**TIME & PURPOSE**

12-29-21

We are now officially into 2022!

We have already begun the 3rd year of the 3rd decade of this century.

(2000’s, 2010’s, 2020’s)

**JOHN 10:10** “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

The thief…

* Steals - Joy
* Kills - Opportunities
* Destroys - relationships
* He wants to steal our joy, because he knows that the Joy of the Lord is our strength,
* He wants to kill of our opportunities because he knows the potential we have if we really walk fully in the plans and purposes God has for us.
* He wants to destroy our relationship with God and others because he knows that those relationship may be the very reason we were created; “To love God and Love others”

He is our enemy and works relentlessly to try to ruin the great things God has for us in our lives.

He is described as a “thief”, and one of the primary things he tries to rob from us is “TIME”

He wants to keep us preoccupied, discouraged, distracted or defeated for as long as he can,

*…So that,* lots of *valuable,* *precious* and *purpose-filled* **time** gets wasted.

His goal; to hold us back and keep us from fulfilling God’s purposes in this life.

*It’s like a football or basketball team “running out the clock”.*

*Satan – tries to run out our clock,*

*Why? To waste your* ***time.***

Because:
“Each moment of your time represents an opportunity for you to be used by God to further His kingdom, AND destroy the works of the devil.”

**Eph 5:15-16**

**15**Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, **16**making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.

[**NIV**](http://biblehub.com/niv/ephesians/5.htm)
“making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”

[**NASB**](http://biblehub.com/nasb/ephesians/5.htm)
“making the most of your time…”

[**ESV**](http://biblehub.com/esv/ephesians/5.htm)
“making the best use of the time…”

[**KJV**](http://biblehub.com/kjv/ephesians/5.htm)
“Redeeming the time…”

**CEV**
“These are evil times, so make every minute count.”

The “evil thief” is always trying to kill steal and destroy, your time…

**The Good News:**

*Time belongs to God,* God created Time! *,* He owns it… it’s His!

Creation of Time:

Gen . 1: **1**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2**Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

**3**And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **4**God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. **5**God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”

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**Gen. 1:14** “And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years.”

*Contemporary English Version “God said, "I command lights to appear in the sky and to separate day from night and to show the time for seasons, special days, and years. “*

Something changed in verse 14, my theory is that God created, “time” as we know it.

He controls time:

**Psalm 31:14,15 (David) 14**But I trust in you, Lord; I say, “You are my God.” **15**My times are in your hands;
    deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me.

 **(Joshua** and his army marched all night to assist their allies in Gibeon while they were being attacked by Five Amorite kings.) The Lord stopped the sun and helped them fight.

**Joshua 10:12-14** **12**On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel:

“Sun, stand still over Gibeon,
    and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.”
**13**So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,
    till the nation avenged itself on its enemies,

as it is written in the Book of *Jashar(?). (Book of the righteous or upright)*

*The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day*. **14**There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to a human being. Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel!

**Solomon,** the wisest person ever, gave us these words:

**Eccl 3:1**   “There is a time for everything,
       and a season for every activity under heaven.”

(To everything there is a season and a *time* to every purpose under heaven)

**Eccl. 3:11** “He has made everything beautiful in its time.”

God has purposes attached to times, “a time for every purpose”.

Every Time in our lives has a purpose assigned to it, some great, some small but *all* are significant.

EVEN IN A PANDEMIC!

Covid should not be an excuse to drydock yourself or stay in a *permanent pitstop* until things go back to normal. If you approach these days like that, you may waste some of the most valuable opportunities and experiences that your life is intended for.

There are times to draw back, rest and even remain still and silent, but that should never become your permanent posture.

It could be that these years that we are in now, will being about some of the most significant purposes of your life.

What if we’ve already allowed the thief to come in and steal our time.

What if we did not redeem the time, or make the most of every opportunity in the past? (Eph. 5:16)

What if we find ourselves far away from where we believe God would want us to be, and feel we’ve missed out on a lot of God opportunities???

Perhaps we really have not done what we should have, or said what we should have.

Am I too old to fulfill the purposes God had for my life? NO!

* **Moses** was 80 years old when he saw the burning bush and began the amazing final third of His life. (First 40 years – Lived as an Egyptian in Pharoah’s house, middle 40 years – lived as a shepherd in the backside of the desert, *Final 40 years – Freed His people from Egypt, Crossed the Red Sea, Received the Commandments, wrote the Torah, Lead the people to the promised land…)*
* **Abraham** was 100 years old when Isaac was born.
* **Vito Parillo**

…

(Our friend, Melissa’s Grandfather, 93 year old when he was elected Mayor of Tinton Falls. He won re-election and will begin his 2nd term on Tuesday at age 97!

What about if you have really “blown it” in your life?

Perhaps we’ve done and said a lot of things we *shouldn’t have*, and now we feel like instead of having made the most of every opportunity, …we’ve blown lots of opportunities. Is it too late to accomplish His purposes and get back on track?

The truth is that God’s Will is done regardless of us, he wants us to be obedient and available, but when we are not, he often uses someone else to do the job.

But, does that mean our life becomes meaningless if we get off track and don’t respond perfectly to the plan of God for our life?

The answer is NO, it’s never too late for second chances with God.

God is patient and merciful to us.

**2 Peter 3:9** “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

The prophet Jeremiah wrote of an oasis of hope in the middle of Lamentations:

 **Lamentations 3:19-23**

 **19**I remember my affliction and my wandering,
    the bitterness and the gall.
**20**I well remember them,
    and my soul is downcast within me.
**21**Yet this I call to mind
    and therefore I have hope:

**22**Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,
    for his compassions never fail.
**23**They are new every morning;
    great is your faithfulness.

The prophet Joel prophesied to Judah about what God will do when they experience despair:

**Joel 2:25 “**I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten!”

God can restore even the things that thief has killed, stolen and destroyed.

The enemy will work overtime to try to immobilize you when you are discouraged. It’s at those times, God wants to show you His strength in your weakness.

**When we are discouraged, the enemy wants us to *give up*,**

**God wants us to *get up*!**

**STORY:** Norwegian skier Simen Hegstad Krueger the 2018 winter Olympics.

He got a chance to race in his *first* Olympics. It was a 30-kilometer skiathlon. In these Olympic races, any imperfections in your pace can cost you valuable time and cause you to lose. Too many wide turns, *loose footing* for even a second, or *brushing up against another skier* could be devastating.

Krueger experienced a disaster at the very beginning of the race, he had a bad fall and crashed into two other skiers. All of them were laying in a tangled mess and the rest of the racers went on way ahead of them. He got up and realized that one of his ski poles was broken.

..

He had a choice.

He realized that he had already lost a lot of valuable time and was no longer in contention.

1. Should he give up and go home, and allow this whole experience to be defined by an early crash and defeat?

OR

1. should he do the best he could to do what he loved to do, and was good at, and ski as fast as he can to try to get back in the pack and finish the race?

## His quote about that moment was; "I knew I had to switch focus."

He decided to not look back at what happened, but look ahead to what could be…

Amazingly, he caught up to the pack of racers, he eventually fought his way to the front of the pack and … miraculously WON THE RACE by a commanding lead!

*Maybe* ***you*** *feel like that skier, you ran into some trouble in life and lost a lot of time…*

*Maybe sone mistakes you made or things others did to you have wounded or damaged your ability to accomplish your goals the way you had hoped to.*

*You have a choice,*

1. *Look back with despair and regret for what didn’t happen, and give up,*

*OR*

1. *look forward, and direct your focus to what “could be”!*

*The Lord has these words for you…*

**Isaiah 43:18-19** “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.
**19**See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

In other words, he can provide what seems like impossible provision for us in ways that have never been done before.

**Heb 12:1-3 “**Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2**fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

God wants you to have victory and succeed in ALL the things He has planned for you. He does not want the thief to rob you of one more minute of life.

My New Year’s prayer for you,

is that you do not allow yourself to become;

discouraged, distracted or defeated,

but that you remain available and ready,

so that when the right time or opportunity comes along,

you are prepared in your mind, your heart, your schedule and your willingness

 to respond to every opportunity that God gives you,

to accomplish;

HIS purposes in YOUR life,

 in the TIME that HE has given YOU to Live.