



There is an old phrase, *"timing is everything."* No matter the circumstance of life experiences we are bound in this world by space and time. It is the subject or appreciation of "time" that is brought out in the words of poets, authors, lyricists, screenplay writers and even the stand up comedians. That punch line or phrase, delivered at just the right time can mean everything to the total presentation - Even the preacher putting the period at the end of the final sentence of a sermon.

I quickly did a word search using my New American Standard Bible where I found the English translation from the Hebrew or Greek equivalent for time and it appears 797 times in 722 verses. In my King James Version 765 times in 699 verses. Although this is not an exclusive list of appearances it still can give us a glimpse into the subject matter from Genesis to Revelation concerning time. Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning..." through Revelation 21:1 - 22:5 the end of time and into eternity is the theme on which we can rest our weary minds. Especially to know and be comforted that there is a beginning and an end when it comes to the sufferings of this present world.

This is one aspect of a "Biblical Worldview" that we as Christians can enjoy in the midst of troubled times. The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 4:4a *"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son..."* a pivotal point not only for this world, but also for all of creation. These are "big things" to think about in your theological journey while immersing yourself in the Word of God! Unlike us God is not bound to space and time nor does He have a beginning or end. From eternity to eternity as far as we are concerned He is the creator of "time" itself. Just thinking about these things helps define the real meaning of "Awesome!"

On a much smaller scale of considering our everyday schedules and appointed times for this and that, how do we manage our way of life? As we get older I believe time on this earth becomes more valuable because we do not know whether or not if our tomorrow will be canceled. Yet, regardless of our age we should be conscience of how we spend our time. Paul writes, *"Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."* (Ephesians 5:15-17) "What is the will of the Lord?" I am asked this question frequently while serving as a pastor and teacher. My first response might be Micah 6:8 *"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?"* Or again I may refer to Luke's account of Paul in Acts 21 where the Holy Spirit says through a prophet named Agabus that Paul will be bound and delivered into the hands of the gentiles when he enters Jerusalem. They beg him not to go then Paul answers, *"What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."* (Vs. 13) Then Luke writes, *"And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, 'The will of the Lord be done!'"* (Vs.14)

However, I think a good and practical response for spending our time doing the Lord's will can be found in Romans 12:1-2. *"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

God has gifted believers to serve in whatever capacity He has enabled each of us individually to build up His Church and minister to one another. This we should be found doing at all times with our time. Of course the key word here is "time." If you personally figure out what you deem worthy of your time it is probably how you manage your way of life.

I like to cook meals. Aside from fishing or watching Jungle Book with my grandchildren to rest my mind I am relaxed by immersing myself in a good homemade recipe. I have become quite popular as a cook (at least with my family, our church and friends) and the most asked question is "how did you get that to taste so good and can I have the recipe?" I love to see their facial expressions when I answer, "TIME!"

It is no secret when it comes to a finished piece of work; product or even a homemade meal that it was the time spent doing it right and doing your best to accomplish the quality or successful outcome. It involves research, education, preparation, diligent determination and down right hard work - all of

which takes time. If this attitude about quality and time in the physical things of life is true, imagine the impact that could be made by the same attitude of the spiritual.

Obviously as a pastor in church and ministry I would welcome and encourage any help where there is a need or a task too large to handle alone. The Lord always provides the people or the way forward. However, some of us may find ourselves burned out if we take on more than we can handle because we simply don't have enough time personally. Sometimes the first noticeable result is a lack of quality or an unfinished outcome. Jesus warned us about serving as His followers in Luke 14:27-32. He cautions His followers to consider carefully the cost of full commitment to Him in a life of service. This is the attitude each of us should have as we set out to serve enabled by the Holy Spirit and the commitment of our time. The words of Jesus in Luke 21:12-15 have always gripped my heart when I think of how small the task of taking time to serve in church and ministry can be compared to the trials facing the Christian Church. Jesus Said, *"12a... they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. 13 It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. 14 So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."*

I want to make up my mind beforehand that I will be committed to the time it will require to serve. My hope is to be found doing the will of God with my life. The following acrostic using the word TIME helps me to manage my way of life. Perhaps it can help you as well. Even I revisit this acrostic as a reminder.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus and desire to do His will
Immerse yourself in the Word of God
Make the most of your time doing your best for Jesus
Encourage others to do the same

GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES, GOD'S TIME

Some closing thoughts on the subject of time and how the way we use our time can affect our own life as well as the world around us. We live in a world of utter confusion and mixed messages at best when it comes to public morality, social ethics, religion, politics, education, healthcare and money. These topics are usually covered in the daily news. A good portion of our population listens to all the information delivered through multimedia sources and processes the details in many different ways. For some people these are the "good times" with laptops, notepads, Ipods, smart phones and a storm of other technologies. Whether or not the information received is true or accurate probably doesn't matter as long as they can continue to get it faster. Others will consider what they see or hear as living in "bad times" because in reality there are no jobs to pay for those technologies. Beside that, what good can come out of so much bad information? Sounds rather depressing, doesn't it? We need some "good news" and a refreshing blast of truth and encouragement! We need to focus on "God's Time" not the troubles and worries of the world.

The world tells us there is a pill for everything that ails you physically or emotionally. A drug company can pay a million dollars for a 15 second advertisement of which 3 seconds describe the good news, while the remaining 12 seconds tell us the bad news of side effects. Some side effects can even kill you!

Jesus Christ is the ultimate remedy for all the pain and suffering, fears and uncertainty, the hopelessness and broken hearts in this world. He is the only Way, the Truth and The Life and He loves you! This is the "good news," the Gospel of Jesus Christ now and forever! Jesus says, *Come to me all who are weary and heavy-laden...* and *"... I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* (Matthew 11:28a, 28:20b)

Let us encourage one another to be set apart for "God's Time" in our lives devoted to prayer, to love and service. Keep an eternal perspective and be eager to share a "Biblical World View" wherever and to whomever the Lord may set before us. Engage in worship, fellowship, Bible Studies, evangelism and missions. Immerse yourself in the Word of God. Be filled with The Holy Spirit! The world around you will change by the power of Jesus' name.

Take time to make time and always be ready to go! ☐ MARANATHA!