

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, June 10, 2017

I imagine at some point we've all used the phrase *"Well, it's about time!"* Perhaps you simply had the thought rather than verbalized those words. Either way, it's quite natural to want those anticipated results sooner rather than later. Patience is not one of our worldly traits. We want things now! Instant gratification fits our twenty-first century microwave mentality. With that in mind, I guess this can be a timely discussion.

Time has no favorites. We're all faced with twenty-four hours each day. As we age it does seem to pass us by faster, but in reality it remains the same from one day to the next. Our solar system has us on a set schedule and even though the length of days may vary drastically during the seasons, we still have the same amount of time each day of our lives. How we handle that time varies greatly.

In our business lives there never seems to be enough time to complete all we want to accomplish. So, some of us simply allocate more time to work at the expense of our families and loved ones. Some of us fritter away time in watching too much television or perhaps playing video games. Generally, we seldom find time for others and spend most of it on our self-interests.

Time is an extremely precious commodity. Once it passes it cannot be reclaimed. Let's take a close look at what God's Word says about this precious treasure. In Psalm 39:4-5, King David proclaims *"Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath."* (NIV)

In Psalm 90:12, the psalmist provides good counsel: *"Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."* And, in Isaiah 55:6-8, the prophet advises *"Seek the Lord while he may be found: call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the Lord."*

In John 9:4-5, Jesus tells us *"As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."* And Paul confides in Romans 13:11-12 *"And do this understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light."*

I hope you find this message timely and in time for you to truly take a hard look at your life and how you are using your time. Are you using it wisely as a precious commodity or simply letting it evaporate? It's not too late to take control of whatever time you have left. I'm certain God will be pleased with your diligence and your effort this day forward!

In ending this discussion, let me share a quote from Hall of Fame NFL quarterback Bobby Layne - *"I've never lost a game in my life. Once in a while, time would run out on me."* Don't let time run out before doing what you know is the right thing to do.

Passages to Ponder: Luke 19:41-44; John 12:35-36; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2; Galatians 6:9; Colossians 4:5-6; James 4:13-17.

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Luke 19:41-44 New International Version (NIV)

⁴¹As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴²and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. ⁴³The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

John 12:35-36 New International Version (NIV)

³⁵Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. ³⁶Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 New International Version (NIV)

6 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ²For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

Galatians 6:9 New International Version (NIV)

⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Colossians 4:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

James 4:13-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹³Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." ¹⁴Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." ¹⁶As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.