

GOD'S PERFECT TIMING

If we were to have an honest look at our lives, I'm sure we would be grateful that God didn't always give us what we wanted when we wanted it. So often, we want God's promises to manifest at a time when we feel they are most needed. However, what we need, or what we want, may not be beneficial to us at that particular period in time. Only God knows the future and His timing is always perfect!

William Shakespeare said, ***"Timing is everything. There is a tide in the affairs of men which, when taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."*** We need to learn to take advantage of things when they would benefit us most. And the best way to do this is to follow God's timing, not our own. As Shakespeare said, we can go with the flow or we can wait for the flood! For it's the flood (God's timing) that leads to fortune (success). Ecclesiastes 3:1 declares, ***"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven."*** The Greek word for "season" ("kairos") literally means "a correct proportion or measure." However, it is used in the New Testament to signify ***"a season, a time or period"*** that possesses certain characteristics. Such characteristics are exemplified when referring to the "harvest" (Matthew 13:30). In Hosea 2:9 the Lord says, ***"Therefore, I will return and take away My grain in its time And My new wine in its season."*** Numbers 13:20 says, ***"Be of good courage, and bring some of the fruit of the land'. For the time was the season of the first ripe grapes."***

In Acts 1:7 the Lord Jesus makes this statement, ***"It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority."*** Another translation reads, ***"You should not be concerned about times or seasons. The Father has set them by his own authority."*** The problem is, most of us are very concerned about the times and seasons!

Let's quickly examine the two Greek words that appear in this verse - **times** ('*chronous*') and **seasons** ('*kairous*'). As mentioned, '*kairous*' has to do with "a period of time which possess certain characteristics." For instance, the time for sowing and reaping. Each season has different and distinct characteristics, and each season has a fixed and definite proportion. We cannot sow seed during the harvest, nor reap when we're meant to sow seed. And, we reap in proportion to what we've sown! But, what about the times? "*Chronos*" denotes a 'space' in time. In the modern Greek it can mean a year (or years). Therefore, '*chronos*' has a beginning and an end - it is a measured and fixed period.

In fact, what Jesus was saying is this.... We do not need to know the unique characteristics of each period, or it's proportion (magnitude). Nor do we need to know exact measurements of each fixed period. God has kept this under His authority. Whatever you may be going through in your life right now, be rest-assured that it's all happening within a time and season which God has under His authority. Notice, Jesus made this statement after the disciples had just asked Him whether this was the appointed time when He was going to restore the kingdom to Israel. Their expectation concerning the Messiah, was politically driven. They expected Jesus to free them from the oppressive regime they were living under. However, Jesus didn't say that He wouldn't, He merely pointed out that they need not concern themselves with these details. There are many of you that need to do the same. You shouldn't be concerned about the detail of how, when, and in what timeframe. God has everything under His **authority** - under His control. Remember. His timing is perfect!

Sometimes it's hard for us to understand why God doesn't allow things to happen straightaway. Yet God has perfect timing. He is never late. He is never early. He is never in a hurry. He is always on time - on His time! The hardest part to accept is that our time isn't necessarily His time.

The Bible confirms that God's timing is perfect:

- **God will make sure everything happens at the right time.**

Ecclesiastes 3:11, ***“He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.”*** God makes everything happen at the right time. Yet none of us can ever fully understand all He has done, and He puts questions in our minds about the past and the future.

- **God has set a predetermined time and place for everything.**

Ecclesiastes 3:17, ***“So I told myself that God has set a time and a place for everything. He will judge everyone, both the wicked and the good.”*** God has set a time and a place for everything. It's not just about space (or time), it's also about location! Maybe God is waiting for you to arrive at a certain place before He releases the blessing.

If we truly believe that God's timing is perfect, that He'll make everything happen **at the right time**, then surely we would be prepared to wait! “Waiting is the key that unlocks our future because it allows God to provide our need when the time and place is right. There is no reason to be impatient with God. Waiting has many benefits! Isaiah 40:31 says, ***“But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”*** James 5:7 says, ***“Therefore be patient, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and has long patience for it, until he receives the early and the latter rain.”***

Waiting is difficult, but we must remember that God's timing differs from our own. He sees things from a different perspective. He sees the whole picture, not just what we want, but what is best for us in the grand plan for our lives. Everything is part of a divine order and it will be done in its own proper time (and in its right place). Of course, when we are hoping, praying and waiting for something, it's easy to forget this. After all, waiting is "remaining inactive in one place while expecting something." And being inactive often means feeling powerless and at the mercy of the world. Nobody likes that feeling.

What are you waiting for in your life right now? Is it a new job, financial security, healing, a baby, a restored relationship? It seems that no matter where we are in our lives, we are waiting for something in the future. Our lives are never stagnant; if we are moving forward, there is always something to expect or wait for around the next corner. There are many stories of "waiting" in the Bible. In some stories, the waiting seemed to last forever, while others only waited a few intense moments. The key to waiting is not the length of time but how we handle the wait. The Bible teaches us that we should "*wait on the Lord*" and not on anything else! We must look with confidence and expectation toward the future, trusting that God will reward our patience in good (and proper) time. Hebrews 6:12 says, "***Do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.***"

To end, I'd like to point out two very important things: (1) Peace only comes through understanding God's perfect timing, and (2), provision comes by His perfect plan for our lives. If we do not fully comprehend that God's timing is perfect, peace can never manifest in our situation. We must believe that everything is under His **authority** (all our times and seasons). Then through that belief, we can rest in the knowledge that He is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28).

However, this verse doesn't end there, "***And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.***" This brings us to the second point I mentioned. Provision comes by His perfect plan for our lives. If we are to prosper in all matters, we must live with a sense of destiny and purpose. As Romans 8:28 points out, God's timing and provision are done in accordance with two requirements.

- (1) We must love God - with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength (Deuteronomy 67:5).
- (2) We must be fulfilling our destiny - God's plan and purpose for our lives.

Remember what Jesus said to His disciples? "*The times and seasons are under God's authority.*" Only God knows where you should be right now (in relation to His plan and purpose for your life). Therefore, only He can time things accordingly! This makes perfect sense and it should fill us with confidence concerning the future. When God releases the blessing it will be at the perfect time and in that perfect place. If you think of this as a journey it is far easier to envisage. Somewhere along the route, at a fixed time and specific place, God will manifest what you are praying for right now! When He does, you will receive the greatest benefits, and He will receive the greatest glory. So be at peace and enjoy the journey. Everything is under His mighty authority and divine control. God's timing is PERFECT!