**New Years’ Time & Purpose**

Sharable Truth for the New Year:

“One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14)

The past has passed. It served us well while it was the present, but now is only a memory of what was. It takes everything you’ve got to fully engage in today, don’t use today’s resources trying to live in the past as well. Sufficient are the cares of the day.

God has a calling on each of us, a purpose, a destiny. If we press on toward that goal we will win the prize that He has for us.

Don’t waste time or energy worrying or wondering about the past. Instead focus on the new things God is doing through you, in you and all around you. It would be a shame to forfeit today’s joy, by dwelling on yesterday’s sorrow.

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:18-19)

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*It’s New Year’s Day 2023. It’s the first day of the first week of the first month of a brand-new year.*

*This is a very rare occurrence. It won’t happen again until 2034, then again in 2040.* We are officially in the fourth year of the 2020’s making it no longer the *early 20’s* but the *mid-20’s.*

*Interesting Facts:*

* *For the first time in history, most 4-year college graduating classes were born in the 2000’s, not the 1900’s.*
* *“43 years ago today” was New Year’s Day 1980. If you said that in 1980, it would be New Year’s Day 1937.*
* *The New York Jet’s last Superbowl was 54 years ago, which they won with Joe Namath on January 12th, 1969. That means that a 46-year-old who attended that game would be 100 years old this year. (It may be another 54 years for the Jets).*

I say all this not to depress us, but to give us a perspective on the passing of time, and how we can be wise (not foolish), and make the most of every moment we are given.

The passing of time is not a bad thing unless it is marked with missed opportunities and unmet purposes. When it’s filled with a life, legacy and body of work that is marked with fulfilling those purposes and doing the will of the Father, the passing of time is a beautiful thing.

**Eph. 5:15-17 (NIV)“**Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, **16**making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”

I believe that God has incredible plans and purposes for each day of our lives. He wants us to be fulfilled and fruitful in all of them, but we must act wisely and understand what the will of the Lord is, to not miss out, or forfeit the opportunities He sets before us.

Paul tells us: to “make the most of every opportunity, because the *days are evil.*”

What does it mean that the days are evil?

Most of us agree that the days we are living in are evil. Immorality, lack of Faith, deception, godlessness, and governments that blatantly disregard the Word of God and the Will of God in their actions, policies, laws and agendas.

Many have become very fearful and deeply concerned about the evil that seems to have permeated all aspects of society and culture. I know Christians who are very disturbed and having severe anxiety about all that is going on in the world, particularly in government.

But we have to remember, that this is nothing new. The days were evil during Paul’s time as well (he wrote this letter, Ephesians while in a Roman prison).

In fact if we were to go through the Bible, particularly the New Testament and pick out our most flowery, feel-good verses, the kind you might see on a painting of a beautiful nature scene, or a Wedding, birthday or sympathy card.

Verses like:

* “Love is patient, Love is kind” (1st Cor 13.)
* In everything give thanks (1st Thess. 5)
* “Rejoice in the Lord always” &
* “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done." (Philippians 4 – A prison epistle)

ALL of these verses were written in times that are way worse than we are experiencing now, or likely will ever experience. The church in these times was constantly threatened with imprisonment and death for believing in Jesus.

Evil may look different today than it did during Paul’s time but the days are still evil.

**Eph 5:15-17 (NKJV)**

**15**See then that you walk circumspectly *(akribós: with exactness),*not as fools but as wise, **16**redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**17**Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is.*

[**NIV**](http://biblehub.com/niv/ephesians/5.htm) **15**Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, **16**making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.

[**NASB**](http://biblehub.com/nasb/ephesians/5.htm)“…making the most of your time…”

[**ESV**](http://biblehub.com/esv/ephesians/5.htm) “…making the best use of the time…”

**Solomon;** the wisest person ever, gave us these words:

**Eccl 3:1**   “*To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven”.*

***“Divine Time and Purpose Intersects”***

God has purposes attached to times, “a time for every purpose”.

Every Time in our lives has a purpose assigned to it, some great, some small but *all* are significant. The Devil wants to rob our time from us, through; discouragement, distraction, deception, etc.

Examples:

* *Baseball – perfectly executed play - 4 second from hit to first base.*
* *Football – “run route”*

**TIME**

**God holds the timeline:**

**Moses** understood this:

**Psalm 90:12“**Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

**David** understood it;

**Psalm 31:14,15 14**But I trust in you, Lord; I say, “You are my God.” **15**My times are in your hands.”

**Jesus understood it more than anyone**. He was on a very exact and specific timeline. He chose very carefully what He did and said, in order that he would be in Jerusalem *on Passover* for his death and resurrection after his third year of ministry.

* **John 2:3-5** **(Wedding of Cana)“**When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.”“Woman,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26100a)] why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.”His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you*.” (At some point he changed THE water to wine, and that kicked off a new phase of ministry.)*
* **John 7:2-10(Feast of Tabernacles) “**But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, **3**Jesus’ brothers said to him, “Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. **4**No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” **5**For even his own brothers did not believe in him. **6**Therefore Jesus told them, “My time is not yet here; for you any time will do.”
* **John 11:4-7(Lazarus’s death) “**When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.” **5**Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **6**So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, **7**and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”
* **Acts 1:6-8(after his resurrection) “**Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” **7**He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **8**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Jesus was a “*master of Eph 5:15-17”* because He was *never overcome by sin and distraction* and *knew exactly what the will of the Lord was* for His time on earth.

**Eph 5:15-17 (NKJV)**

**15**See then that you walk circumspectly*,*not as fools but as wise, **16**redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**17**Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is.*

**5:15-17 (Paraphrased for Jesus) “15**He walked completely circumspectly, not foolishly but wise, **16He**redeemed every minute, every second of His time, because He knew the days were evil.**17**Nothing He did was unwise, because He understood exactly what the will of the Lord *was for Him.”*

That’s why he was always in the right place at the right time. When God wanted to do something on the earth in “Divine Time and Purpose Intersects”, Jesus was always right there and ready to do God’s will.

I believe God wants us to live this way as well. He has lots of Divine Time and Purpose Intersects prepared for us each day, and as much as we walk in His ways and are obedient to His will, we experience them. When we don’t because of sin, distraction or unwillingness, we miss out on them. And if we remain in sin, discouraged or distracted, the Devil has us right where he wants us and tries to “run out the clock”. *[ Example: Football “run out the clock”]*

**Lastly; God’s “Divine Time & Purpose Intersects”** can happen even*If you’ve messed up, wasted time and have forfeited opportunities. It’s never too late and you’re never* ***too old.***

* **Moses** - He was 80 years old when he saw the burning bush and began the amazing final third of His life. (First 40 years – Lived as an Egyptian in Pharoah’s house, middle 40 years – lived as a shepherd in the backside of the desert, *Final 40 years – Freed His people from Egypt, Crossed the Red Sea, Received the Commandments, wrote the Torah, Lead the people to the promised land…)*
* **Abraham** was 100 years old when Isaac was born. That’s when the promises began to be fulfilled.
* **Vito Parillo** (Our friend, and staff member’s Grandfather,) 93-year-old when he was elected Mayor of Tinton Falls. He won re-election and will just began his 2nd term at age 97!

*“Don’t Give Up”. It’s never too late to “Get up and Get Going”.*

***STORY:*** *Norwegian skier Simen Hegstad Krueger’s first race was the 2018 winter Olympics 30-kilometer cross-country skiathlon in South Korea. Right out of the gate he got tangled up with two Russian skiers and* and found himself facedown in the snow with two rivals on top of him, he figured his hopes at an Olympic medal were over. He had a choice to make, “Give Up and go home”, or “Get Up and Get Going. He decided to get up and get going, and with one broken ski pole, he skied as fast as he could in hopes to catch up to the pack of high-speed Olympic racers. He finally caught up to the last place skier. Then, starting from the rear, Krueger passed 63 skiers to take the lead and win the gold medal!

*If you feel that it’s too late for you to redeem your time. Perhaps you’ve blown it or wasted too many years not pursuing God’s will… The Lord has these words for you… “Don’t give up, Get Up and Get Going!”*

**Isaiah 43:18-19** “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.
**19**See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

**Joel 2:25 “**I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten!”

God can restore even the things that thief has killed, stolen and destroyed.

God wants us all to have victory and succeed in ALL the things He has planned for us in the times we live in. He does not want the thief to rob us of one more “Divine Time and Purpose Intersect”.

**Redeeming the time means making the most**

**of every opportunity that God gives you,**

**to accomplish;**

**HIS purposes in YOUR life,**

 **in the TIME that HE has given YOU to Live.**