

IN A MOMENT OF TIME

Text: Luke 4:5-7

INTRO: I once read a book in which a preacher told of the first funeral he preached in the new city he had moved to. Only one other person attended--the wife of the dead man. Several years before the man, a European, had left his wife behind & come to America for adventure. After a time, he lost his health & sent for his wife to join him. She did, and by the time she arrived, he was in the hospital in very poor condition. She visited him there daily. The last time she saw him alive, he told her next time to bring her Bible. But there was no next time.

Many of life's most important events happen in a moment of time--and life's most important decisions must sometimes be made in a moment of time.

I. OPPORTUNITY OFTEN COMES IN A MOMENT & MUST BE SEIZED OR LOST.

- A. Queen Esther had an opportunity to spare her people.
Esther 4:13-14.
- B. The apostles had an opportunity to see Jesus the evening He rose from the dead, John 20:19, 24.
- C. The men & women of Athens had an opportunity to hear the apostle Paul. READ ACTS 17:32 thru 18:1.
- D. Devout Jews from every nation had the opportunity to hear the first gospel sermon & be present at the birth of the Lord's church, Acts 2.
- E. All such opportunities were fleeting. They occurred in a moment of time.

II. TEMPTATION OFTEN COMES IN A MOMENT OF TIME.

- A. Luke 4:5. What if Jesus had given in? The end forever of man's hope for salvation.
- B. Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup, Gen. 25:30-34. Afterward he sought diligently to reclaim his rightful place--but he had thrust it away in a moment of time.

- C. Simon Peter's self confidence had convinced him that he of all people would never deny his Lord, MT 26:33. Yet his confidence worked against him. He let his guard down. He was the very one who did deny his Lord--3 times in succession, Matt. 26:69-75.

III. DISASTER--PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL CAN OVERTAKE US IN A MOMENT OF TIME.

- A. Physical disaster is sometimes linked to human sin as in the cases of Ananias & Sapphira, Acts 5; Herod Agrippa in Acts 12, & the destruction of Jerusalem foretold by Jesus in Matt. 24. But physical disaster is certainly not always a result of our own sin. READ JOB 1:13-22.
 - 1. Note his wife's advice, 2:9. Not so. He needed God now more than ever. His hopes were on things eternal. Job 19:26.
 - 2. A few things we can do: take precautions, buy insurance, establish savings account, but mostly, learn to put our trust in things eternal.
- B. Spiritual disaster. Rich man of Luke 12; RYR, MK 10:22. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, & we are not saved. (Jer. 8:20).

IV. THERE ARE BLESSINGS THAT MUST BE EMBRACED--OR LOST--IN A MOMENT OF TIME.

- A. The robber on the cross at first reviled Jesus, MT 27:44. But in an opportune moment, he repented, LK 23:39-43
- B. Blind Bartimaeus had a fleeting opportunity to plead his case to Jesus. READ MARK 10:46-52.

NOTE: There is no way Bartimaeus could know that Jesus would never pass that way again. We seldom know when an opportunity will be our last.

C. Jesus' disciples, Paul, Shake off dust.

V. CHRIST WILL RETURN IN A MOMENT OF TIME.

READ I COR. 15:51-55 READ REV. 22:7, 12, 20

CONCLUSION: The deceiver said to Jesus, "All this will I give You, if You will bow down & worship me." But Jesus knew that, though the devil might have the power to do so temporarily, He must possess this universe in a not-so-easy manner & make His dominion an eternal one. Now Jesus, King of kings & Lord of lords says thru His inspired apostle: I CORINTHIANS 3:20-23.

All these will He give us if we will bow down & worship Him--but tomorrow may be too late.

La Porte, TX, February 8, 1981

Exton, PA, October 7, 1984

Claremont, NH, December 30, 1984

Shively, Louisville, KY, December 1, 1985 (meeting)

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, December 25, 1994

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, July 19, 1998