



Further Study

In today's message, we come to part two of our current series on "Why? Why Now – God's Timing Is Always Perfect". Everything in our lives centers around time. In fact, God Himself originated time. He created it in Genesis chapter one. That means that time as we know it had a beginning. According to the book of Revelation, time will have an ending. Think about how time affects our lives. Each day has 24 hours; each week has 168 hours; each thirty one day month has 744 hours; and each year has 8,760 hours. If you live to be seventy years old, you will live 613,200 total hours; At seventy five, you will live 657,000 total hours; At eighty, you will live 700,800 total hours; At ninety, 788,400 total hours; At age one hundred, 876,000 total hours. While those numbers may sound like high, I'm confident that if you ask any eighty year old about it, they would say that it went by so fast.

God's timing is perfect timing. He is never late. He is never early. He never gets in a hurry. He has predestinated everything in this world according to His divine time table. So make no mistake about it. His plan and purpose for all things, including our lives is running right on time. Consider the following Scriptures about time:

"Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee; in the day of salvation have I helped thee" (Isaiah 49:8).

"Then saith Jesus unto them, my time has not yet come (John 7:6).

"For there is a time for every purpose and for every work" (Ecclesiastes 3:17).

"It is time for thee Oh Lord to work" (Psalm 119:126).

"In due time, Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6).

"My times are in thy hand" (Psalm 31:15).

"Trust in Him at all times; pour out your heart before Him" (Psalm 62:8).

MOST PEOPLE HAVE TROUBLE ACCEPTING GOD'S TIMING IN THEIR LIVES:

When we have trouble accepting God's timing for our lives, many times we find ourselves asking God, Why Now? That is really a subtle way of letting God know that we do not approve of His timing. When we disapprove of God's timing, we are actually taking issue with His sovereignty and His right to be God.

THE BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF JOHN 11: (The Story of God's Perfect Timing With Lazarus)

Verse 1,2: Good people do get sick and die.

Verse 3, 4: We should always rehearse our situation before God Himself. God hears what we say to Him. According to these verses, our situation will "honor" Him; it will "glorify" Him; and it "promote" His glory (See also Romans 8:28). We were put on this earth to glorify God. John Piper said it best when he said that we either magnify Him as a microscope or as a telescope. A microscope magnifies something by making it appear larger than it really is. That is not what we do. We magnify Him like a telescope. A telescope allows us to see something as it really is. Our responsibility is to show the value and worth of God in our lives on a daily basis by accepting His perfect timing for all things. We must show Christ to the world through the lens of a telescope.

Verse 5, 6: We must understand that God loves us even when we can't see it, feel it, taste it, or experience it. He loves us but He is not controlled by our expectations.

Verse 7: God's delay in our lives is not necessarily God's denial.

Verse 8-10: We must accept that we may never fully understand what God is doing or saying. We will know some things, but will never know other things. (Acts 1:7; 1 Thess.5:1, 2, 4).

Verse 11-12: Most of the time, God's revealed revelation to us is progressive. It rarely comes all at once.

Verse 13: Most of the time, you should never trust your feelings or your thinking when it comes to applying God's perfect timing principle to our lives.

Verse 14: To get our attention, it may be necessary for God to speak very plainly to us.

Verse 15: God's delays and denials are always intended to increase our "trust" and "faith".

Verse 17: God's perfect timing will probably mean waiting. Martha and Mary waited for Jesus for four days. Although they were enveloped in death, Jesus never panicked in the face of death. Death meant nothing to Him. Nothing is impossible with God.

Verse 20: A lack of understanding always has consequences. When we fail to see God's hand in our lives, we feel betrayed. We then pull away and get angry. Generally, we end up laying aside and neglecting the things we need the most.

Verse 21: A lack of understanding causes anger and more questions. Everyday circumstances always mean that faith and reality will collide. We must understand that when Lazarus died, part of Martha and Mary died also. Amazingly, Jesus tenderly accepted her anger and only responded to her faith.

Verse 22: We must never lose sight of what God can and will do for us in His time.

Verse 23-24: The best thing we can do for our faith is to live in the now, not the future

Verse 33-35: These verses state clearly that as Jesus approached the tomb of Lazarus, He was literally "troubled" in His spirit. The word actually means He was angry.

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION

The question must be asked as to why Jesus was "angry" as he looked at the tomb and observed all those standing around the tomb that day. I believe He was angry at what sin had done to the world. The family He loved so much was sobbing; the man He loved so much was dead, and he has been placed in a tomb. He was surrounded with the oppression of sorrow and death.

John Calvin said this about the passage: "Jesus Christ advanced to the tomb of Lazarus as a champion prepared for conflict against death, hell, and the grave". Although Jesus was only weeks away from dying on the cross, which would mean the complete victory over death, He was now willing to give this family and these witnesses a small taste of what this victory would ultimately look like as well as putting Satan on notice that death and the grave are never final realities for those who know Christ. It was also a reminder that nothing is impossible with God.

Simply put, trusting God and His perfect timing must always be independent of our understanding. With this in mind, we must never demand explanations from God.

Whenever there is a delay or a denial in our lives, remember that God always has something better in mind.