

## LIVING IN GOD'S TIME

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Roman 13:7-14; Matthew 24:45-51; 25:1-13

### THE YEAR OF COVID

Covid often dominates the way we think about time . . .

How long it has been since it began?

How much longer it will be?

What behaviors are appropriate in this period of time?

### JESUS & TIME

Jesus teaches people – to think about life in TERMS OF TIME

& to ask (see Matthew 24:45-51, 25:1-13)

- what time it is?
- where are we in the time-span of life and history?
- what lies ahead in the future time?

### PAUL & TIME

Paul teaches the same kind of thing about “time” in Romans 13

<sup>11</sup>**you know what time it is,**

- how **it is now the moment** for you to wake from sleep.
- For **salvation is nearer to us now** than when we became believers;
- <sup>12</sup>**the night is far gone the day is near.**

**This is NOT a negative warning** – Not: “Judgment is coming . . . shape up”

**BUT positive motivation** – What a privilege: we’re a day closer

to meeting God face to face; to “winning the trophy”;

to the day when all the lights of heaven are turned on;

to Bethlehem where -- like the Magi – we meet Jesus face-to-face.

SO NOW, says Paul, ***live like that day is near, just round the corner***

***. . . as if you have no more time to lose***

### THREE RESPONSES TO LIVING IN GOD'S TIME

#### 1. A Time to think through *the Honor We Owe Other People*

– **Including those in Government!!**

See Context on Government: Romans 13:1-6; and then 13:7.

Remember: the Emperor in Rome at this time was the despicable Nero (AD 54-68), who burned Christians to death. Still, Paul says --

<sup>7</sup>**Pay to all what is due them**

- taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due,
- ***respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.***

→ RE-THINK YOUR ATTITUDES TO SPECIFIC PEOPLE IN 2021

#### 2. A Time to think about *the Kind of Love we Owe*

-- Defined by the Ten Commandments

<sup>9</sup>The commandments,

“You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder;

You shall not steal; You shall not covet”;

and any other commandment,

are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

<sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Remember: Jesus himself embraced the 10 Commandments

(see Matthew 5:17-48) and pointed out that they were

- Not merely about *our external behavior*
- But about *the way we think* . . . anger, lust, greed

→ RE-VISIT & MEMORIZE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN 2021

#### 3. A Time to think about our Spiritual Clothing: “What We Wear”

○ <sup>12</sup>Let us then ***take off*** the works of darkness –

○ and ***put on the armor of light***;

<sup>13</sup>let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

<sup>14</sup>Instead,

○ ***put on the Lord Jesus Christ***,

and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

There’s behavior we need ***to take off*** – like worn out clothes

And then there are behaviors we need ***to put on***

**Put on the Armor of Light** -- As if we’re dressing up for battle!!

- Remember: like Jesus we are in spiritual battle
- Remember: Spiritual Disciplines (like reading the Bible or Praying) are like “spiritual armor.”

**Put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

- Remember to ask: “what Jesus would think, or do, or say” -- until it becomes a “habit” that we wear . . .

→ ASK GOD TO HELP YOU PUT ON NEW SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL CLOTHES IN 2021

→ REMEMBER THAT AS CHRISTIANS

“COVID time” is NOT the only “time frame” that we live in in 2021

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