

Hope For Tomorrow

Radio Talk for *Yuvavani* by Bejoy Peter
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Once there was a young boy who walked along with his mother one evening. He skipped around excited and talked about what he saw all around. Soon it was dark. They came back home and sat down on the lawn. As the boy was tired he laid his head on his mother's lap and looked up at the clear night sky. The twinkling stars were shining like diamonds in black velvet.

He soon stopped talking and became totally silent. His mother sensed something was troubling him and asked, "Son, what are you thinking about?" He replied, "Nothing Mummy." But she asked once again. "Tell me what is it?" Then the boy said, "Mummy, if the underside of heaven is so beautiful I wonder what the real side would be!"

Yes, there was a time when young children used to look up at the night sky and wonder. But today they grow up with heads bowed down and glued to artificially lit screens of gadgets. The world view of today's youth is more and more limited to a virtual world dominated by social media like Whatsapp and facebook. It is very difficult for those addicted to it to live without connecting to these pages every day.

What is the impact of this? Let us look at relationships, education and spirituality.

As far as relationships are concerned, there was a time when members of the family would sit and dine together and communicate openly with each other. Today, because of busy schedules and wrong priorities people do not find time for those within the family. And the saddest moment comes when youngsters find themselves strangers in their own home.

As we look at education, we find that it often fails to equip youngsters to face real life issues. It often fails to teach youngsters the most important lesson of saying NO to compromising situations in life.

In the religious sphere leaders are becoming more earthly minded than heavenly minded. Therefore youngsters are in a real dilemma when they seek out role models to follow.

Where does all these lead to? Youngsters sooner or later become like a boat cut off from its moorings and drifting on the waters without a sense of direction, without an

aim or specific goal in life. Of course, they learn their lessons, get good marks, enter into cut throat competition, earn enviable salaries and move ahead in life. But the question is what happens when they lose their jobs suddenly? Or what happens when someone who seemed to show special interest and liking cuts off that relationship without warning and prefer to be with someone else?

It is during such times one's character and mettle is tested.

It is during such times when youngsters start wondering about the meaning and purpose of life.

It is during such times that youngsters often give up and count themselves failures.

So many choose the wrong roads cutting themselves off from family and friends and waste their precious lives in addictions. Soon they lose their sense of worth and start thinking that nobody cares anymore. When such a negative and demonic thought finds breeding ground in one's mind a youngster loses all sense of reality and goes on to a downward spiral that often has tragic consequences.

But then is it true that no one cares? Often life can bring situations which make us think it is hopeless to hang in there and live to see another day. Dear friends, when you think that you wasted your life and there is no hope of a positive change do not act hastily. Just hold on and tell yourself that this night will pass and the day will break with new hope and a better tomorrow.

It is this message of hope that is the highlight of the story Jesus told about the prodigal son. Instead of the traditional concept of God standing as a tough school master ready with a cane to punish every single offence, through this story Jesus showed us the Father-heart of God filled with compassion and care for his erring children. The story tells us in compelling terms that God is ready to run to us with the offer of forgiveness and acceptance and friendship if we truly say "Yes, I want to come back to you."

In today's world many youngsters need just this assurance of being loved and accepted. Often we demand that they become perfect and righteous before we start loving them. But God is different. He accepts people just the way they are. He specializes in broken lives and works to restore joy and peace in such lives.

So there is hope for tomorrow even if things have gone wrong in your life so far. God can still paint a beautiful picture around that ugly stain that mars your life. Your past mistakes will not prevent you from achieving greatness in life. God can turn even your worst failures into masterpieces of dazzling beauty and craftsmanship.

Beyond all this there is the hope of a greater tomorrow. For God is not just interested in the present. He is thinking of an eternal home where we shall live with him for time without end. He is always thinking about wiping away all the tears from your eyes.

It was to convey to us this hope of a better tomorrow that Jesus declared: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." He said he came to this world to seek and save what was lost. He came to redeem and give his life to save people from their lost condition. He came to give them hope for tomorrow and even beyond.