

The blessings of righteousness -

- his offspring will be mighty in the land, v.2a
- he will have wealth and riches, v.3a
- he will always have hope, v.4a
- he will never be moved, v.6a
- he will be remembered forever, v.6b
- he is not afraid of bad news, v.7a
- he will look in triumph over his enemies, v.8b
- he is honored, v.9c

How wonderful would it be to live a life that is secure, whatever trial, hardship and calamity may come! And certainly, all people want to experience and enjoy these blessings for themselves, and as a legacy to their children. But not everyone is willing to pay the price of these blessings, which is the prerequisite righteousness.

For the Christian, however, the position of being in right standing with God has been secured by Jesus through His sacrifice on the Cross. Jesus has imputed His righteousness upon those whom He justified. So for the believer, what remains is to daily assess himself if he is, indeed, living in righteousness by abiding in Christ.

Here are the characteristics of a righteous man -

- fears the Lord, v.1b
- greatly delights in God's commandments, v.1c
- is gracious and merciful, v.4b
- deals generously and lends, v.5a
- is just in his affairs, v.5b
- trusts in the Lord, v.7b

- is steadfast and unafraid, v.8a
- gives to the poor, v.9a

The encouragement of Psalm 112 for us is this: the righteous will never be moved because God Himself will ensure it. But we have to counter the three problematic Fs - forgetful, fallible, and fickle - that characterize us and causes us to do crazy things. So I suggest for us three things:

First, to address our forgetful ways, **REMEMBER** your call of righteousness. Because Jesus exchanged His righteousness for our unrighteousness, His perfect life for our sins, the righteousness we have received through Him is worthy of remembrance and honoring each day.

Then, in order to be less and less fallible, **REMAIN** in your position of righteousness. Allow full access to the Holy Spirit who will point out things in your life that remain unsundered. Quickly yield to Him and give Him full authority to transform you. Ask Him to lead you away from paths of unrighteousness.

And finally, to do away with fickleness, **REFLECT** the God of righteousness. Choose God and choose to live for God, not for the desires of the flesh and the offerings of the world. Fight for your relationship with God who loves you and pursues you daily. Find it a great privilege to represent God in this dark world.

Remember, remain, and reflect. And you will see that God Himself will ensure that you will never be moved. ✠