OUR TIME IS RUNNING OUT

THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN

Every one of us were born into this life for a reason. God has a purpose for you - You are wanted! The Lord created man for His Glory and gave him life. We are an eternal spirit being with a Soul living in an earthly body. The only thing separating us from eternity is this earthly vail of flesh. None of us know how many years we will live! We must remember, our body will one day wear out, it’ll lay down in death and our spirit man inside will take its flight into another world. We live each moment here on a temporary plane, swiftly passing through in a fleeting space of time, heading for the hereafter! God wants man to know, their life here is not all there is!

The earth you live on is a bridge that crosses over into eternity! This world is your dressing room to prepare. Dear reader - you’re in the middle of this bridge right now! Every day, our eternal soul is headed somewhere, to a place where we shall live forever! At one end of this bridge is a blessed hereafter called Heaven to be in the presence of God where joy never ends and no one dies; At the other end of this bridge that man is on is another world, an everlasting Hell of torment created for the devil and his angels! Be it known unto you that it’s a dark nether world beneath our feet! The Bible calls it a bottomless pit, an inescapable place where sinners and the ungodly go after death because they rejected God! They sold their soul for this world’s money, it’s pleasures, good times and fame! In this life only is where we all will make a choice, whom we will serve! I am so glad for the day I heard the voice of the Lord calling me! I answered that royal Call, gave Him my heart to serve and obey! ARE YOU READY? Have you made preparations? **You don’t have much Time left**, it is quickly running out!

This writer will soon be 71 years old. I sit down sometimes and pull out the old photo albums and go through the box of old pictures of when I was a child living back home with Mom and Dad. As I slowly go through the photos, O how the memories flood my mind! Each picture is a snippet of my allotted time. There I am on my tricycle, then there I am on my first bicycle, there’s the birthdays, the cakes and the little candles that kept adding! Each snapped picture is a moment in a frame of time! O how the time has swiftly come and gone! I come to another one, this one is in color and there I am dressed up proudly standing by my first car, I’m now working my first job. Sitting on a table in our living room is my graduation picture in a frame sitting on a table that I pass every day. When I look down at it, I thank my God for His tender mercies of how He saved me from a life of drugs and alcohol and Rock music. I remember those times before I came to Jesus, how that I didn’t want to live! I was a 20 year old boy, a young man addicted, bound in misery of sin! Satan had me shackled, I was in a spiritual prison of my own making because I listened to the Devil that was trying to destroy my soul. I’m sitting here typing these words with the tears now filling my eyes – my Precious Lord Jesus has been so good to me!!! O that the world knew His great Love, O that every soul could only feel what I now feel and the Hope I have inside!!

I have a precious Mommy and Daddy now in Heaven who are waiting on me. My feeble 92 year old Daddy, right before he died, reached up his wrinkled hand and pulled me down to hug me while he was sitting in his chair as I was getting ready to leave and go back home from visiting him. I will never forget it as his blue eyes looked into mine – He said to me – “Son, I love you more than I can tell you that I love you! I’m ready to go and be with Jesus and see your Mom!” He then pulled me closer and kissed me on the left cheek and said – “I want you to be with me!!” As long as I live, I will never forget those words, they forever echo in my soul!

My Mom before she died was bedfast, confined to a hospital bed that Hospice moved into her bedroom at home. She had withered away to just skin and bone. She went into a coma and after a day or two with my Dad, my wife a I at her bedside, she awoke and said – “Who’s playing that beautiful music?” I said – “Mom there isn’t anyone playing music!” She said – “I’ve heard it all day and it is so beautiful.” She went back into a coma and was out till the next day. Her breathing was getting labored and shallow. I remember my Dad was on the right side of her bed and Mary and I were on her left side. She came to again and said – “Who’s playing that beautiful music?” I said – “Nobody Mom!” She said – “O but I have heard it all day and it is beautiful!” She then clasped her hands together and began singing – “O Lord you know I have no friend like you, If Heaven were not my Home, dear Lord what would I do? The Angels beckon me from Heaven’s open door and I can’t feel at home in this world anymore!” When she finished singing, she went back out and it wasn’t long Mommy was gone, Jesus came and took her Home! My Mom when she started getting bad sick, she would tell me the very same words that Dad would tell me – “Mommy loves you more than I can tell you that I love you!!” She knew she wasn’t going to be here long! I’m so thankful I had praying Christian parents who brought me up in Church and taught me right! I know that I am only what I am, who I am and where I am today because of the Grace of God and how I was raised! My Lord sowed His good seed in me through Mother and Dad! This is my Heritage that I will proudly Hold on to until the Lord comes and calls me home to be with Him and my Precious parents again!! Mom and Dad lived out their allotted time and finished their work down here, now it’s up to me! I have a blessed Hope and sweetest memories that this world can never ever take away from me! I was born to serve the Lord! So were you dear reader, you are important to God and He loves you!!

From the recliner in our living room, I look up and hanging on the wall beside our front door that enters into our living room is my Wife and I’s wedding picture, taken in a moment of time when we got married over 45 years ago! In that frame is a beautiful 23 year old girl dressed in her snow white wedding dress, clasping her soon to be Grooms hand as we walked down the aisle of the Church to say our wedding vows. This was 45 years ago, O how the years have passed! The Lord called us and put us together and anointed us to work for Him! I’m dealing with **Time** and the whole duty of man in this Newsletter. Dear reader, Time is running out on us! Can you see and feel it?

A lot of memories flood my mind thinking back through the years that have swiftly passed by. I stand in front of the mirror and I see the gray hair and old age creeping on and I ask myself and the Lord sometimes – “Where did all those years go to so fast?” Dear God, have I done enough for you? Could I have done better and done more for You? I realize more and more now than ever that I was born to serve the Lord and I don’t want to fail Him! Some of you may be older than I am, maybe some of you are much younger. I don’t want to ever forget and waste what He’s given me but ever be Faithful to Him that I might someday receive a Crown of Life.

**POEM:**

When I was a child, I laughed and wept – Time Crept! When as a youth, I dreamed and talked – Time Walked When I became a full grown man – Time Ran When older I grew – the Time Flew Soon I shall find when I come to the end – My Time is **Gone**!!

 I want to say – We don’t have much time left to get ready, to work for the Lord and fulfill His calling. Our time is swiftly running out! The Bible declares – “The glory of man is like the grass; in the morning it groweth up and flourisheth, in the evening it withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; the wind bloweth over it, it is cut down and the place thereof knoweth it no more.” Our life is like a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. Job said – “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle” soon the thread on the spool will run out, the wheel will stop and our life here will end! What are we making good for the Lord while the yarn is still on the spool? What good work will we have to show the Lord on the Day of Judgment?

**ECCLESIASTES**

I want to take you now for the next few minutes through the Book of Ecclesiastes and give you a summary of Solomon’s message that God inspired him to write and to warn us.

The Psalmist David’s son Solomon wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes. God granted Solomon great Wisdom far above that of any other man, gave him great understanding of man’s life and purpose in this world and where he is headed to, when it all comes to an end. Solomon wrote this book containing 12 chapters when he was an old man looking back over his life - He calls himself “The Preacher” – I am the Preacher, a man with great experience to warn you not to waste your time, your money and efforts on this world and frivolous things but to serve God, to get the priorities in your life in order so you’ll be ready to face God at the judgment and be able to enter His Holy Heaven!

**King Solomon, what did the Lord give you to tell us**?

**Ecc 1:2** Solomon will say – “As I look back over my life, I will start off this Book by telling you – Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” There’s a reason he repeats it twice!. (That word **Vanity** means Hollow, empty and vain) **3** What profit (what real gain and value) hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? Solomon goes on: The eye of man is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear of hearing. Take it from a man that had been there, that had experienced wealth, riches, fame and pleasures in life! Solomon said – “I went forth to fill my heart with joy, gladness and pleasure! I made me great works, I builded me houses, planted me vineyards and gardens, I had great possessions of silver, gold and peculiar treasures! I was great and increased more than all that were before me; I labored and whatsoever my eyes desired, I kept not from them! I came to Great Estate – But now that I’m old and I’ve spent out all my Time, Energy and Strength, I look back on all the works that my hands have wrought for worldly pleasure; I look on all the labor that I had laboured to do: And Behold, all is **vanity** and **vexation of spirit**! It’s all a weariness to my flesh. I have exhausted myself seeking and labouring to fulfill my dreams in attaining this world’s material things. I see and realize now that it will all be forgotten in the days to come – therefore I hated life because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me – for all is vanity and vexation of spirit – I hated all my labour which I had done because I should leave it all behind to others after me when I die.” (Solomon was saying - I can’t take one thing with me when I die, all the wealth and riches and goods and accomplishments will be left behind for others to have and worry about!)

The prophet David Wilkerson who won many souls to the Lord in his New York ministry at Times Square Church, tells about visiting a dear Brother in the Lord who was in the Hospital dying of Cancer. Wilkerson tells about being at his bedside getting ready to pray for him. The man was barely able to talk and soon to die. He looked up into David’s face and with a weak voice said – “Brother David, I have served the Lord for many years now and I’m coming down to the end. I know I’m going Home to Heaven. Brother David, if I had my life to live over, I would give God more of my time, money and labour than what I have given. I would be more focused on eternal things and less on this world and all its Cares.”

 You must realize that Solomon is old now and looking back over his life with regret! He ended up missing God, his heart was drawn away from the Lord! He records the word VANITY 37 times. He mentions Vexation of spirit 10 times and he’s trying to tell and warn us – that the pursuit of happiness, pleasure and fulfillment in earthly things are meaningless, they’re empty, worthless and vain without God! Vanity of vanities saith the preacher – life is hollow and empty without serving the Lord your maker! Please dear reader, put all your heart in serving the Lord!

Can you see it in our world and society? It's human nature that people seek and grasp for the now, they desire for the morrow, we get caught up in this world’s cycle of desiring, attaining and getting things! We seek entertainments and pleasures but forget the main thing – We easily forget about God and our eternal soul! Solomon says - when we come down to the end, we find that our days are sorrow, travail and grief - our heart takes no rest because we left God out of our life. We’re not ready to stand before Him to give account of how we’ve lived and **spent our time** down here! Many souls will stand before God empty handed, not having any good works to show, they were more concerned with this world and temporal things!

**Can you Tell us more Solomon:**

Yes I can: O the seasons of life! I can tell you that you will pass through many seasons from the time you’re born till your death. A time to be born and a time to die; a time to weep and a time laugh; a time to get and a time to lose; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to keep and a time to cast away. To everything there is a season – there is a beginning, but what about when time runs out and you come to the End?! Everything in this world and life down here will soon come to an end – what then?

 Listen to Solomon as He goes on preaching: “Yes, God made everything beautiful in His time. It’s good for man to eat and drink and enjoy all the good of his labour, it is the Gift of God. But remember, God shall judge every person in the End!

 Solomon compares man to the likeness of the beasts in the fact that when our bodies die they both go back to dust from which they came. The spirit of beast goeth downward when they die and that’s it, it’s all over for them - they have no conscience or hereafter; but the spirit of man goes back to God who gave it. When God breathed into man, He breathed Himself and made us an eternal spirit being that will never die. Animals and pets have no soul, but God gave us a Soul! He gave us a Will, He gave you a Conscience and an awareness of Him! He gave us an intellect and it’s up to us to make that choice to know, Love and Serve Him.

It's a known fact that the more we have, the more we have to worry about in order to hold on to and keep. (This is what Solomon means by Vexation of spirit). Jesus knows the weakness of man, He said – “the Cares of life, the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things will **choke us out** spiritually, they’ll drain us out of the things of God.” **Tell us more Solomon**: Better is a handful with quietness (inward peace), than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit. So many people are earthly minded going into debt for things they covet and desire and they end up working many hours and miss Church to pay for! The very best thing they have is God, but He’s put on the back burner and it costs them spiritually, they become hollow and empty! O the Vanity and vexation in the soul when you lose the presence and touch of God! This world has great influence like a hypnotic spell to pull and entice man!

**The selfish nature of man is to not let go**:

Monkey trappers in Africa have a clever method of catching Monkeys. Gourds are filled with nuts and firmly fastened to the branch of a tree. Each gourd has a hole just big enough for the monkey to stick his hand into. When the hungry animal finds this, he sticks his hand into the gourd and grasps a handful of nuts, but the hole is too small for him to withdraw his clenched fist. He doesn’t have enough sense to open his hand and let go in order to escape the trapper and he is easily taken captive. (Can I tell us all – there is a clever Trapper in this world and his name is Satan! He’s going to and fro offering the souls of men this world’s things and it’s appealing pleasures that people reach for and won’t let go!)

O Sinner man and Backslider who are away from the Lord:

**Ecc. 6:3** If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, I say, that an untimely birth is better than he. **4** For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness. **6** Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: Do not all go to one place? (What he is saying? – “It would be better if a person never be born into this world if they were going to live out their whole life without God and their Soul not be filled with Good!”) Solomon said – This only have I found – that God made man upright; but they have sought out many **inventions**. We now live in a fast paced mesmerizing age of technology and electronic gadgets that have stolen the hearts and minds of millions. People are like they’re held in a hypnotic spell and cannot break free from their phones and the world wide web. Six point nine (6.9) billion people now have smart phones. Technology has now become a god to this addicted generation, where everyone is connected to one another through entertainment and they’ve become disconnected from God and Spiritual things. The Internet is their favorite past time in viewing and hearing, filling the minds with images and sounds and most of it is so lustful and bad!

 But O the Blessedness of serving God in Holiness and putting Him first in our lives! He is the Author of Life – He’s the Blesser and giver of all Good things! He is our Joy, Peace and Happiness!

Someone compared **TIME** to a river upon which your life flows at a slow pace at first. You are riding upon this river. It is carrying you to eternity. There’s no turning back and there is no escape. When you are young the river of time is deep and wide and it flows slowly with much to offer. But as you get older, the channel narrows, the declining river bed steepens and becomes a stretch of rapids. Faster and faster O River of Time – the steeper and narrower you get, the faster my time is running out on me. I’m surely nearing the end. I’m getting closer to my final destination. At the end of the rapids, I see a mist rising just ahead. Is that a waterfall and a drop off I hear? Yes! I will soon go through the mist called death and the river will empty into eternity and I will be gone from this world – ushered into eternity to my final everlasting home. Where do you stand with the Lord in light of eternity? What have you done for God? Have you left anything undone? Have you taken care of the Spiritual issues in your life? Have you gotten your priorities in order of what God desires out of you? Are you doing the Lord’s will?

Remember, only what you do for God is going to last. Our Kings business requires haste. The hour is late and the Holy Ghost is saying….. HURRY – get busy! Don’t let the day close on you without finishing the Lords work. I surely don’t want to leave this world with an unfinished task. Are you using the talents God has given you? Soon the day will close as time empties into eternity and we will all stand before the Lord to give an account how we spent our time. Our lives and deeds will be judged. Our prayer should be: O Lord Jesus, is there something I have left undone? Have I fulfilled the call of God? Have I fully surrendered and given up what you told me to give up? Am I ready? Am I slack in anything?

**Hebrews 9:27** – “Heb 9:27 It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

**Eph 5:15** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, **16** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

**PS. 89:47 –** David cried out to the Lord - Remember how short my TIME IS. **PS. 90: 9 –** We spend our years as a tale that is told. **VS. 12 –** So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. In closing – are you ready? It’s Time to set our house in order. We must be about our Father’s business. There’s much work to be done and souls to be won. Our life down here is like a book with many chapters. Soon our last chapter will be written and will close!

**Ecc. 12:13** ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: **for this is the Whole Duty of man.** **14** For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. May God Bless each and every one of my Readers!!