

Gainsville Baptist Church
January 2, 2011
Selected Scripture
New Year's Message (State of the Church Address)

(1) The Redemption of Time: 2011

Introduction: For some of you, the anticipation of what 2011 holds for you is exciting. You have plans, hopes, dreams and aspirations.

For others of you, 2011 is just another year. The sun rises, the sun sets. You get up in the morning, you endure the day and you go to bed at night.

(2) How does God view the expenditure of our days?

Ephesians 5:15-16 - *See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

Through the writing of the Apostle Paul, God says to us that we are to redeem the time.

God's expectation of each of us is that we are to be wise in the way that we spend our time. The term "time" in this verse does not refer to endless days or hours. Instead, it refers to a "season," an "opportunity" or a "measured period of time."

God has set boundaries to our lives and our opportunity for God to work **in us** and **through us** is limited to those boundaries.

God has sovereignly determined the beginning and the end of our time on earth and that time is brief at best.

(3) John Macarthur - **The MOST SPIRITUALLY foolish thing a Christian or a CHURCH can do is to waste or squander little by little time and opportunity in trivial, half-hearted or meaningless service of the Lord.**

Unless you, as an individual and us corporately as a church are intentional we will FAIL to REDEEM the time and thus squander or give half-hearted service to the Lord in the coming year.

During the course of time in 2011 you are going to experience agreeable times and unpleasant times.

You will experience peaks in your walk with the Lord and some of you will walk through the valley of shadow of death. Yet, as difficult as it is to understand, both the joys and the heartaches are gifts from the Lord.

(4) Every hill and valley that God lays before you was conceived in eternity past just for you **for the purpose of conforming you to the image of Jesus so that He might become known to the entire world as the first-born among many brethren.**

Romans 8:29 – *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

In order for Christ to be made known in you personally.....and through this church in 2011..... there are some Biblical principles that must be applied in every circumstance we encounter.

I. (5) Consider yourself an alien, pilgrim and stranger. This world is a temporary dwelling place and NOT your permanent home.

- **(I Peter 2:11)** - *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.*
 - In this passage, the Apostle Paul is urging believers to understand that they are merely aliens....or visitors in this world.
 - **Philippians 3:20** - *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - The pleasures of the world are tempting and enticing and because of those temptations, a great struggle can take place inside of you.
 - **Application:** Each time you give in to the struggles of your flesh.....you fail to redeem that temptation and you bring harm to your soul and shame to the name of Christ.
 - **(6) The key to abstaining from fleshly desires and defeating fleshly temptations lies in walking in the Spirit's power and exercising godly discipline.**

Transition: So, redeeming the time begins by understanding this world is temporary. Secondly, in order to redeem the time of the coming year, you must.....

II. (7) Accept your responsibility as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

- **(II Timothy 2:3-4)** - *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*
 - Paul uses the example of a soldier to illustrate the characteristics of a strong spiritual life.

- **(8)** A “strong spiritual believer” does not simply do minimum duty for his Lord Jesus....but serves Him with everything he has and everything he is.
 - Suffering hardship for Christ means that you will have rough treatment.....as you give yourself more and more to Christ.....you will find the blessings of God will increase and the opposition of Satan will increase as well.
 - Suffering hardship will also require **servicing** and **giving your time** in simple ways such as driving a van on Wednesday nights for children.

- A good soldier of Christ Jesus also refuses to allow earthly matters to interfere with the fulfillment of his duty to his Lord.
 - Many Christians and churches have been undermined by concerns and activities that are innocent in themselves but have been allowed to crowd out the primary purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission to make disciples.

Application: Redeeming the time in 2011, will demand that you as an individual and we as a church be willing to suffer and specifically give ourselves only to those things that contribute to maturing the believers and reaching the non-believers.

Disciple making is costly!

Transition: Redeeming the time involves...Considering yourselves aliens to this world, Accepting your responsibilities as a good soldier and avoiding selfish desires.

III. (9) Beware of getting what God does not desire you to have.

- **(James 4:1)** –*Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?*)

In case you haven't learned already.....as a follower of Christ.....you will always experience an internal struggle between your old fleshly nature and your new nature.

In his writings, the Apostle Paul often refers to the flesh of a believer. The flesh he refers to is not the human body....it is instead your old nature you inherited from Adam.

It is this flesh that is so prone to sin. The human body is NOT SINFUL. The body is neutral.

(10) THE spirit may use the body to glorify God or the flesh may use the body to serve sin. When a sinner comes to Christ, he is given a new nature within., BUT the old nature isn't removed and it isn't reformed.

It's because of the existence of these two natures that a war exists inside of the believer. (Romans 7:24)

- **There is a difference between a CARNALLY minded Christian and a SPIRITUALLY minded Christian.**
 - **One walks with God daily and lives to please Him.**
 - **The other walks in the flesh and seeks to please the flesh with little or no thought of God!**
 - **(Romans 8:6) To be carnally minded is death, but to be spirituually minded is life and peace.**

Redeeming the time in 2011 will require humility and submission. Humbling yourself before God and submitting to His will, His Way and His Spirit in your life.

In addition to internal conflicts within the believer.....James also warns against internal conflicts in the church that are a result of selfish desires.

Folks.....I'm going to be very honest with you. In 2010, there was ENTIRELY too much complaining and grumbling in our congregation that had selfish desires as its source.

- People complained because the chairs in the fellowship hall were not put up.
- Other people complained because the chairs in the fellowship hall WERE put up.

When is the last time anyone complained because we haven't prayed enough or we haven't evangelized enough or we have spent enough time discipling one another????

Application: Beloved.....we have a brief period of time in which to fulfill God's will personally and corporately.....if we spend our time in conflict over selfish desires....we will fail to redeem the time God has given us.

Transition: Finally.....redeeming the time requires that we operate in the power of the Spirit of God.

IV. (11) You can accomplish all God desires for you in this very year when your adequacy is from the all-sufficient God (II Cor. 3:5- Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is

from God.)

- (12) The Apostle Paul's own inadequacy and his lack of human resources allowed him to be a channel of divine power for God to accomplish His will.

John 15:5 - *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

Conclusion: (13) **The time has come for the redeemed of God to redeem the time.**

To live Godly in Christ Jesus in 2011 does not simply mean that you do more.

In 2011, my goal as Pastor, is to do my best to intentionally lead you as a church to redeem what time we may have left in order to accomplish the will of God.

One of the means that we will attempt to accomplish that is with discipleship courses on Sunday evenings at 6:00 PM.

February 13th – April 17th

Classes:

Bible Study in Sanctuary (Suffering and the Sovereignty of God: Study of Book of Job)
Shepherding a Child's Heart – Justin Welch
Just Do Something – Pastor Michael White
Children's Bible Study – Jana Jonas and Associates