

So I think there is a special blessing for us if we look at it at least provisionally that way, that the first few verses show a man recognizing a fact and seeing how inescapable is the fact and up to this fact not glorying in the fact but seeking a bit to escape from it.

Now our present generation has very largely managed to escape from it, but none of them escape completely or totally from it. You witness to somebody and tell them about the Lord. They look at you coldly and indifferently and show no interest in what you are saying. They want to put it out of their minds. They want to have nothing to do with Him. Now don't feel that your witness is wasted. Don't feel that there is nothing accomplished in talking to them. If the seed is planted in their mind, if the thought is there, when the time comes that trouble comes into their lives. When the time comes that they face difficulty, and this comes to everyone, then if that thought comes to their minds then the Lord's Spirit may take that and apply it to their heart at a time when they are not hiding behind the many things people hide behind today to keep from being aware of the knowledge of the Lord.

I remember during W.W. II of hearing of two ships, or rather of two planes that were and to land on the water and the men were marooned on a life-raft quite a long time. One of those planes - the result of it was that several of the men on it gave their lives to Christian work. Men who had not known the Lord before became real Christians -- ardent and active. These men tell how this plane was downed and how they were in that raft for some days and how aware they were of the presence of the Lord, and how aware they were of their need of Him, and how they were praying and looking to Him and in the end their lives were changed. But in the case of the other plane, the situation seemed to be just the same at the start. They also looked for help to the Lord and recited whatever Scripture they could remember and sang whatever hymns they could remember, but after they were rescued someone told of seeing them all in a bar a week later having turned away aside from any thought of God at all. When you get the full story of them, you see that the difference is that in the first of those two planes there was an ardent Christian in the group who had a Testament in his pocket and when those men were in that situation, where there was nothing but blank despair ahead of them, and where they were aware that there must be realities beyond what they could see or touch. They could not escape it. This man was there with his Testament to read them the Scripture and to explain the way of salvation, and God used the message in that situation.

It is necessary that we have the message. Difficulties rarely by themselves bring a man to the Lord. But as long as everything is going wonderfully, people are apt to push the Lord aside and say Some other day, some other time. They are oppressed rather than rejoicing in the knowledge of God's greatness. So we should sow beside all waters, never knowing how the Lord may use the message that is given.