

THE GIFT OF TIME
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Galatians 4:1-7

1. In the front of my Bible I have written various words of encouragement and admonition that I try to keep in mind as I live my life before God and men.
2. One of the entries simply says, “Born: 12/26/41—Died: _____ In the end it will be the dash that matters.”
3. I was born and one day I will die, and the time between those two dates is a gift from God; it is my time to live in this present age.
4. As followers of Jesus Christ we should obey Paul’s words in Ephesians 5:15-17.
Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 **making the most of your time**, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
5. At a pivotal time in Jewish history Mordecai reminded Esther, “And who knows whether you have attained royalty for such a time as this?” Esther 4:14
NOTE: The Jews faced annihilation, and Esther was in a position to at least try and do something about it.
6. This is our time, and it matters what we do with it.
7. I was going to title this message, “Time and Eternity,” but changed my mind as I sat down to put my thoughts in writing.
8. Theologians speak of God’s eternity, meaning God is eternal, He has always been and He will always be.
9. At a point in God’s eternity time was introduced, and at some point in the future time will be no more.
10. Our time provides us the opportunity to determine where we will spend eternity.
11. It also provides those who become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ the opportunity to be His instruments in the lives of others, even as He was.
12. Notice some biblical references to time as it applies to Jesus Christ and to us.

I. The fullness of time. Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

- A. Here we learn that when the time was right God brought about what we refer to as the Incarnation.
- B. His purpose for doing so was redemption.
- C. Why did God choose that particular time in human history?
 1. A strong government was in place that ruled over a significant number of people.
 2. A network of roads and maritime routes were in place that made travel easier.
 3. A common language, Greek, made it possible to communicate across a wide spectrum of humanity.
 4. The Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament, was in common use by many.
- D. God is always working in the affairs of men to accomplish His redemptive plans and purposes, and we need to be ready, willing and able to be used by Him.

II. The right time. Romans 5:6-8

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

A. In the previous passage we read that we were once **held in bondage** under the elemental things of the world.

B. Here we are told that while we were **still helpless**, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

C. What an example Jesus provided for us. Philippians 2:1-8

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

D. In Christ we are no longer held in bondage, and we are no longer helpless because we have been rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God's beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

III. The proper time. 1 Peter 5:6-11

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. 8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. 10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. 11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

A. Those who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God will be exalted at the appropriate time.

B. Until then let us live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, while trusting God related to details and circumstances of our lives.

APPLICATION

1. Paul wrote, "But realize this, that in the last days difficult (dangerous, troublesome, hard to take) times will come." 2 Timothy 3:1

2. We are in the last days of the Church Age, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, for evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:12-13

3. Let us make the most of our time because the days are evil, and the world needs what we have to offer.