

DISCERNING THE TIMES
PART 1-THE REALITY
ROMANS 13:11-14; HEBREWS 11

INTRODUCTION

We step away from our series in the Book Of Galatians for a couple of weeks to deal with something else that is vitally important for us a Church collectively and as Believers individually!

As Believers of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is vitally important in our walk with God that we RIGHTLY DISCERN the times (or we could say RIGHTLY UNDERSTAND the times) both the times we are living in and the times that lie ahead!

I have a question for every Believer here today:

Do you truly believe every Word of God to be True? I pray that you do! Because it is and it is of utmost importance that you believe it!

Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Psalms 18:30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

Thank God that when we were lost in our sin, someone shared the true Gospel with us! God's Holy Spirit quickened our hearts by that Word of God to the Salvation that comes only by grace through faith alone!

When we were lost, the Holy Spirit of God took the Word of God and gave us discernment in our darkened souls through the light of the Gospel!

He convicted us of our sin (our lost condition) and of the judgment to come, but thank God He also showed us the sufficiency of Christ alone to save us! We believed on the LORD's death for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection and the miracle of Salvation was wrought in our hearts!

Now, as Believers, as we can immerse ourselves into the Scriptures and God's Holy Spirit that dwells within us develops our faith with His Word!

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

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The people of God should be able to take the Word of God and not only know what God is doing, but know how God would have us to live in light of the times we find ourselves in!

We need to be like the children of Issachar who were mentioned in 1 Chronicles 12:32 "...which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do..."

In this age of ours we need men and women of God like that who understand these times we live in and know what we as a Church ought to do and do it!

But the sad reality is that MANY Believers are not in the Word like they should be and so THEY ARE NOT BEING BUILT UP IN THEIR FAITH and THEY ARE NOT DISCERNING THE TIMES!

It is the primary reason that we see the great falling away from the WORD of God! The same thing happened to Israel in the days of Hosea: Hosea 4:6- "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..."

DISCERNING THE TIMES has always been important to those who lived closest to God. Not only that, but those that DISCERNED THE TIMES had the greatest impact for God with their lives!

LET ME GIVE YOU SOME EXAMPLES: (Turn to Hebrews 11)

- 1. We Know That ABEL Discerned The Times He Lived In Becoming The First Martyr For The Faith!
*(Hebrews 11:4; Genesis 4:1-7)***

- 2. We Know That ENOCK Discerned The Times He Lived In Walking With God! (A living, active faith!)
*(Hebrews 11:5; Jude 14-15; Genesis 5:21-24)***

- 3. We Know That NOAH Discerned The Times He Lived In Also Walking With God! (He was a just man who was perfect in his generations!) *(Hebrews 11:7; Genesis 6:5-9)***

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4. **We Know That ABRAHAM and SARAH Understood The Times They Lived In!**

(Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19; Genesis 12:1-4; Joshua 24:2)

5. **We Know That JOSEPH Understood The Times He Lived In!**
(Hebrews 11:22)

Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

6. **We Know That MOSES PARENTS Understood The Times They Lived In!** *(Hebrews 11:23)*

By faith they were able to circumvent a king that intended to kill their child for his own selfish purposes and have that king actually aid in the protection and raising of their son.

7. **We Know That MOSES Understood The Times He Lived In!**
(Hebrews 11:24-29)

8. **We Know That RAHAB Understood The Times She Lived In!**
(Hebrews 11:31; Joshua 2:9ff)

9. **We Know That MANY OTHERS Understood The Times They Lived In!** *(Hebrews 11:32-40)*

These saw the need to not live unto themselves but to live unto God!

As I go about in the ministry that God has given to me I have an opportunity to talk to a great number of people from all walks of life. I talk with many people who know they are lost but are not interested in doing anything about it, at least not today. They intend to do something about it one day, but not today! They are too busy with the things of THIS life!

They don't really have an understanding about the times—The times we live in nor the times that are about to come!

I also see and hear many others who testify with their mouths that they are saved, but **they are not busy about what the people of God should be busy about!** The Word of God is clear about this!

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

Listen, that is talking about more than just Faithfulness to God and His house! (Which should be a given, but it is not!) It is being something for God and doing something for God! Serving Jesus out of love for what He has done for us! Giving a good witness in these dark days we live in!

To many professing Believers are DISTRACTED rather than DISCERNING and that is dangerous for both them and those around them! *(e.g. Distracted Driving)*

Too many people are so wrapped up with themselves and this life and, many times, with satisfying the desires of their flesh, that they have little to no time for the things that really matter—God and His Word!

As I look at the Scriptures that define what the last days are going to be like, more and more I come to believe that we are on the very threshold of the Lord's return for His own! The characteristics that Paul said would be prevalent in the last days in are found in *2 Timothy 3:1-5*. They are "...lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy..., lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God...having a form of godliness but denying the power."

One of the great problems with both the lost and those who claim to be saved but have little, if any, evidence of it in their lives, is that Satan today has folks fast asleep in self and sin, and his great device is to keep them that way.

Satan does not care what these people do, as long as he can keep them in their slumber.

The teaching of these verses in our text is that a deep conviction of the nearness of eternity should prompt us to wake up and live differently. *(Vs 11)*

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Conclusion

Let me ask this question— Do you know what time it is? Can't you see that Jesus is about to come back! Does that make any difference to you? It should!

If you are here without Christ, you are in a dangerous position!

John 3:18“...Condemned already...”

2 Corinthians 6:2 “...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

That's because NOW is all that you know you really have! You are not promised another minute!

Also, if Jesus were to come back today to take Believers out of this world, you would be left behind to endure the very worst years this world has ever seen!

Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Oh my friend, if you don't know Him, Come to Jesus today!

Believers, as Jesus looks at your life that should be lived for Him, would He describe you as asleep? What are you doing for the LORD? Are you so caught up in this world that you don't even have the time for BASIC FAITHFULNESS for Him, let alone service for Him?

Vs 11 - 14