

TIME: THE VANISHING TREASURE

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

...Robert Frost's beautiful poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," tells, "And miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep." MAYBE!!!! By this he meant that he had many things to do before he died. J. C. Ryle wrote, "All things are growing older: the world is growing old; we are ourselves are growing older. A few more summers, a few more winters, a few more sicknesses, a few more sorrows, a few more weddings, and few more partings, and then what? Why the grass will be growing over our graves!" ... Today begins a brand new year, 2017. Of three gifts given to us by Jesus, TIME, TREASURE, and TALENT, but the greatest is TIME. Soon it will be gone...and so will you.

FOUR BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES REMINDING US THAT TIME IS UTTERLY PRICELESS, SO USE IT WISELY...For time like a baseball is "Going, going and almost gone!"

I. God Created Time As We Now Know It, And One Day It Will Be No More.

- A. God made TIME during the creation week. (Genesis 1:1-5) "The day and night cycle." ...He gave us the great lights (sun and moon) to mark the passage of time. (1:14) We note "seasons, days and years." Without this time marker, we would not even know our age.
- B. Since God is eternal, He is not subject to time as we are, though He works His plan within it. ...Psalm 90:1-2..."He is from everlasting to everlasting." Jesus has created the "ages."
- C. The Lord made man to live forever. Adam brought death into the world through his dis-obedience. God had warned, "In the day you eat of it you will die." (Psalm 90:3-9) (Romans 5:12)
 - 1. It is estimated that 150,000 people die every day in the world. "The planet of death"
 - 2. In the future, God's order will not have the day/night sequence, "No night" (Rev 22:5)

II. God Has Determined The Number Of Our Days. (Time)

- A. Solomon told us that there is a "Time to be born and a time to die." (Ecclesiastes 3:2)
 - 1. Since God has determined this, you have no choice in these opposite points of life.
 - 2. Often said, "Your life is a hyphen." Check out any cemetery and see this is so!
- B. God breathed this truth through David as he wrote Psalm 139:16. "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." God has ordered all of your days. ...Job agrees, "God has determined the number of man's months." (Job 14:1-6)
- C. Furthermore, David told in Psalm 31:15, "My times are in your hands." God sets all boundaries! ...For the Christian, this truth ought to provide us with great comfort. (Psalm 138:8)

III. God Has Provided Us With Enough Time To Do What He Desires Us To Do.

...The Lord never said, "I did not know the days would be that short." No! He created it so.

- A. Solomon told us that the wise person knows that his "time" is in God's hands and that there is an appropriate time for every human activity. (Eccl. 3:1-8)
 - 1. Here is a list of 14 activities, it is a double 7, given to show utter completeness.
 - 2. Also, the polar opposites reveal the totality of life. "A time to be born...a time to die."
- B. Many people waste time. They spend their days and have little to show for it. Avoid this!
 - 1. Paul urged us, "To redeem the time, because the days are evil." (Eph 5:16)
 - 2. Solomon gave us help in this with his words in Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 and 9:7-10.
 - 3. Finally he concluded with a warning, "Fear God and keep His commandments." (12:13-14)
 - 4. Jesus' example...He was never rushing around, yet always on time doing the Father's will, and never wasting a single day. He died on the appointed day for His death.

IV. God's Death Sentence His Caused Our Lives To Be Brief And Uncertain.

- A. Our days are likened to a "breath or a vapor." Here one minute, gone the next. (Psalm 90:10, James 4:14) God does not guarantee us 70 or 80 years. And even if you do live that long, your life will pass so fast it will seem like a dream, "Like a tale that is told."
- B. Make your plans. But do not presume to know the future. You don't. "Man knows not his hour." (Means his time of death) (Proverbs 27:1)
 - 1. James 4:13-15 tells us that the future is in God's hands, not ours.
 - 2. Also, know that bad times can fall un-expectantly upon us.
- C. This is life in our fallen world, so fill your days serving Jesus, whether you live long or short. If you do this, you will never regret it. "Time really is the vanishing treasure!"

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

- 1. Think rightly about time, it is your most valuable treasure, yet it is quickly passing. Use the hours and days of your life for eternity sake...by living for Jesus. Love Him and serve Him with all your might.
- 2. Perhaps the Lord has convicted you of wasting your moments? Repent, turn from this sin, and ask the Lord Jesus to help you live for Him. Make the changes today, as we move into this New Year.
- 3. Resist making your plans without considering the Lord's will and His blessing. The future is in His hands, not yours. "If the Lord wills, we will do this or that..." D.V. always!
- 4. Jesus is not only the Creator of time, but also the Redeemer. Some day soon, your time will be gone. Have you asked Jesus to save you from your sin? Today, you are urged to call upon Jesus to save you from your sin and to receive Him as your Lord and Savior.