

WHILE THERE IS YET TIME

Who among us has never realized we put something off until it was too late? Probably none. We may have plans to get that little click in the engine checked as soon as we can get time, only to find ourselves stranded with a car that will not start because we waited too long. Or, maybe someone you know intended to go to the doctor and get that little "tightness in the chest" checked out, but died of a major heart attack before ever getting around to it.

The same often happens in the realm of Christianity. Souls are lost, opportunities missed and work left undone because we often tend to put things off until we have more time. One of the problems with doing this is that we are not the time-keepers.

The Bible clearly teaches that the time of the Lord's return is not known to man. Jesus stated, "but of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Jesus also stated, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 25:13).

Another often taught lesson of the Bible is that additional time upon this earth is not promised. The wise man stated, "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). James spoke of the uncertainty of life when he wrote, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Ja. 4:14). Peter spoke of life on this earth as grass which withereth away (I Pet. 1:24), and Paul spoke of all of life as "a moment" (II Cor. 4:17). Indeed, life is short.

There is yet another reason why we should never postpone doing the Lord's will. Our hearts may become hardened with time. The Hebrew writer stated, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). One can reach a point of having no feelings concerning sin. This is the sad state of those spoken of by Paul when he wrote, "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:19).

Dear reader, whether it be the initial obedience to the gospel of Christ in becoming a Christian, your growth as a Christian or correction of sin, please do not procrastinate. Time may well be running out for you to make those needed changes.

Robert

IMPORTANT?

Jesus Christ build HIS church (Matt. 16:18)! The church is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19)! It is the body of Christ (Col. 1:18)! It is made up of the saved (Acts 2:47)! Christ is the saviour of it (Eph. 5:23)! Christ shed His blood to purchase it (Acts 20:28)!

More than the above could be stated concerning the church of Christ, but surely that is sufficient to express and even stress the great importance of the church of our Lord. No space need be used to explain these six proofs of importance, thus let us turn our attention to our responsibility to such an important institution as the Lord's church.

Let us begin with an issue that is so obvious that it is extremely hard to believe anyone does not already realize it, attendance at the services of the church. How can one possibly think they are exhibiting a recognition of the importance of the church if they do not even attend when the church meets? The word of God commands attendance (Heb. 10:25) but even without such a command, common sense would dictate our attendance at all services if possible. If one loves the Lord, they will have a burning desire to assemble with the church to study and worship at every opportunity. If you consider attending services as a chore that "has to be done", then you no doubt have a heart problem that needs to be addressed.

Secondly, if you realize the importance of the Lord's church, you will see that you must do all in your power to build it up, not tear it down. There are many issues involved here. Knowing the bliss of eternal life, you will obviously want to tell others about the joy awaiting them. Evangelism is commanded (Matt. 28:19,20), but again, you should desire to do so anyway, even without such a command. One would certainly want to exhort his brethren, not be a depressive agent toward their faith and joy as a child of God. Supporting the work of the church in a monetary manner would certainly be a part of the building it up process. Again commanded (I Cor. 16:1,2) but one would consider it a joy to do so if he understands the importance of the church (II Cor. 9:7).

The above should be a starter for our minds concerning how we express our understanding of the importance of the church. Our actions often speak much louder than our words. Is the church important to you? PROVE IT!!!

Robert