

Sermons - 2007

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Chapter 1. Save Now!

READ - *Luke 19:28-40*

TEXT - *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (Luke 19:13)*

THEME - There is no greater testimony to the world of Jesus Christ's reality and relevance than the LONG TERM VIGIL of a committed Christian.

Introduction:

Save Now! That's what they were crying out! Hosanna - SAVE NOW! (Don't see it in our text, but it is in other gospel accounts - cf. *Matthew 21*.)

Imagine the scene (paint the picture) -

Note: They were quoting *Psalms 118:25-26* - *Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD...*

Jesus was riding on a donkey. Horses were used by kings in battle. Donkeys were used when making overtures of peace. Jesus was presenting Himself as Israel's King - coming in peace. cf. *1 Kings 1:33,44* - this is how David presented Solomon, the chosen son of David to sit on his throne.

- Their EXPECTATION was deliverance NOW. The kingdom restored NOW.
- The REALITY was NOT NOW, BUT SOON.
cf. *vss. 11-13*
- When the REALITY didn't meet the EXPECTATION, the crowd dispersed and INTEREST WANED.

Imagine another scene. READ *Acts 1:6-12* (paint the picture)

- Their EXPECTATION was deliverance NOW. The kingdom restored NOW.
- The REALITY was NOT NOW, BUT SOON.
cf. *vss. 7, 11*
- Imagine the daily looks toward heaven. Probably started out as a constant - running out to look every other minute. Did it get less and less as time wore on? Did there come a time when they hardly looked anymore? When the REALITY didn't immediately meet up with the EXPECTATION, did their interest wane, too?

Indulge me as I share just one more scene with you? READ - *2 Timothy 4:6-10* Paul had lived his whole life waiting for the return of the King! Now he is at the end of his life. (Paint the picture of the Mamertine prison.)

- He's STILL waiting - *vs. 8*
- He's watched many give up on the wait - *vs. 10*
- When the EXPECTATION (save now) didn't meet with the REALITY (not now but soon), PAUL KEPT WAITING, but others did not. Some gave up.

All these examples teach a similar truth, don't they?

I suggest that it is normal to become disinterested... disillusioned with something you have to wait a long time for. We don't like to wait, you know...

ILLUS - Microwave society - my 60 second breakfast burritos seem to take forever.

ILLUS - Guy behind you who honks the horn the split second the light turns. We don't like to wait.

But one of the lesson's of our text is that we DO have to wait. The King IS coming. But when we cry out SAVE NOW, He says, NOT NOW, BUT SOON.

And some, when faced with the hardships of this life, grow weary waiting. Life is hard - cancer, marital problems, betrayals, pain, sickness, sin, spiritual battles, this evil world which groans under the influence of the prince of darkness... YOU NAME IT. We all have reason to cry out SAVE NOW!

But, my friend, will you listen to the Savior as He says, NOT NOW, BUT SOON? Will you wait? Will you keep serving? Will you never give up until He does return? Will you keep gazing up into the sky waiting for His return?

I hope so, for there is no greater testimony to the world of Jesus Christ's reality and relevance than the LONG TERM VIGIL of a committed Christian.

Our text provides a couple of ideas to help us while we wait - things we should be doing until the King comes again.

Become a SERVANT OF THE KING before it's too late.

ILLUS - Zaccheus (*Luke 19:1-10*)

- Zaccheus was LOST and knew he needed to be SAVED.
- Zaccheus knew Jesus was the ONLY WAY.
- Zaccheus knew that TIME WAS SHORT. (The whole story SCREAMS of HASTE.)

Imagine the horror he would have felt to get up in the tree only to see Jesus disappearing forever over a distant hill. TOO LATE.

Imagine the horror of missing the kingdom by a minute. (There are those who are still thinking about it... but what if they think too long? What if they miss it?)

SONG - Why Do You Wait? (By George Root)

Why do you wait, dear brother,
Oh, why do you tarry so long?
Your Savior is waiting to give you
A place in His sanctified throng.

What do you hope, dear brother,
To gain by a further delay?
There's no one to save you but Jesus,
There's no other way but His way.

Do you not feel, dear brother,
His Spirit now striving within?
Oh, why not accept His salvation,
And throw off your burden of sin?

Why do you wait, dear brother?
The harvest is passing away,
Your Savior is longing to bless you,
There are danger and death in delay.

Somewhere right now, somebody is trusting Christ just as Zaccheus did. Each such salvation brings the return of the King closer. Consider - the next one could be the last?

And so two thoughts today:

For the lost - why wait? BECOME A SERVANT OF THE KING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE?

For the saved - how many do you know like Zaccheus? How many people in your world, your sphere of influence, are running out of time? While you wait for the king, will you help others to BECOME SERVANTS OF THE KING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE?

REMAIN A SERVANT OF THE KING UNTIL HE COMES.

READ - *Luke 19:11-27*

Notice again our text verse - *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (Luke 19:13)*

"Occupy" = "be busy"

We know exactly WHY He preached this parable (cf. *vs. 11*) - their EXPECTATION didn't match up with REALITY.

Do you want to finish like Paul (rather than the disappointing Demas)? THEN BE BUSY FOR THE KING.

1. Be busy because of the account Jesus said you will give.
2. Be busy because it is key to success in the your Christian walk!

QUOTE - George Whitefield (age 24), in his journal, "I am never better than when I am on the full stretch for God. God grant that I may not like Jehu drive furiously at first, and then afterwards fall back, but forgetting those things which are behind, may I reach out to those things that are before and press forward towards the mark for the prize of my high calling in Christ Jesus."

Oh Christian, BE BUSY - REMAIN A SERVANT OF THE KING UNTIL HE COMES.

1. Be busy LEARNING.

(Bible reading / studies... listen to preaching... learn learn learn learn. Every day He leaves you here is an opportunity to learn more of Him! Be busy.

2. Be busy PRAYING.

Oh that we would learn to be a people of prayer.

I like to tell shut ins that this is THEIR MINISTRY. Even when shut up to age and infirmity, you can be busy in prayer. Pray for your church... pray for your pastor... pray for the souls of your family and friends... pray pray pray.

3. Be busy EXERCISING YOUR GIFT.

We've talked about this recently. Have you given it any more thought? What is your spiritual gift? Are you using it? BE BUSY DOING IT.

4. Be busy WATCHING WHAT GOD IS DOING.

God is working today - in marvelous ways. Wonderful things are happening if we just open our eyes and look at God's work, rather than the devil's mess.

BE BUSY - REMAIN A SERVANT UNTIL HE COMES. NEVER GIVE UP IN YOUR SERVICE FOR THE KING.

QUOTE - "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." TRUE - many fall into evil because of idleness. BEING BUSY IS THE CURE. Activity cures so many things ILLUS - Depression - activity is a great cure of this.

BE BUSY - REMAIN A SERVANT UNTIL HE COMES. NEVER GIVE UP IN YOUR SERVICE FOR THE KING.

Chapter 1. Save Now!

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. (Galatians 6:9)

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:1)

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (1 Peter 1:13)

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. (Matthew 24:45-46)

Christian, will you determine to REMAIN A SERVANT UNTIL JESUS COMES? Keep on serving Him no matter what.

ILLUS - Peter, when worn out from fishing, Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. (Luke 5:5)

Conclusion:

You know what keeps preachers preaching? Soul winners winning souls? Sunday school teachers teaching Sunday after Sunday? Music ministers singing week after week after week?

OLDER CHRISTIANS WHO ARE STILL BELIEVING AND STILL GOING, that's what.

Energizer bunny Christians - the ones who just keep going and going and going and going.

ILLUS - My one-time pastor and mentor, Tom Malone, who went home to be with Jesus this past January. 91 years old - married to the same woman for 68 years, served God all his adult life. He was an energizer bunny for God.

People like that are just like you and me.

- They want Jesus to come back - they cry out SAVE NOW just like everybody else. They get weary in the battle.
- BUT, they hear Him say, "Occupy until I come." "Be busy for me."

Hosanna! "Save now," they cried. But He responded, "Not now, but soon... be busy until I come."

Will you take up that charge? Will you be busy until He comes? Will you occupy until He comes?