

D. The Trouble with Good Resolutions; They Fail. Ps. 39

(Again, an appropriate step. Our desires often exceed our ability. To some Christians this becomes devastating and they conclude themselves worthless. Others determine they will stop striving to do the Lord's pleasure. This Psalm teaches us a lot about resolutions and how we both make and recover from them.)

1. Introductory notes on the Psalm.

a. Outline:

- the resolution, vs. 1
(a high-minded resolve not to speak anything that will be detrimental to the cause of God.)
- the frustration, vss 2-3
(having resolved too highly, the Psalmist is met with defeat)
- the prayer of dependence, vss 4-13
(This rather long prayer includes several vital portions. We summarize in this way:
 - : his life is place in dependence on God, vss 4-5
 - : his state is complete in the Lord, vs. 7
 - : his deliverance must come from the Lord, vss 8-10and the hope for the future comes from God.

b. Significant notes on the Psalm

- (1) This is obviously a deep personal reflection of some aspect of the life of David. It is as personal as Psalm 23.
- (2) Although other Psalms touch on this matter, no psalm is more emphatic in its pronouncement of the brevity of life than is this one. The writer's consciousness of life's shortness and his own ineffectiveness to achieve what he thinks should be achieved are key factors in placing him in dependence on the Lord.
- (3) His appreciation of man's own emptiness is very pronounced in vss 6, 11.
- (4) The language of vs. 12 bothers some readers but the term "stranger" only means that they are of a different class of beings. He is limited in his ability to understand God and must depend on God to reveal Himself and to uphold him in life.

2. Our message..in four steps for faltering resolve:

- a. Review the resolve
- b. Confess the need
- c. Ask for Divine Help
- d. Pledge to serve.