

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
December 29, 2019
Psalm 78 & 95

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” Hebrews 3:12-15

On Wednesday we will enter the third decade of the 21st Century, God permitting. We will mark the end of another year, another decade. Soon we will arrive at life’s end. It is time “today” that we consider unfinished business. What have I left undone?

Scripture stresses the urgency of heeding God’s Word now. “The Holy Ghost saith, **To day**, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts” (3:7); “exhort one another **daily**, while it is called **To day**; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (3:13); “**To day** if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts” (3:15); “**To day**, after so long a time, as it is said, **To day** if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts” (4:7). What unfinished soul-business do I have?

I. Unfinished business of your soul’s salvation

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works” (Matthew 16:26, 27).

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?” (Hebrews 2:1-3).

“For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (II Corinthians 6:2).

II. Unfinished business regarding your love for God

“Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:35-38).

III. Unfinished business regarding love for others

The first commandment, to love God with the whole heart, soul and mind, is followed by this: “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39).

“Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:30-32).

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Colossians 3:12-14).

IV. Do you have unfinished business regarding sinful behavior?

“Exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Hebrews 3:13).

“We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:12-14).

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience” (Colossians 3:1-6).

Psalm 78 reports Israel's unfaithfulness toward God, and God's compassion toward His unfaithful people. It includes God's chastening of His people, then their restoration by His favor. His tender mercies and overwhelming goodness are summarized in these words: “But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and that cometh not again” (Psalm 78:38-39).

God will pardon all who seek His favor and bow before Him in repentance. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:8-9).