

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO ULTIMATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE FUTURE

When anxiety was great within me,
your consolation brought joy to my soul."

In the context of this portion of Scripture, taken from Psalm 94:19, the psalmist states that he was surrounded and threatened by wicked persons and evil circumstances. In this situation he felt anxious concern that threatened to overwhelm him. But he was also encouraged by the knowledge that the Lord was helping him with His strong hand, and supporting him with His gracious love; and this brought comfort and joy to his soul.

Many people today are burdened down and heavily pressed by ultimate concerns, crucial uncertainties about the future. Who knows what important and unforeseen events may occur during the coming days? Who knows whether he or she will face a loss of job and income, a loss of a loved one, a loss of health, or even death in the foreseeable future? These concerns consume their thinking a good part of the time. They are passionately, deeply anxious about these questions. Frequently they try to escape from these concerns through total involvement in their job, or through recreation, or through human relationships, or through all-consuming social causes, or through literature or art or music or television or physical culture or alcohol or drugs or sex. But as soon as the escape that these activities have provided is over, they revert back to their ultimate concerns.

In this message I would like first to explore with you some ultimate concerns about the future that human beings experience, and second to attempt to make a Christian response to these concerns.