

God's News In The News

Week One Hundred Fifty-Three

When Time Is Running Out

Time Is Our Enemy

I hear this sentiment a lot, but not as succinctly as I just said it. Mostly I hear people talk about situations where they are up against a deadline of some sort whether it be a bill or even the health of a loved one who is not doing well. Then there are those who worry about ventures that are tied to their age or a window of opportunity that will close if they wait too long or are up against some other deadline. Time waits for no one as the saying goes and in some parts of the world the slow will get run over by those who just seem to be able to function at a quicker pace. Then there are the wish or bucket lists that have things on them that are connected to abilities or openings that closed years ago and may never come around again. Alas, we feel pressure for lost chances and many people spend their days wondering "what if." All these things indeed make the case that time is our enemy.

Time Is Neutral

There, I said it. While we feel like time is a cruel taskmaster, it was created by God and was not meant to be anything more than a part of life. We tend to fight it or ignore it, but it's not any different than the weather which doesn't favor one person or another, it simply just happens. How we deal with it is up to every person and that hasn't changed for thousands of years. With our free will, we can decide how we handle it, use it or view it. However, the pressures we put on ourselves and others as we navigate our lives is something totally different and right now, many who work in the prophetic realm and those who follow the words given them by God are feeling pressure because of words that didn't happen as they and others thought they would. There are people I know that are depressed because things aren't panning out as predicted and they are adding these things to their personal list of individual words about a better future that is far from their present circumstances. Is there anything in the Bible that addresses this?

God Is In Control

This phrase should give us assurance, but where the rubber meets the road, it hardly has the uplifting power one would think. Faith is the victory as the famous hymn goes, but such optimism can fade or be diminished by what we actually see around us and what we are told by those whose jobs are to inform us. It is on our faith journey that we experience the ups and downs of life and the twists and turns of the roller coaster of events that come with it that can often cloud our ability to see things from a Heavenly perspective. Yes, God is in control, but that is little consolation when everything we see belies that statement. Fortunately we do have God's word to help us. In it there are a myriad of examples of people who had their faith tested and they saw that greater was God who was for them, than he that was in the world. It was in the times in between the triumphal ending and the start of the trying times that we see the struggle against what to them was time running out.

It Sure Is A Good Time For A Miracle

My father-in-law likes to tell people who are in the crucible of testing that they are prime candidates for a miracle since nothing else will change things. And there are certainly good examples of that in the Bible. Pick your example and see how it played out. How about Gideon? How about Joseph? Or take a look at Abraham or Noah or Daniel? There is no lack of impossible situations in Scripture to learn from or to glean hope from and when it comes to those of us who know so much about prophecy, we should look to prophets who said God revealed to them the future and how disrespected they were for a time. Noah spent at least 125 years being ridiculed regardless of how long you think it took to build the ark. And what about Abraham and Sarah who no doubt faced criticism and most likely charges of being a tad crazy for thinking they would have a child when they were so old. And lest we forget Joseph had a dream about his brothers bowing down to him that didn't happen at the time and literally caused them to throw him into a pit and sell him into slavery. Then there are those prophets whose prophecies have yet to be fulfilled even now and critics exist today who ridicule them and dismiss them as being fables or myths. While these prophets are now in Heaven, their words are debated by people who have more degrees than a thermometer. The ridicule is not aimed at them now, but those of us who stand by them.

Learn To Trust

At this point, we all seem to have prophecies that apparently let us down. Most are personal words given to us by people who have the gift of prophecy mentioned in the Bible in **1 Corinthians 12:10** and **Romans 12:6**. Right now, the gift of prophecy and the office of the prophet are under increasing criticism and while we should test these, there are those who think at least the gift or prophecy is no longer needed when the last word in the book of **Revelation** was penned. And now, with the proliferation of prophetic words we have now, there are calls for a moratorium on such words until sanity can be restored. In this sense, time is the enemy of such prophets and the words they proclaim. It only takes one dated prophecy that fails to happen and out come the critics with their knives of theological blades to dismiss the words and the people giving them. However, it is the personal words that fail to come to pass which cause anguish and hurt for those who keep looking for their fulfillment and just reach a point of giving up. What do we do when a personal word given even decades ago doesn't materialize?

There Are Many Factors

Again, timing is everything on these words and unless there are specific things attached to them we need to understand that God can change things in an instant. Also, these words do depend on this pesky thing called free will and it is entirely possible that people hinder or delay these prophecies by simply living in ways that God can't bless. But if none of these things are in the way, it is most likely a matter of time and decisions made in the interim may not be consequential to the eventual fulfillment. Things like taking a job that simply pays the bills while the eventual calling comes to pass comes to mind. Also, God is the great redeemer of time and if one strays from the path, God can always bring things back to where they need to be. In the case of a prophecy that is timed, either the prophet needs to find out why they missed it or there were factors that they missed in their interpretation of the word. In either event, it is not time to dismiss either the prophet or the God they serve.

Let Your Circumstances Drive You Closer To God

Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him... (Job 13:15, NIV)

The one thing to avoid at all costs is to not learn and grow from mistakes. When you experience a setback or disappointment it is time to draw nearer to Him not pull away. If you develop the habit of always spending more time with God in times of disenchantment, disillusionment or distress regardless of the explanation it will turn out better for you. Job is a good example of this as he says plainly that even if God allows him to die, he will still put all his hope in Him. Considering all that happened to him, that was a huge thing to say. In a moment of physician heal thyself, I have been given words that have yet to come to pass and I have spent some time wondering why they haven't occurred, but rather than waste hours on trying to figure out what happened, I go to Him in prayer and lay them at His feet and let Him unravel things in His way and in His time. And instead of pouting or having a pity party or worse, playing the blame game, I have learned to instead draw closer to God and let Him figure things out. As the Bible says in **Deuteronomy 29:29**, the secret things belong to God and He will reveal those things that we need to grow in Him, but there are things we may never know. I can live with that.