

God's Thoughts Toward Us

Sermon delivered on December 28th, 2014

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text: *Jeremiah 29:11*

I - Introduction

As the year 2014 comes to an end, and as a new year begins, we ask the question, What is this new year going to bring to you and me? What lies ahead for you and me, in this new year 2015?

Looking ahead in anticipation what the new year would bring, there are **many things that concern us**. For some, it may be **job concerns**, for others **financial problems**, for others **health issues**, for others **family concerns** and as parents we are **concern for our children** regarding the direction in which **our country is heading**, with **declining morality** and **growing hostility** and **indifference** to the way of Jesus Christ.

So, as we welcome 2015, we cannot help but ask the question, **what holds tomorrow?** Who knows? **Only God knows!**

We don't know what holds tomorrow but we know who holds our tomorrow!

But what does this oft-quoted saying really mean? How can you and I translate it to our own lives as husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, children and **face the new year with confidence?** Because if we are honest we would admit that we are **plagued with fear**. We fear many things. We are people **prone to fear, disposed to be afraid**.

Throughout this week I was praying for a message that will help us **face the new year with confidence**. Something we could take with us for the coming year and **for the rest of our lives**. Because, God after 2015, if Christ does not come, most of us will still be here, and **we need something to carry in our hearts to sustain us, to lead us, to motivate us to greater confidence, love and service, not only to people around us but specially to our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ**. Up until Thursday I was still undecided what message to bring this morning. I was vacillating between two messages.

But yesterday, my sister texted me and she does not know this, but she helped me pick the text for this morning's message.

Here is what she texted me:

*Great and faithful promises from the Lord to claim for the coming year.
Love in Christ the Quintos.*

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Which, by the way is our **memory verse** of the week.

When a friend or a loved one is going through a difficult time, we try to comfort them by sending them a note, letting them know ...

"I am thinking about you."

"My thoughts and prayer are with you."

"You are in my heart and in my thoughts."

When we say these words, we mean to convey two things:

1. Expression of love and concern

To be mindful of another person in his trial and sorrow is the **essence of love**.

It's nice to know that when we are going **through tough time**, people are **thinking about us and praying for us**. These are words expressing of love and concern.

2. Admission of helplessness

Although those words are very reassuring, we know our **thoughts cannot actually change anything**.

But in our text we read ...

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

These words were spoken by Jeremiah, for the assurance of the people of Judah in captivity who were **tempted to think that God had indeed forgotten them**.

I would like to show how **comforting** and **powerful** this verse is and is **worth committing to our memory**. If we could only grasp the significance of this verse, it would help us face the new year 2015 with confidence.

II - What a wonderful truth that God thinks of us

Psalm 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Just to think of who we are and what we have done, it blows my mind to know that God thinks of me and cares for me.

Psalm 40:17 But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

I am poor and needy, that is, I am nothing, I have nothing and I can do nothing and yet the Lord pays attention to me.

III - What a wonderful truth that God thinks of us always

That is a wonderful truth that God thinks of us. If that is the only truth that we are able to take home this day that should be a tremendous help to us. **The almighty God thinks upon His children from eternity to eternity.**

Every moment of our being and existence **His thoughts of mercy and goodness in Christ are upon us.** God thinks of us moment by moment. Never, for one moment, are we out of His thoughts.

Isaiah 49:15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

God has you **inscribe** or **written** on the palms of His hands.

The Lord never forgets His own. **Even though He has the whole vast universe to sustain and to rule.**

Not like life insurance

God is always conscious of His thoughts, of His eternal plan for us. His thoughts towards us are not like life insurance where after you have **signed it** you **put it away** in your filing cabinet and **forget about it** and **pull it out** only when you need it. No, we are ever before His mind and thought.

In **good days** and in **bad days**, in **good health** and in **bad health**, in our **youth** and in **old age**, in **prosperity** and in **poverty**, we are always in His mind.

Thy walls ...

It is the city, Zion, the emblem of the people, that can alone be "graven" or "portrayed." This city has, of course, walls. God bears them in mind perpetually.

What a wonderful truth! Our thoughts of God are often too small. The eternal God never ceases to think about us.

IV - God tells us what His thoughts are

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Our thoughts change from day to day.

We are fickle minded.

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Truly our thoughts are not like God's thoughts. **God's thoughts are greater than our thoughts.**

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? The Lord is not a man that He keeps changing His mind. **His infinite mind is made up, and He knows His thoughts.**

1. Thoughts of peace

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, **thoughts of peace**, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

God's thoughts toward His people are always thoughts of peace. He came to give us peace.

This the message of the angels to the shepherds on the first Christmas night ...

Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.

He wants us to have **peace that passes all understanding**. He is the **Prince of Peace**.

He gives us peace through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

The thoughts of God toward us are thoughts of peace, not evil, a **peace flowing from the cross of Calvary**.

Why does He have thoughts of peace towards us and not thoughts of holy retribution?

Why? I have no answer, but grace!

2. Not of evil

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and **not of evil**, to give you an expected end.

God knows **His thoughts and plans for His children**. His desire for His children is **not to harm, not to hurt us**, but rather to prosper, to bless, to give peace.

Psalms 115:12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron. 13: He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. 14: The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children. 15: Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

3. Expected End

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you **an expected end**.

And those thoughts lead to an expected end, that is, to a goal. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give a hope and a future. **Plans to give a future filled with hope.**

God's thoughts of us are powerful thoughts

They are not only well-meaning and sympathetic, but they are powerful. By His thoughts He will give to us an expected end, the end that He had planned and promised.

It is not wishful thinking. It brings the intended desires and plans.

The universe is one of God's thoughts.

God has a plan for us, His children. He knows the thoughts that He has toward us, and He has the **wisdom** and **power** to accomplish His plans and to give us that expected end.

V - Closing Thoughts

Now the Word of God comes to us today. We are not to live in the false hopes of the world, or the false hopes that we ourselves would devise. We must completely trust God and His words.

Let us respond with **submission, hope, and joy**. And let us say with the psalmist...

Psalm 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

Psalm 139:17 How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! 18: If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! How difficult it is for me to fathom your thoughts about me, O God! How vast is their sum total!

Let us pray that God would write these truths into our hearts and help face 2015 and the rest of our lives with confidence. And **whatever happens this year** we can be rest assured that God is true to His word and promises.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

This verse has its application for the individual, family and GTBBC.

Great and faithful promises from the Lord to claim for the coming year.

Amen!