

REDEEMING THE TIME FOR THERE IS TIME NO LONGER

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Ephesians 5 vs 15, 16 "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil"

Quotable Quotes

The earth has been overtaken by wickedness. There is great need therefore to ensure we use every opportunity to exercise ourselves in prayer, reading of the word and remaining in fellowship. We have to make out time for our God, therein lies our salvation.

The word of the Lord is our source of strength and energy; we can't afford to shun it. You must make out time from your pleasures, from your leisure and even your sleeping time etc for God.

Let us ask God for wisdom on how to redeem time, even when we are engaged in legitimate duties i.e. cooking, studying, working or when we are confronted with stressful situations.

May we be stirred up sufficiently to redeem those things that are about to die. ... Bro. Hubert Manilla

(Sunday 22nd June, 2008)

Our main text is from Ephesians 5 vs 16 “*Redeeming the time, because the days are evil*”. What does the word redeeming mean?

Redeem means to buy up, ransom, to rescue from loss, to buy up something for oneself. So we could translate our main text as “*buy up or rescue the time (redeeming) because the days are evil*”. Now what are we expected to buy? Let us examine an illustration from the book of Hosea. The prophet Hosea was instructed to redeem his harlot wife for 15 pieces of silver and an homer and half of barley; she was expected to remain faithful to him because as it were, he had bought up her time. (**Hosea 3 vs 2, 3**).

God is speaking to us expressly that He has bought us with a priceless prize. He has made us His own, so we like Gomer Hosea’s wife are expected to remain faithful to him. We should not espouse ourselves to another.

The prize paid for our redemption must be clearly understood for it is the very foundation of our being espoused to Him. The prize paid is made clear in the redemption story.

The redemption story:

God saw that man had broken every covenant, law, precept, ordinance (instruction) that was given him; as a result man automatically placed himself under judgment of the law of sin and death. There was no way out because only the blood of a righteous man could satisfy the righteous demand of God to redeem man. So what did God do? He came down to us in the person of Jesus Christ to pay the price. He redeemed man from the law of sin and death, which man had willfully brought himself under. One commentator put it this way “at the deliverance by Christ of Christians from the law and its consequence Christ paid the ransom in order to satisfy the demand of His (i.e. Gods) holy character”.

Gal. 4 vs 4 “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of woman, made under the law (of sin and death)”.

Vs 5 “To redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. Also read **Ephesians 1 vs 7, Heb. 2 vs 14, 15.**

Oh how great thou art, my God and my redeemer. The price has been paid. And for what purpose – that we live to fulfill the righteousness of God in this present time.

The devil has power to execute the law of sin and death. And Jesus came to destroy this power of death (sin, fear, anger etc). Praise God. You are no longer under the yoke of the law of sin and death. You are free to resist Satan and he has no option but to flee. So believe not brethren, when Satan tells you that you will die, because in your ancestry there is so and so. Your ancestry has no power over your life. You are free because “*who his own self bare our sin (all the sins) in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you were healed*” **1 Peter 2 vs 24**. You are redeemed brethren from sin. Sin should not have dominion over you. Do not go back into bondage by dabbling in sin, you must detest sin vehemently. Receive counsel; even if you sin rise up and repent (be determined to turn away from) of the sin immediately and plead the blood. Further reading **Romans 6 vs 1 – 14**.

The next question we will attempt to answer is:

What are some of the things we are expected to be redeeming at this time?

1) Our first love:

You must redeem your first love. That burning love that you had which caused you to make all manner of sacrifices just to get into the presence of God. Some of us were ready to trek miles in those days to attend fellowship or night vigils. Where has all the fire gone? Where is all the zeal with which you looked forward to fellowship. Some of us could stand for hours on end praying until we saw results. Now we are full of excuses – “there is no transport, the rain was so heavy that’s why I could not come” etc. Redeem your love for God that is growing cold. It is this coldness in our hearts that causes us to handle the things of God with

levity (unseriousness). Many of us have become stagnant (no upward growth spiritually), we are not striving against sin as we should. The Lord is saying, the time is at hand. So redeem your first love which (you have not lost) but which you have left to pursue other things.

Rev. 3 vs 16 – 5. "I know your record and that which you are doing, you are supposed to be alive but in reality you are dead".

"Rouse yourself and keep awake and strengthen (redeem) and invigorate what remains that is at the point of dying. For I have not found a thing that you have done perfect in my sight. Call to mind the lessons you received and heard". (Amplified version)

We must resuscitate that which we have, that is about to die. Recall the sound doctrines you have been taught and continually lay them to heart. Be quick to repent lest the Lord comes upon you as a thief in the night, for we know not the day or hour. Our level and capacity for oil (Spirit of God) has to increase. God forbid that we become lukewarm (non-challant) lest we be spewed out of God's mouth.

2) **Redeem your life from sin and cares of this world:**

We must redeem ourselves from sin. We must leave a sin-free life. Sin will automatically open the door for God's judgment.

Be anxious for nothing, (school fees, rent, food, clothes etc) but by prayer and supplication make your request known unto God. God will provide your needs. Concern yourself with the things of God not with worry or anxiety, free yourself from worldly cares.

1 John 2 vs 15 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him". The love of the world causes us to be overly anxious. If there is no food, use the opportunity to fast and pray, God will provide food. If you can't sleep, why worry, use the opportunity to have a personal all-night prayer vigil. God will see and bring deliverance to your situation. *Gal. 5 vs 16 "Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh".*

3) **Redeem the neglected moments of having fellowship:**

God created man for the purpose of fellowship. When you neglect fellowship you reject the opportunity to increase the Spirit of God in your life. There is nothing wrong with a family declaring every Friday (except the Friday that your main fellowship is gathering) an all-night prayer meeting. Make use of every opportunity the Lord presents to fellowship with God.

4) **Use every opportunity you have to witness for Christ:**

Use every opportunity you have to witness or testify of Christ. Witness to your business associates, in your hostel etc. Do not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, it is the power of God unto salvation. Jesus made it clear that if we are ashamed of him, he will also be ashamed of us before the father. Paul specifically prayed for a door to be opened for him to witness. We should do likewise. *Ephesians 6 vs 19 "And for me that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel".*

5) **Redeem every opportunity to minister (serve) to God and men:**

How sad that we miss opportunities to share the love of God with others. Service to God is one sure way to enrich your spirit. Service to God and man is not inconsequential. Neglect not your ministry to the body of Christ. *Col. 4 vs 17 "... Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it".*

In **Matthew 25 vs 31 – 46** we see a people who missed the opportunity they had to minister to Christ by their refusal to minister to men. They were rejected by Christ in the parable that was told. Those to inherit the kingdom were those who ministered to men in their need.

Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1 vs 15 - 18), the brother who ministered to Paul in time he was in despair when all others forsook him. was testified of by Paul **“the brother oft refreshed me”**. May we be a people who bring refreshing to the body of Christ. It may be in little things or in big things but be sure to stand in the place where you bring life (refreshing, help, hope, encouragement etc) to men. Your labour of love will not go unrewarded.

Gal. 8 vs 10 “As you have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men especially unto those who are of the household of faith”. There is much blessedness for those who give to the necessity of the saints. Your sacrifice will be counted for righteousness. Look at how Paul prayed for Onesiphorus because of this ministry of service.

2 Timothy 1 vs 16 “The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain”.

Vs 18 “The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day ... ” (the day of judgment, midnight, the day when evil will come against him).

Why must we redeem the time?

Because the days are evil. Perilous times are upon the earth and judgment is at the door (**2 Timothy 3 vs 1 – 6**). God is not slack concerning His promise to judge sin, He is long suffering, and is giving men time to repent of their abominations of their murders, their sorceries, their uncleanness, the homosexual tendencies and all such like.

2 Peter 3 vs 9 “The Lord is not slack concerning His promises as some men count slackness but is long suffering to us ward not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”.

What we need to be able to redeem the time:

The instruments we need to equip us in redeeming the time effectively are the ability to walk in the Spirit and having the wisdom and understanding from God to work in obedience to His word. The foolish cannot understand or appreciate the warning or counsel of God. *“Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”* (Prov.4vs5, 6, 7).

May we be like the children of Issachar who knew how to conduct themselves and what they ought to be doing at the time that other Israelites turned from their God. *Eph. 5 vs 15-17 “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

CASE STUDY OF THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS (MATTHEW 25 vs 1-13)

The 10 mention here were all born again believers (virgins). What was it that made the difference between the five wise and the five foolish. The one group had extra oil (the Spirit of God) but the foolish did not have enough oil (the Spirit of God was not overflowing in them)

Apparently, the wise virgins spent their time redeeming the time; while the foolish were careless, consequently their oil diminished. If they had known; when the Lord tarried (God tarries in order to give us time to redeem the time) they would have spent time redeeming the time to get enough of the Spirit of God for themselves. Watch therefore, for ye know neither what day nor the hour that the Son of man cometh.

Note also that the time is coming when no one will be able to give you oil (i.e. provide spiritual help) *vs 8 “And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.*

Vs 9 “But the wise answered not so, lest there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourself”. It will not be possible to share oil at that time (the time of midnight, when wickedness would have reached its highest peak). Wife will not be able to give help to the husband, neither parents their children. Everyone will stand before God for his/herself.

CASE STUDY: MARTHA AND MARY (LUKE 10 VS 38 – 42)

They both had a relationship with Jesus (they both ministered to him). Their home was like a second home to Him. Note it was Martha who invited him. The distinctive difference between the service of the two women was this: Mary sat at His feet to hear His teaching (she ensured to redeem the opportunity for fellowship to enrich her oil) *vs 39 "And she had a sister called Mary which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word"*.

But of Martha Jesus said *vs 41 "Martha, Martha, thou art careful (anxious) and troubled (agitated) about many things"*. She was distracted and overcharged with the cares of the world.

May we like Mary, be found at His feet to learn of Him.

One thing is needful; the word of God (Man does not live by bread alone). Mary made good use of the opportunity presented, to enrich her oil (increase the flow of the Spirit of God in her life).

CONCLUSION:

The whistle will soon be blown. The time of grace will soon be over. The door will soon be shut. The time is coming when you will no more have the opportunity to redeem the time. There is a time that God will stop his prophets/teachers from speaking. It is a fearful thing indeed.

Rev 10 vs 4-6 "... I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. ... that there should be time no longer:" WE ARE IN INJURY/BORROWED TIME.

- 1) Redeem the time and whatever ministry and ability you have been endowed with (given) walk therein.
- 2) Let the quickening Spirit of Christ quicken us to make use of every opportunity; that will bring us closer to God and our Lord. May we remain in fellowship with God and may this same Spirit quicken our mortal bodies to shun all sin, for there is time no longer.
- 3) Having known this much, let us therefore *"walk in wisdom towards them that are without (i.e. the unbelievers so that they do not cause our oil to drain away.) redeeming the time" Col 4 vs 5. (KJV)*
"Be wise in the very way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity" (NIV).

IT PAYS TO REMEMBER...

RISE UP AND POSSESS THE

There are times and seasons in God, in recent times God has been speaking to us about ensuring we possess our possession. We over time through the dealings of God have attained a certain level of maturity or height in the spirit. There are matters God has given us victory over and we need not only to make the victory sure, but also need to extend our borders. It is dangerous to remain stagnant. God is encouraging each man to ensure he fully possesses and conquers the spiritual territories he has attained in God.

What are the territories the Lord is referring to? Are they physical territories as in the days of old when the children of Israel were expected to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan and inhabit their land? In our day God is speaking of spiritual territories.

For the Israelites it was not enough to possess the land, they had to ensure to dwell in it and maintain their possession. I give a simple illustration – I used to have a terrible temper, but God has given me a certain measure of victory. Now I need to ensure that I not only maintain this victory (possess the land) but I need to overcome the temper completely (extending the borders).

There is a territory you occupy and God is saying that you have to take full possession, make sure the foundation and settle in it. Be careful to maintain your territories, ensure the devil does not come to steal it again. Carelessness is the door that opens the way for the devil. Laxity and leisure are also thorns that the enemy uses to distract us.

God wants us to have full possession. It is time to increase in God. We need to function in the Spirit. There is a principle in God found in the New Testament. "To whom much is given, much is expected". If God gives you something and you do not use it. God will take it away. Let no day go by that you do not pray at least twice a day. Let no day go by that you do not read the scripture before you go to bed. Let not a week pass without your taking up a fast. This is not a rule I make but I give you good counsel. Rise up brethren and possess the land, lest you loose it.

... Bro. Isaac Ihekwoaba