GOD-365

A DEVOTIONAL & PRAYER JOURNAL



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Tuesday, March 1, 2011

A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE

Ecclesiastes 3:1

To everything there is a season, and **a time to every purpose** under the heaven:

Our devotional focus for the month of March is "Part B" of this very familiar scripture: "...a time to every purpose under the heaven..." There are phrases, chants, words to songs, and clichés that play in our heads and/or roll off our tongues all day, every day. Just as natural as it is to think or speak certain words and phrases, it is our hope that we begin to live, breath, and confess the words "a time to every purpose under the heaven." It is our prayer that the words become a daily affirmation, a constant thought, a prayer focus, a meditation inquiry, and ultimately evokes praise to Almighty God for the powerful revelation that "there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for **every purpose** in my life."

It is a process to understand, accept, and receive the liberation of the truth in the words "there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for *every purpose* in my life." God is time. God orchestrates beginnings, the middle, and endings. God allows our existence in the time span that he alone has calculated. We cannot delay, retard, or alter God's appointed time for a particular purpose in our life. Time arrives and time passes. We have a choice. We recognize the time, seize the moment, and reap the benefits or we miss the time and never come to a full realization of what has just passed us because we do not recognize and appreciate that God is time.

It is of utmost urgency that we recognize, respect, honor and reverence God as time. In "[t]he words of the Preacher...one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. Ecclesiastes 1:1, 4-5(KJV) If the foregoing verses do not stimulate or excite your soul, recall a familiar prayer that we hear on Sunday mornings. Deacon Jesse Hills, Jr. has prayed this revelatory and liberating prayer: "... Father, we thank you for a day we've never seen before and a day we'll never see again." What an acknowledgement to God that time is right now and time is available to walk into what God has purposed for our lives today without fear, hesitation or regret. We will not get another chance at TODAY...at RIGHT NOW. It is time!

Prayer Requests: Lord I desire to begin the process of understanding, accepting, and receiving the liberating truth that "there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for *every purpose* in my life."

1.	
2.	

"there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for every purpose in my life"

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

TEMPORARILY OUT OF SERVICE

Isn't it frustrating when you wait until the last minute to go to the bathroom and you rush in and there are "temporarily out of service" signs on all of the stalls? What about when it's cold and raining and you pull up to the gas station, brace yourself for the cold and wind, and get to the pump and it reads – "temporarily out of service?" All of this is frustrating, to say the least, but what if you called on God and he said: "sorry I'm temporarily not answering prayers today. I need a little down time to regroup. Try me tomorrow I may be back to full service by then, or maybe not." Fortunately God will never take a temporary break from us. We, however, need to take a temporary break from ourselves to seek God for guidance on managing our time. The scenarios presented above are examples of what happens when we do not manage our time well. Think about it, our bodies are perfect machines. Our brains tell our bladder it's time to go to the bathroom in plenty of time to get to the stall without threat of an accident. If you are stopping in stormy weather for gas, that means that you are probably on "E", otherwise you would not be stopping in a monsoon to pump gas. were you doing that was so important that you could not stop to go to the bathroom or pay attention to your gas needle and notice you are running out of gas? And what were you doing that was so important that you missed your child's first recital and your grandparent's 65th wedding anniversary? What were you doing for nine months when you did not notice that your 15

year old daughter was pregnant until she was arrested for killing her new born child just what were you doing? -- Nothing rises to the level of importance to miss any of these life changing events! Just stop "doing." Yes, one can stop "doing." Turn off all electronic devices. Silence CNN, FOX. Sally Ann Roberts, Sylvia Weatherspoon, and Norman Robinson. Create a sign to let the world know you are temporarily out of service.

Sample Sign: In order to better service God, myself, family, ministry, and others I am Temporarily Out of Service.

reate 1 our own sign				
Talk to God abou	t time management:			

Let Us Pray: Lord teach me to be a good steward of my time. Forgive me for not recognizing the importance of managing the time you have ordained for every purpose in my life. Amen.

"there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for every purpose in my life"

Thursday, March 3, 2011

GOD'S TIME CLOCK

Ecclesiastes 3:7 -- A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak.

Time resumes at a standard pace for everyone. However differences occur in the utilization of The varied use of time reveals that different kinds of time exist. There is clock time, and then there is seasonal time; the appropriate or appointed time for something. There are seasons and times of nature, and there are seasons and times in life. Seasons are not limited to the four seasons of the year, but apply to a whole range of activities that people are engaged in or observe. We cannot stop the progression of time. All seasons of time are ordained and controlled by God. advances along, a decision has to be made of how to use it and how to make the most out of the seasons of life. Human wisdom of time and its seasons does not contain all answers. Knowledge and education have their limits therefore little if any understanding of time is formed without God. Spiritual wisdom is essential! The wisdom of maintaining an eternal perspective can be found in God's word. In order to acquire that wisdom, one must first get to know and honor God.

Let Us Pray: Heavenly Father, Thank you for the miracle of life and help us to respond properly to the seasons of life through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Friday, March 4, 2011

GRACE

Titus 2: 11-14--11) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12) Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13) Looking for that blessed hope, and the gloriously appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14) Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

The traditional definition of Grace is God's unmerited favor. Grace means that God showed favor and blessing when it wasn't deserved. It is the power and ability of God, available to meet our every need. Without grace, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing. God's grace that extends and expresses His love is always available and accessible. This conveys wonderful hope and comfort to the Christian. In Paul's letter to Titus, he reminds him of this grace and how it should affect his life and those who have been redeemed: For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men (**Titus 2:11**). We are alive today because of God's grace. We are here today because of God's grace. We are saved from sin and offered salvation because of God's grace. Grace is through our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own.

What a terrible thing to receive God's grace and not to grow in it! God's process for Christian Growth begins by grace, but it also continues by grace. God gave us His saving grace to get us started, but God also gives us daily grace to keep us going and growing. God wants our lives to be changed. He wants us to grow in the grace and

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knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (**2Peter 3:18**); to have a solid understanding of the grace of God which is essential to living a victorious life.

Let Us Pray: Our Father, Grant us your grace to always go before us and follows us, keeping us intent upon good works, through Jesus Christ Your Son. Amen.

Saturday, March 5, 2011

PATIENCE TO ACCEPT HIS TIME

Psalm 25: 5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Waiting is not something that comes easily. We live in an age where time is of the essence. In this fast paced world of computers and modern technology we expect immediate satisfaction, therefore evading the "wait" whenever possible. Even in our modern age of conveniences and our dislike for waiting, it is a crucial part of life. Waiting absorbs time, and times of waiting may be challenging.

Waiting on the Lord requires the endurance of passing time. Time allows faith in God to mature, teaches perseverance, and encourages one to seek patience and wisdom. Waiting also includes the concept of hope, an expectation based on knowledge and trust. The ability to wait on the Lord stems from being confident and focused on who God is and in what He is doing. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. There is no circumstance, situation or condition in which the Lord cannot help. He can easily find a way or make a way for breakthrough.

Let's Us Pray: O God, we trust totally in You as we trust in no other. You are the creator of all

things. Our lives depend on You and do not rest secure in our own strength or wisdom. Draw us closer to You and enable us to live more faithfully as followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Sunday, March 6, 2011

THANK GOD FOR NIGHT LIGHTS

Exodus 13:21-22 -- ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: ²² He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

When Pharaoh finally released Israel, God devised a plan to guide his people by day and by night out of Egypt. God was mindful that his people were battle fatigued so he devised a plan of escape. God did not want to lead the people through an area where they might encounter war from the enemy which may have caused the people to mistakenly run back to the same oppressive situation from which God just granted escape. **Exodus 13:17**.

God is always available to guide us through challenging situations. Whenever we find ourselves in a "dark" place, remember how God separated light from darkness. When the darkness of night is interrupted by the illumination of light, know that it is God who has provided us with light in "our night."

Let Us Pray: Father, sometimes my days run into my nights and my nights run into my days because I am overwhelmed by the

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challenges of life. I forget to distinguish that it is time for me to rest my weary body. Sometimes I momentarily forget the day of the week. I thank you Lord that you have devised a peaceful plan of rest and escape for me. I thank you for being the light in my "dark places". Continue to have mercy on me Father, I thank you as always for all blessings. In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen.

Monday, March 7, 2011

A COVENANT FOR ALL GENERATIONS

Genesis 31: 49 ...The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

In the book of Genesis, chapter 31 tells the story of Jacob and Laban and the covenant of peace between them. A 'covenant' is an agreement or promise made by individuals or parties which requires each to abide by some commitment throughout generations of time. A covenant also exists with Christ and His believers in such a way that the covenant and its salvation is not only kept personally by the believer, but with regard to children, grandchildren and the generations following. This was true in the Old Testament (Gen. 17:7). It is also true through the Calvary Experience in the New Testament (Acts 2:39).

God wants to assure doubting hearts, that He will fulfill everything that He has promised, so He administered a covenant. He pledged a firm and sure vow on Himself because there was no one greater by whom He could make this vow. It is the assurance of His unchanging purpose of redemption and blessings He has promised in His word. This hope is ours and our descendants for the years to come.

Let Us Pray: Be blessed and know that we are at one with the Spirit of the living God. May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other. May He look your way and may He look mine; and keep us near unto Him. Heavenly Father, thank you for your love that binds us together and keeps us all in the way of salvation, through Christ our Lord; in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we pray. Amen

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

WHAT WILLYOULEAVE BEHIND?

Job 7:1 *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?*

On May 31, 2001 at 3:30 p.m., I lost a piece of my heart for that was the day and hour my earthly father went home to be with *his* Heavenly Father. For days it seemed I couldn't even breathe. I kept thinking, it's too soon, why did God have to take him now?

None of us know the day or the hour of our appointed time to go home and be with the Lord. We all want to live a long life, but for those who plan to spend eternity with God, it's not about how long we live, but what we do in that time. Jesus himself only lived 33 years. Yet in that very short time he lived in such a way that despite the many who rejected him there were thousands who heard His message, gave their life to God and desired to live a life here on earth that would one day end with them being in eternity with God.

Like most things in this life, it is not quantity, but quality that makes the difference. If God called you home today what legacy would you leave behind? Will

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you have lived in such a way that some one came to Christ because of something they saw in you? What is the real gain if we live a long time, but yet have not lived in such a way that our living made a difference?

It's been 9 years since my father passed and yet still today whenever I see people that worked with him, that knew him, I am humbled when they talk about what a great man he was. How kind, thoughtful and considerate he always was, how he went out of his way to help people. His church family still talks about the pride he took in serving as an usher, how selfless he was in giving of his time and finances. Perfect, no, but a man who left behind a legacy his family could be proud of, yes. When you depart this world, what will you leave behind?

Let Us Pray: God thank you for letting me live to this point. Whether I have many years left or only a few days or minutes, please let me live in such a way that someone sees your light and likeness in me and chooses to follow you.

Wednesday, March 9, 2011

"HAPPY HOUR"

Acts 2:15-17 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: KIV

This account of Acts takes place after an assembly of 120 men and women gathered

together in the upper room to receive the promise of the Luke 24:49 ... I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

With all being on one accord in prayer and supplication, they sought to fulfill the spot left vacant by Judas. Again, they prayed unto the Lord for a selection and Matthias was elected to complete the disciples. After their work was complete in the upper room and the day of Pentecost was fully come, the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a mighty rushing wind **Acts 2:2** empowering everyone present.

After being filled with the Holy Ghost and leaving the upper room, it appeared to the spectators that they were a bunch of drunken folks. The crowd in verse 13 accuses these Holy Ghost filled men of being drunk saying "For these men are full of new wine". And in verse 15 Peter offers a defense by saying "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day". In other words, it's too early for drinking being that it's only 9:00 in the morning.

How many times have you misinterpreted someone's actions or behavior? We are all familiar with the old adage, "don't judge a book by its' cover". The spectators heard the different languages and were confused being that everyone spoke a language other than their native language.

The upper room experience was to prepare the disciples to go out and witness to all types of people all over **Acts. 1:8**. In order to be effective witnesses we must speak the language necessary, i.e., the language of a

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young person, the language of an elderly person, the language of a drug dealer and the drug user, the language of a struggling person, the language of a single mother and the absent father, the language of someone grieving, and yes, the language of a person who's been injured in the church. Whatever language needed when the opportunity arises to be a witness, then that's the language we need to speak to be effective witnesses.

Let us Pray: Father, we thank you for the power of the Holy Ghost to be witnesses throughout the land. Father, for every opportunity which arises for us to witness, let us do so in such a way that our witnessing will not fall on deaf ears.

Thursday, March 10, 2011

"WAITING ALL DAY"

Psalm 25:5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. KJV

Have you ever had to sit around and wait for something? Perhaps the results of a recent test, an answer on whether or not you got the job that you so desperately wanted and needed. Or perhaps you were waiting for a very important phone call and every once in a while you would pick up the receiver to see if there was a dial tone. I'm sure you or someone you know have experienced waiting around for the cable man. What's up with that four-hour window anyway?

All throughout life we are required to wait. Wait in the bank line, wait in the grocery

line, wait in the dismissal line to pick up the children from school, waiting in the doctor's office. Wait, wait, and wait.

In **Psalm 25:5** David is in distress and is seeking God for instruction. David goes to the One whom he declares to be the God of his salvation. David preservers in his prayers due to his favorable past with God and his trust in God's ability to deliver him. Therefore, David purposes to wait on Him all day until he receives instruction.

When we are in situations which are uncertain, lets draw strength from our favorable past with God. I know that waiting can be a difficult thing but we have waited all our lives for one thing or another. We bring a book, we get comfortable and we wait. **Psalm 40:1** says *I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.* There are benefits in waiting on God. If we are to avoid catastrophic events in our lives, let's try waiting on God.

Let us pray: Our Lord and God, we thank you for leading us in thy truth. Help us to study your word so that we may know the truth and be made free by it. Let us not move prematurely Lord, but patiently wait to hear from you.

Friday, March 11, 2011

THE MASTER OF TIME

2 Peter 3: 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Remember "Good Times", a comedy series of the 70's that followed the challenges and joys of a family as they were trying to make ends meet and make a better life. The show was extremely successful at handling controversial topics with humor and dignity. New day technology and knowledge have been instrumental in bringing about improved changes since then. Yet in these modern real life times, poverty, hunger, homelessness, prejudice, selfishness, deceit, sickness, and violence are not humorous in its severity of existence. The media depicts fighting soldiers, starving children, affects of drugs, political corruption, etc.; there is wonder if the violence and immorality will ever stop - reflecting confusion, desperation, and impatience. The world seems like it is spinning out of control. It is easy to get discouraged when years pass and the world doesn't get better. But remember that God holds the world in the palm of His hands. He sees all, knows all, created all and prepares all. It might seem that he is slow, but God is not slow. God does not have our limitations of time. He is completely unrestricted by time. Jesus' teachings show us a God Who is the Master of space and time, and reassures that the Lord works on his time and he has not forgotten his promises. It is He who keeps us, takes care of us, provides for us, and makes a way for us; PRAISE GOD! God is not limited by time - He is the Master of Time!

Let Us Pray: Gracious God we thank you for this offer that we have in Jesus Christ. We pray for your help to take every step of faith in a journey of growing closer to you

and experiencing more of the peace and security and love that you offer us in Jesus Christ. For it is in His name that we pray. Amen.

Saturday, March 12, 2011

Waiting on your acceptable time

Isaiah 49:8 -- Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.

Are you waiting on or for something? Waiting for that house, that job, that healing? Waiting, waiting and yet it seems nothing is happening, nothing is As I read and then re-read changing. today's scripture the words "In an acceptable time have I heard thee" kept jumping out at me. As I thought about the things I have personally been waiting on, my first thought was, so what is an acceptable time, a day, a month, a year? In your case, think of something you've prayed for, thought you deserved, but yet you didn't get Were you angry? Did you get discouraged? Did you feel you had been waiting long enough? Or did you continue to pray, seek God and accept the fact that nothing happens until God says its time. Waiting can be a discouraging process at time, but we must take heart because 1.) God knows our case and what we wait for and 2.) because His word is infallible, in His time, He will deliver! The rest of the scripture reads..." and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." God reminds us that he has and will help us, preserve us and by and

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through His covenant will bless us. Whatever it is you are waiting on remember that our *time* and God's *acceptable time* are not one in the same so while waiting on your acceptable time, wait with the hope of knowing that if God says it and ordains it then in *His time* it will surely come to pass.

Let Us Pray: Father help me each day to realize that because a prayer has not yet been answered does not mean it will never be. Give me patience to wait for that time when You allow doors to open and others to shut, healings to come forth and blessings and favor to flourish in my life. Amen.

Sunday, March 13, 2011

IT'S NOT TIME YET

John 7:6 - Then Jesus said unto them, my time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready

Jesus taught us so many lessons about God's timing. In Chapter 7 of the Gospel of John, Jesus' brothers are showing their true colors disbelief. The brothers are taunting Jesus about hiding his "miracle working gifts" from the public. The brothers want Jesus to attend a Jewish festival and show off his "works". Jesus. however, has knowledge that some of the Jews are looking for an opportunity to kill him. Jesus simply answered the request to attend the festival by stating, "...my time has not yet come..." Notice, Jesus did not entertain the foolishness, he simply stated -- it's not time. I am certain the brothers did not even realize what "time" Jesus is referencing. Additionally, what is amazing about Jesus' response is that at first reading, it appears Jesus may have been apprehensive or fearful of the Jews' plot to kill him. This of course is not the case, because Jesus goes to the festival and with boldness and authority teaches in the temple "smack dab in

the middle" of the festival. All sorts of chaos is brewing at the festival. Accusations and questions are hurled at and against Jesus. An attempt is made to arrest Jesus, but no one laid a hand on Jesus, because Jesus' "hour had not yet come." John 7:30.

Life Application: It's not time to quit—it's not time. It is not time to bury your head under the sand and pretend that "it" will go away—it's not time. It's not time to sacrifice character, integrity, and class – it's not time. It is time to focus – it's time. It is time out for walking in fear – it's time. Time is up for foolishness – it's time. It's about time we stand with boldness and authority proclaiming that Jesus is "the Great I am"... "the beginning"... "the ending"... "our all" – it's time.

Let Us Pray: God our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. I truly want thy kingdom to come and Thy will to be done on this earth. Lord God, have mercy on my soul. I know "it's time." Identify for me "when it's time." Purge my mind and my heart of anything that is blocking me from comprehending – it's time. I thank you Father. All my love, all glory, all honor, all praise, dear Father is yours. Amen...Amen

Monday, March 14, 2011

MIRROR REFLECTION

James 1:22-25

²²But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: ²⁴For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straight-way forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

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If our identity is in Christ, then we should do all we can to reflect Him, so that His identity is evident in us. We were created in the image of Christ, we were made to resemble Him... Do we look like Him?

A mirror can show what we look like, but if we want to know what we really look like, we must look to the Word to show us. The Word of God is our mirror. The Word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (**Hebrews 4:12-13**). Just as in the natural we see what our natural faces look like when we look into the mirror, our thoughts and heart stand exposed before the mirror of the Word of God.

We see what our natural face looks like when we look into a mirror, but our thoughts and heart stand exposed before the mirror of the Word of God. The Word of God will show us every inch of our life that needs correction (2 Timothy 3:16 – 17). We stand completely exposed before the word of God. We may fool ourselves or anyone else, but we will never pull the wool over the eyes of God. No matter what we say we are, the word of God will show us what really is. The Word shows us what we are in Christ, and what we shall be if we are faithful to the end (2 Corinthians 3:18).

We have to continue to hear the word of God, obey the Word of God, increase in the knowledge of the Lord, and strive to make sure that the person in the mirror is doing more than just looking back, but changing and reflecting the image of Christ.

Let Us Pray: Dear Lord, Guide us in seeking you and consulting your Word. We pray that your Word in all its richness, live in our hearts and give us wisdom. Help us to draw on your Word daily, we pray in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen

Monday, March 15, 2010

"THE HOUR HAS COME"

Luke 22:52-53 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. KJV

The Lord Jesus arrives at the Mount of Olives as he customarily does and enters the Garden of Gethsemane where he kneels down to pray as He is feeling the burden of this sinful world. There was a battle at Gethsemane as He prays to the Father saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. Luke 22:42

As Jesus completes his prayer time in Gethsemane, and while his disciples slept due to their weak flesh, Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38, Judas and a multitude came to take him away; coming against Him as thou he were a common thief. The multitude did not know where to find Jesus however. Judas, since he was a disciple and was familiar Jesus' routines, knew exactly where he would be. In order to properly identify Jesus, Judas used the sign of a kiss to single him out. Jesus questions Judas' actions saying, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? Luke 22:28. 1Pe 5:14 says in part, Greet ve one another with a kiss of charity... or a kiss of love. Judas desecrated the token of love in the worst way. But, it was the hour!

"there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for every purpose in my life"

Jesus had to be born of a virgin Matthew 1:23, had to be crucified, had to be buried and most of all he had to rise from the dead in order to perfect God's plan in redeeming man to himself John 10:18. So, this was the hour that would change your life and my life FOREVER! 2 Corinthians 5:17. It was this hour that would allow us to go boldly to the thrown of grace Hebrews 4:16, and it was this hour that would entitle us to a place of most blessed peace and favor with God. Psalm 23:6

Let us Pray: Dear God we come to you in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, thanking you for the kiss of betrayal which would ultimately lead to the securing of our eternal salvation. Thank you Jesus for your obedience unto death even the death of the cross! Assist us Holy Spirit when it is our hour to spread this great gospel that we would not be ashamed and that we would speak with authority and confidence.

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

"NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS"

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. KJV

What would you do if you knew specifically what would happen to you or someone you know in the future, the very near future?

What would you do if you knew that on a particular morning when you left for work or school, or walked outside to pick up the newspaper or check the mail that that would be your last morning? Would you leave the house at all that day? Would you scramble

around to make sure that all of your "business" was in order? Would you tell all those you love that you love them? Just exactly what would you do? Would you spend the day watching the clock to see how many hours were left in your last day on earth?

See, it's not such fun knowing things in the future after all, is it? I don't' know about you but I'm thankful that it is not for me to know the times and the seasons, especially since I do not have the power to change things.

God, the Eternal One without beginning and without end, holds the power of times and seasons in His hands. **Deuteronomy 29:29(a)** states *The secret things belong unto the LORD our God:*

My response to the time that I'm in right now is to rejoice and to be glad according to **Psalm 118:24** and to not take thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. **Matthew 6:34.**

Let us Pray: Lord, I glorify and praise your most Holy and Righteous name. I thank you Lord that you are omniscient and in your infinite wisdom you have chosen to keep certain things away from me. Lord, I thank you and I trust you with my future and everything concerning my future. In Jesus' name, *Amen*

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Thursday, March 17, 2011

Rejoice Always

Philippians 4:4— Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice.

Reflect on all God has done, and give Him a big shout of joyful praise. God's Word tells us to shout with joy. Joy is not an option, suggestion, or circumstance of worship, but a command (**Philippians 4:4**). Joy is lively sense of pleasure or satisfaction, gladness and delight. Believers find joy in the Lord, in salvation, in God's Word, and in His provisions of mercies and kindness.

This is a joy the world cannot touch. It is a joy the world cannot give. It is a joy that transcends the world therefore the world cannot tamper with it, because this joy does not come from this world. It comes from God. It comes from the Holy Spirit. It comes from Jesus the Christ. It comes from knowing that we are one with God because He loved us so much that He gave His Son to die for our sins. He gave His Son so we might be drawn to His love by the cross of Calvary. God bought our redemption through the sacrifice of His unique and divine Son. He brought life out of death. He brought glory out of a shameful execution.

A joy that is not dependent upon the circumstances of life, or the events of this world, but a joy that goes beyond that, and this Psalm tells us how to experience that joy.

The ground of our rejoicing is that everything we need in life is available to us and provided for us and that God controls everything to His glory and our good. And so, when we're commanded to rejoice always, that's a reasonable command. And the key, of course, is to look away from the changing circumstance to

the unchangeable God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the unchangeable benefits and blessings of our salvation and the unchangeable promise of eternal heaven so that the joyful Christian thinks more of his Lord than his personal difficulties, more of his spiritual riches in Christ than his poverty on earth, and more of his glorious fulfillment in heaven than his present pain. Therein lies our joy.

Let Us Pray: Lord, we pray that our joy would shine in tribute to the greatness of you our God, the faithfulness of our Redeemer, and the comfort of the blessed Holy Spirit. Amen.

Friday, March 18, 2011

TIME WAITS FOR NO ONE

Psalms 31:15 *My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.*

Have you ever been accused or persecuted by the hand of someone else? **Psalms 37:1-2** You do not know which way to turn, how to handle or approach the situation. You find yourself questioning God asking God why are you allowing this to happen to **ME**? You begin to reflect on your life to see what you have done to deserve what has or is happening to you. To no avail no answer.

In life everything is already ordained by God in Gods time, but we as people/Christians sometimes detour from the plan God has for us, so this allows God to make us wait on the blessing he has for us. We create road blocks, speed bumps, detours in our life because we want to manipulate or do things our way, and we want things in our time, (Psalms 31:15) but as we grow in Christ we find out God's time

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is the best time, and God's way is the best way.

When we look back over our life and look at the situations that God has delivered us from, things God has brought us out of, **TIMES** God has brought us through, and how God has allowed us to **OVERCOME** so many obstacles we are blessed that God has given us the **TIME** to come before his presence, confess with our mouth, and believe in our hearts, that Jesus hung bled and died so we might have the right to the tree of life.

There is a saying time waits for no one. I am so glad that God has the **TIME** to wait on us to decide when we will give him our **TIME** to serve him.

Let us Pray: Lord thank you for allowing me to realize and recognize how precious TIME is. I thank you for your precious Son who took the TIME to walk the face of the earth, take on all of our sins, then go to the cross and die so we all could have life more abundantly. Thank you for the TIME you give us each and every day of our lives, help us to utilize the TIME we have on this earth to do the work you have assigned our hands to do. In the precious , powerful, magnificent name of Jesus. Amen.

Saturday, March 19, 2011

15 YEARS

2 Kings 20:6 I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. KJV

In verse 1 of 2 Kings 20, we see that Hezekiah was gravely ill and on the verge of death. The prophet Isaiah came to him with a message from God instructing him, Hezekiah, to "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live".

Can you imagine how disturbing this message from God had to have been to Hezekiah? This was not a doctor's report rendered as a result of a positive test result. This was a direct word from the Lord God -- Hezekiah, you will die so get your business straight.

Hezekiah had two options. 1) To simply accept this as God's will and prepare for his imminent death; or 2). Somehow, if possible, change God's mind in this situation.

Hezekiah chose the latter. Verse 2 says Then he turned his face to the wall. The first thing Hezekiah did after getting this disturbing prophecy was turn his back on everything around him – it had to be just him and God. And secondly, he prayed to the LORD. After he got himself in the proper position then he presented his supplication to God and this is it:

I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. 2 Kings 20:3

Hezekiah reminded God that he has always walked in honesty/integrity with a pure heart; and his actions were considered good in the sight of God. Then Hezekiah seals the prayer with tears.

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Please note that Hezekiah <u>did not</u> change God's mind about him dying. God simply put the death sentence on pause and added fifteen years to Hezekiah's life. Please read the rest of this chapter to see what happens to Hezekiah when he opens his big mouth.

Let us Pray: Our Lord and God, Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. We come to you today giving you all praise, glory and honor for hearing us when we call. Thank you Father for holding our future in your hands and being the Author and Finisher of our faith. Bless us and keep us as we go through these days of our lives, which you have so graciously granted us. In Jesus' name *Amen*

Sunday, March 20, 2011 Jesus of Devine Defender

1John 2:1-2

- 1 My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sib, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous:
- 2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world

God's people walk in the way of righteousness and holiness, are different from the world, and have been redeemed and set free. Thank God for the freedom he gives from the dominion of sin. Thank God also for the word of encouragement for those who stumble and fall. The apostle John tells us, Despair not. There is hope. God himself has provided a mighty advocate, the most powerful defense attorney ever. He will plead on the basis of justice, on the basis that he himself met all the demands of God's law's on our behalf. The righteous has died for the unrighteous, and the wounds of Jesus will prevail before our heavenly Father,

who is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The best defender in the universe is pleading our case. He is the defender of all who belong to His Kingdom. He has already suffered our penalty in our place. He can stand before God as our mediator because Christ both satisfies God's requirement and removes our sin. In Him we are forgiven and purified. His defense is always successful and effectual. In Hebrews 7:25 we read, Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. He defends us against our accuser, the devil, as well as before our heavenly Father. Jesus is a most unusual defense attorney in that he does not maintain His client's innocence but rather acknowledges their guilt. Our defense attorney does not seek to get us off on a technicality or make excuses for our sin; for on the basis of His shed blood and His scars. Jesus paid in full for all our sins. Because He is the propitiation or the satisfaction, He can be a successful Defense Attorney. His death satisfied the wrath of God against sin and paid the death penalty for our sin. Christ both satisfies God's requirement and removes our sin. In Him we are forgiven and purified (Colossians 2:11-15).

Let Us Pray: May God help us that our needs may be met, that we be restored to fellowship with the Father and the Son, that we may be filled with the true and permanent joy. Amen.

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Monday, March 21, 2011

Step Aside

Proverbs 23:12: Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge

Do you remember in your youth maybe your mom being in the kitchen cooking and you rushing to help out without having a clue of what you were doing. You would begin moving things and your mom would tell you wait.....stop.....not yet, but you would continue because you didn't know any better. The only thing you knew is that you were trying to help. She told you several times not to touch the stove but what do you know, and this time when you reached your hand up there, you found out what your mother had been saying all along, I'm trying to keep you away from danger and it's my job as your mother, to keep you safe from harm. I've traveled the road that you are about to embark on and it's filled with trouble. Don't take the route I've taken. Now take the word mother out of everywhere I placed it and replace it with God. Stop trying to do God's work for him. Step aside and let God be God.

Let Us Pray: Most matchless and gracious God, I come to you asking that not my will but thy will be done. Grant me the ability to accept the things that I cannot change and the wisdom to allow you to do your job.

Tuesday, March 22, 2011

GODS TIME FOR OUR SEASON

Acts: 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

In looking back over my life I have come to the realization that even B.C. (Before Christ) God already had a plan for my life. Even now A.C. (After Christ) God still has a plan for my life, but sometimes we alter or deviate from the plan God has for us by not following the course he has set for us. God allows us to alter or deviate from the plan he has for us. God also tells us **YES**, **NO** or **WAIT A WHILE** when we ask for certain things or ask God to do certain things in our life.

In other words God does things like your parents probably done when you were growing up. Your parents would try to give advice or recommend that you do something a certain way or not to do it at all, but of course sometimes we were disobedient to what our parents said, we wanted to do it our way. Then once you have done what you were told not to do and it turns out your parents were right you say "if I knew then what I know now I would not have done it."

God does the same as your parents. God has mapped out our lives (original print/copyright) so that everything happens at a time and a season, but we (humans) actually determine the time in which God will allow things to manifest for us. How do we determine the time? I am glad you ask. The season and time is truly determined by God, but the time in which the season will manifest is based on our obedience to God. and if we are following Gods word, and doing the will of God.

In actuality what it boils down to is studying and following Gods word, being obedient to God, and waiting patiently on the Lord to do just what he said he would do (Psalms 27:14)

Let us Pray: Lord I thank you for your season and time you have for my life. I confess that I have not always done things your way, but today I would like to start this day with asking for forgiveness for not being obedient, and also for altering and deviating the plans you have for my life. I come with gratitude that because I was not obedient to you that you did not punish me. I ask that you help me to stay on the course and follow the plan you have for my life. I pray that all my brothers and sisters will do the same in the matchless name of Jesus the one who bled for us. Jesus the one who allow himself to be nailed to the cross. Jesus the one who was crucified for our sins, it's in the precious name of Jesus I pray Amen.

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

WHEN DOES YOUR NIGHT END AND YOUR DAY BEGIN

Psalm 90:4 - "For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night."

This Psalm is a prayer of Moses. Moses exalts God for his majesty and Glory. Moses praises God for being God "from everlasting to everlasting" **90:2**. Moses then reflects on how God calculates time. None of us will ever live to see a thousand years, so Moses makes it plain and "guesstimates" that a thousand years in God's sight is equivalent to "yesterday" or "a watch in the night."

Life Application: A couple of years ago, I wrote in my journal "time is my enemy". Immediately my spirit was vexed and I had to quickly correct myself and wrote, "time is not my enemy, I am the enemy to time." Of course this drove me to a mode of selfevaluation, analysis, and a little prayer. As I reflect on Moses' prayer in this verse today, my attention is drawn to "watch in the night". A "watch" is one of the three periods into which the nighttime hours were divided. We all have different ways of calculating when night begins and when night ends. A night can be as little as zero hours to as much as eight, nine or ten hours. Night begins for some of us at the setting of the sun. The night ends for many of us while we are still in our beds, when our eyes fly open, and we begin to process the day. Many of us begin forming the new day in our heads at 2:00 a.m., 4:30 a.m., or even If you are falling into this midnight. category then maybe you are trying too hard to maximize all time without any guidance or revelation from God. Remember God is a God of order. God expects every aspect of our lives to be in order and that includes respecting the time he has given us to rest, recovery from the day, and sleep.

Let Us Pray:

Lord God, we too like Moses, exalt, adore, honor and praise you. Teach us to value what you have blessed us with – time on this earth. May we release our will to conquer everything that we think we want to accomplish and seek your voice for guidance on how maximize the time you have blessed us to enjoy. Amen.

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Thursday, March 24, 2011

ONE MORE MIRACLE

EXODUS 15:1 ... I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously

If you are looking for a praise pattern, look no further than **Exodus 15**. There you will find the Israelites piling honor on God. The people had just come from one of the greatest rescues in history. The Lord had protected them from the rampaging Egyptians, and their praises reflected the renewed trust in God that this event brought them.

It's ok to pour out our praises on God when we see Him work in a great and miraculous

Let Us Pray: Heavenly Father, Thank you for the miracle of life and the opportunity to praise you. For we know that everything that has breath should "PRAISE YE THE LORD"

Friday, March 25, 2011

HIS RESPONSE, HIS TIME

Job 24:1 Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know Him not see His days?

This world is corroded with lives at ease in ungodly profane fashion, and unrighteous practices of open defiance of all the laws of justice. Wrong doings are performed under pretence of law and authority; and some simply by force. Mischief goes undiscovered and unpunished. A swift resolution is expected. But God does not always immediately send his verdict, nor make examples of the mischievous and their

way. Those are not the only times He deserves our praises. Too often we wait for God to perform a big answer to our prayers before we praise Him. But think about this: God doesn't owe us any miracles. He doesn't need to prove His greatness to us. He has already given us a display of His power in creation. He has made the ultimate sacrifice to purchase our redemption. He has conducted the most miraculous transaction known to mankind. He brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life. Waiting for a miracle? God's done a plenty of them already. Lets give God our unconditional praise.

follies, however God foresees their conclusion. Although he keeps in silence at times, His eyes see everything. Bad times are not hidden from him, though the bad men that make the times bad say one to another, He has forsaken the earth (**Psalms 94:7**). God governs the world, and is aware of every thing that goes on in the world. He is aware of all iniquity, and will reveal in His time that which is thought no eye could see were able to be seen by Him.

If God's actions and responses were so very obvious, there would be no need for faith. It is by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope (Galatians 5:5). Waiting isn't a waste of time, but an opportunity to grow in character. When the wait feels impossible, try to focus on building patience and relationship building with Jesus, rather than worry. God provides the ability to endure when yielding to His strength. The Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to

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be fulfilled (**Romans 15:4**). So be at peace knowing that God's justice will be done.

Let Us Pray: Father God, Please forgive our impatient behavior when having to wait on You. Help us to use the time of waiting to grow stronger in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday, March 26, 2011

POP QUIZ

Luke 9:18-20: And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? ¹⁹They answering said, John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again. ²⁰He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

In this passage of scripture, we find Jesus praying. All of a sudden, after the prayer session, Jesus springs a pop quiz on the disciples: "what are you hearing on the streets and in the crowds about me?" "What do you know about me?"

Sometimes we get pop quizzes about our faith and it comes in the form of a soul who is seeking Christ. Are we always ready to truly confess our faith? Let's take a confession of faith check:

Let's say your accomplice in sin – an unauthorized lover, a smoke partner, your

gambling buddy -- catches you off guard and ask "who is Jesus?" Can you come out of that zone and answer: "He is the first and the last which was dead and is alive" (**Rev 2:8**) or will you cave into the moment and say "oh baby this is not the right time ... can we talk about that later ..." **OR**

When a mother of 7 children walks up to you and says we are homeless, you pass me each Sunday morning on your way from church... can you tell me where Jesus is in my life and my children's lives. Will you be able to pour into her hope of the redemptive power of your savior and say to her "Jesus is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5:12)...the same belongs to you...OR

When you have just hung up the phone from that is threatening creditor repossession, or foreclosure and the phone rings again and it's a family member who says, I need... I have nothing left – no home, no job, my spouse has walked out... remind me what Jesus is in your life. Can you blot out the anxiety, fear and frustration of your financial disaster and confess your faith that Jesus is the "Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14)." It is He that is Holy, it is he that is true, it is he that has the key of David. It is he that openth & no man shutteh and shut & no man opens: (Rev 3:7)."

Will the 3 souls introduced to you today be able to feel God's presence while they are in your presence? In Matthew 16:17 we find Jesus' response to Peter's answer that Jesus is the Christ that is not recorded in Luke --

Jesus said "Blessed are thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Will the souls we encounter know that our confession of faith and our witness is not of flesh and blood but was revealed by our Father which is in heaven? Always be ready for the pop quiz -- What is your confession of Faith?

Let Us Pray: Lord may I always be able to confess Christ with conviction, sincerity, and be filled with the Holy Ghost in my witness of your goodness. Amen.

Sunday, March 27, 2011

"TIME OUT"

Psalm 90:4: For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. KJV

Have you ever noticed that small children have no concept of time? When they are having fun and their parents call it to a halt because it is bedtime, time for them seems to be rushed. When they are not enjoying themselves, time for them seems to be forever. I remember when I taught kindergarten for about a month, I would discipline my students by placing them in "time out". I learned not to place the student in time out during a reading or math lesson or they would misbehave just to avoid doing their class work. "Time out" was reserved for when the class would do the fun things like coloring, finger painting or recess. I knew that my small children could not tell time so therefore they would serve their two minutes of "time out" while the rest of the class participated in a fun activity. Two minutes of non-play at recess can seem like forever to a small child.

As I began to grow spiritually I realized that oftentimes we Christians are much like my former students when waiting on God. How many times have we uttered the words, "How much longer Lord" or complained to a friend that our breakthrough appears to be taking forever? Is there something that you are believing God for and it seems to you that he is taking forever? Or are you hoping for a breakthrough for some situation in your life and you seem farther away from your goal with each passing day? I know that sometimes it seems as though we have been waiting forever for some of God's promises to come to pass but try to remember that a thousand years is but a day to God. God exists in eternity, but his children live and operate within the confines of time. When time is measured against eternity, we've only been waiting two minutes.

Let Us Pray: Father, reset my spiritual clock. Help me to trust you to bring all of your promises to pass in your time and not mine. Amen.

Monday, March 28, 2011

LORD WE ADORE YOU

Matthew 21:15-16: And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, ¹⁶And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

Meditation Word for Today:

Hosanna. The Greek meaning for this word

"there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for every purpose in my life"

is *oh save!*; *hosanna* (that is, *hoshia-na*), an exclamation of adoration:—hosanna.

The children in this verse, without shame, reservation, or fear, cry out their praise to the savior. Is your praise the pure and perfected praise accepted and admired by our God? Let your praise be an "exclamation of adoration" for the most high God!

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

REDEEMED

Galatians 3:13-14 ¹³Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: ¹⁴That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Meditative Thoughts for Today: Do you remember when stores gave customers S&H green stamps. Each time you purchased grocery you would receive a roll of stamps that you paste to in your book. Once you filled a book(s) you had the opportunity to go to the S&H green stamp store and redeem merchandise. You could select appliances, toys, linen...whatever your heart desired, it was yours if you had the requisite number of stamps to redeem the item. Well, God does not require us to collect, purchase, or save anything in order to be redeemed by him. Christ redeemed us before there was an "us".

Let Us Pray: Father as we continue in this Holy week, we give you thanks for redeeming us back to you. We thank you that we are not a slave to sin, that we will not be shackled to our graves and suffer eternal death. Lord we aspire to walk worthy of the blessing of our salvation Let Us Prayer: Lord, we bow down in honor and respect of you. Our hearts are full of love for you. May we too cry out to you in the sanctuary, in our homes, anywhere and everywhere our adoration for you. Lord cleanse our hearts and our minds as we prepare ourselves to celebrate our redemption, our restoration, and your grace. Amen.

today. Have mercy on our souls. In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen.

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

RESTORE

Psalm 51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

As we meditate on this prayer of repentance and restoration, may we remember that because of the cross we are guaranteed eternal life.

Let Us Pray: Lord God, I want to be restored today. I know Father that I am redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, but sometimes I feel like I am missing something. Fill my void Lord. Help me turn away from the temptation to sin when I feel the void. Please Lord have mercy on me when I pick up old habits in an effort to

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mask the pain I may feel at times. Remove that temptation from me. May I always remember that in my salvation I am complete. I thank you Father. I am grateful for the sacrifice of your only Son for me. I bless your Holy name. Amen.

purpose for every time in our lives. We know that Christ was obedient to the death on the cross because he followed the exact plan that his Father set for him while on this earth. Although we do not like to think about it, there is a set time set for us to leave this earth. Before we reach that appointed time to die, let's make sure that we live and in living secure our place in eternal life!

Thursday, March 31, 2011

WHAT TIME IS IT?

Mark 15:33-37: And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴And at the ninth hour ... And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

Some theologians try to put a specific time on the death of Christ on the cross. Speculation is made by theologians as to what time is the "sixth hour" or "ninth hour." We, as Christians, know that the exact time that Jesus yielded his Spirit back to himself is not important. What is vital is that we recognize that God has ordained a

Indentify what it means to Live:
Father, I pray that I learn to respect the time you have given me to:
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"there is a time appointed, ordained, and anointed by God for every purpose in my life"

First Emanuel Baptist Church "The Church with Vision and the Faith to Act" Proverbs 29:18 James 2: 18

About First Emanuel Baptist Church

We are celebrating our 125th year in 2011 and our 22nd year under the leadership of Dr. Charles Joseph Southall, III. Pastor Southall is the 7th Pastor of First Emanuel Baptist Church. We are located in New Orleans, Louisiana and our State's Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For more information about us, please visit our website. You may also contact us as follows:

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