

Coping With the Press Of Time

by Richard E. Bieber

To cope with the press of time, we must learn to enter the realm of sanctified time through prayer, watchfulness, and labor.

Scripture: Matthew 25:6, Mark 1:14, Mark 13:32, Luke 12:49, John 9:4

Topics: "Time Management", "Sanctification"

Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches about the importance of being prepared for the return of the bridegroom, emphasizing the need to bring the glory of God into our daily lives in our interactions with others, handling of finances, and management of time. He highlights the temptations that come with the pressure of time, such as slothfulness, anxiety, vain ambition, and triviality, and how Jesus navigated time with holy peace and purpose. Bieber urges believers to enter the realm of sanctified time through prayer, watchfulness, and labor, ensuring that their lamps are filled with oil to partake in the marriage feast.

Transcript

But at midnight there was a cry, "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the wise replied, "Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves." And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:6-10

When we first enter the Kingdom of God we're given a few blessed weeks or months perhaps when the Spirit of God so immerses us in the atmosphere of heaven that many of the pressures of life in this world are, for a season, held in suspension. It's a holiday. God wants us to enjoy it. It's like the feast for the prodigal son, eating and drinking, -music and dancing.

But then the feast comes to an end and the prodigal son takes his place on the farm and gets down to business.

So when the honeymoon with God ends we now have to start bringing the glory of God down into human life. We have to do this in three areas:

1. Into our dealings with people.
2. Our handling of money and things.
3. In the way we cope with the press of time.

Every believer knows we have to translate our vision of divine mercy into a merciful walk in our dealings with other people.

Every believer knows we have to apply our faith in God to the way we handle money and things.

But not every believer understands that our walk with Jesus Christ, if it is real, is going to bring about a radical change in the way we deal with the press of time.

In fact, if we don't learn to cope in an effective way with the press of time, time alone will be our undoing.

If the bridegroom had come as soon as the foolish virgins

expected him they would have made it into the marriage.

Time was their undoing ...they couldn't hold out.

When the book of Revelation was written it contained messages to seven thriving churches. Where are they now? They haven't existed since before the days of Islam. People still inhabit that land, but the churches which once were aflame with the presence of Christ crumbled under the pressure of time ... sank under the weight of the passing years.

In the natural world this is understandable.

- Our bodies grow old,

- our eye muscles weaken,

- our hearing dulls,

- our joints get stiff. But in the realm of faith

we are meant to go from strength to strength. Those who wait on the Lord never wear out. Because they've learned to cope with the press. of time they become younger and fresher with every year that passes.

"Though my 'outer man is wasting away, my inner man is being renewed day by day."

Paul could say that because he knew how to cope with the press of time.

The press of time affects us in different ways.

- The prisoner and the invalid feel the heaviness

of days that are long and dull. The thought of life going on and on like this is depressing.

"If only the years would pass and I could get out of here!"

- Others feel the press of time in that they simply have too much to do. They can't get it all done and become overwhelmed and demoralized.

But whether time seems to be going too fast or too slow, the temptations brought by the weight of time bearing down on us are common to us all.

There is the temptation of slothfulness.

"The master has gone into a far country.

He won't be back for a long while so I might as well bury my talent and relax."

"The day of reckoning is so far away, why even think about it?"

There is the temptation of anxiety.

"This river of time which takes me toward the ocean keeps carrying me over waterfalls and dashing me over rocks: I'm hardly making it now. How will I be able to cope with tomorrow's evil?"

"What if I get sick?

What if I lose my job?

What if the rest of my friends leave me?"

There is the temptation of vain ambition.

"I have to achieve something; I have to leave some mark on this world before I sink into oblivion."

"Time keeps flying by and I still haven't tasted success."

Often our vain ambitions drive us beneath a
cloak of Christian piety...

- The ambition to achieve status in my fellowship.
- The ambition to build a church or a movement
that will outshine all others ... That will
prove how right we are and how wrong they are.

The temptation of triviality.

Because the householder has gone into a far
country and is so slow in coming back we
allow ourselves to be caught up in the trivial
in things which are as lasting as the wind.

- What shall we eat?
- What shall we drink?
- What shall we wear?
- Whole going to win the Rose Bowl?
- What will I do if my team loses?

Our Lord lived under the press of time just as we do yet

He never succumbed to slothfulness,

anxiety,

vain ambition,

triviality. He lived with His feet

on the ground, took care of business,

and somehow sanctified the flow of

time as He moved with it.

- He hallowed it.
- He made it count.

Notice how conscious He was of time...

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Mark 1:14-15

"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!..."

Luke 12:49-50

"We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work." John 9:4

"Are there not twelve hours in the day?

If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble..." John 11:9

How is it that, conscious as Jesus is of the press of time He's never in a hurry, and He never dawdles. Every moment is filled with holy peace...and every moment counts.

One way of describing our Lord's astonishing handling of the pressure of time is to say He turned every day into a kind of sabbath. He took hold of time and sanctified it.

In the midst of life Jesus was no longer in the pressure cooker, He walked in the realm of sanctified time. So time was no longer pressing down on Him, trying to crush Him, it was something holy. It was a living stream carrying Him

on in the will of His Father.

"Are there not twelve hours in the day?

- Let's fill them.

- Let's work the works of him who sent me,

- Let's have oil in our vessels.

- Let's worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

And if we let him Jesus will take us into the realm of sanctified time every day where we will experience the sabbath rest, the sabbath peace of God even while we do His works.

1. We need to let Jesus bring us into the realm of sanctified time daily through prayer.

- How do you deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Him?- Through daily prayer.

- How do you ask the Father for your daily bread? - Daily prayer.

"Oh, but I just don't have the time!"

"You don't understand, I'm really busy!"

And my friend you'll always be too busy to pray, you'll always be short of time, until you learn to enter the realm of sanctified time by prayer.

"I have so much to do today," a believer once, said, "that I can't afford to spend less than three hours in prayer."

Follow Jesus to the place where you see time brought under the power of the Spirit, cleansed with the blood of the Lamb, and filled with sabbath peace. And this is what

happens when you go into your room and shut the door and ask the Father to help you to deal with the pressure.

2. We need to walk with the Lord in the realm of sanctified time through watchfulness.

"But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch; for you do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight or at cockcrow, or in the morning, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.

And what I say to you I say to all: Watch."

Mark 13:32-37

I need to stay awake and be alert to every situation of God so I don't miss it...God may want me to change my plans today:

On the other hand, if Satan wants me to change my plans

I have to be alert to that. I need to be alert to every visitation of the father of lies that attacks my mind, gets me off the track.

If I'm watching,

- I won't be as likely to slip into self-pity,

- or the nursing of a grudge,
- or the distracting enchantment of some fantasy.

If I'm watching,

- my thinking will be clear,
- my emotions will be tied to reality,
- the flow of time in my life will be holy.

3. We need to enter the realm of sanctified time through labor.

"We must work the works of him who sent me
while it is day."

Work - steady,
deliberate,
thoughtful,

well done work in the place where we are puts us
into God's time! Holy time! If you have to go up and
down the street and wash windows free of charge, do it,
rather than doing nothing.

Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by all that seems to be
crowding in on us. But as soon as we take hold of the
work right in front of us, suddenly the pressure is gone.
Our vision clears, because through labor in the Vineyard
of God we have entered again into the realm of sanctified
time.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom
came, and those who were ready went in with
him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:10

The press of time will, sooner or later, destroy those

believers who have lamps of faith,
who are waiting for the bridegroom, but haven't
taken the trouble to get oil ... to get out of the pressure
cooker and into the realm of sanctified time.

- God's time.
- God's sabbath.
- God's peace.
- God's works,

"We must work the works of him who sent me
while it is day, night comes when no one can work."

The daylight of God is closer to us than the air we
breathe. God help us to enter it, and live in it, that
when night comes when no one can work our lamps
will still be burning and take us right on into the
marriage supper of the Lamb.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-e-bieber/coping-with-the-pressure-of-time/>

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