

**Mother of God Community**  
**Sunday Night Praise & Worship**  
**May 17, 2020**  
**Making the Most of Our Time**  
**Don James**

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Time is one of the greatest gifts God has given to us. We were created for eternity, to bask in the glory of God and to participate in it in ways that even angels cannot. Yet we have a very **short time** to **prepare** for it. The span of our earthly lives is less than a second in the perspective of eternity, so it would be smart of us to use our time wisely: to **prepare us for eternity** and to **help as many others as possible** to reach heaven as well.

This is why St. Paul says:

*<sup>1</sup>Therefore **be imitators of God**, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup>and **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and **gave Himself up for us**, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. ... you were formerly darkness, but now you are **Light in the Lord**; **walk as children of Light** <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), <sup>10</sup>trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*

*<sup>15</sup>Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, <sup>16</sup>**making the most of your time, because the days are evil.** <sup>17</sup>So then do not be foolish, but **understand what the will of the Lord is.** (Eph 5: 1-2, 8-9)*

What is he saying here? A child of God is one who **imitates Christ** by **offering himself/herself** as a sacrifice to God. In other words, when it comes to God, our **love language is obedience**.

This is precisely what Jesus tells us in the Gospel today:

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth..." (John 14:15-16)*

It's **not** that God needs our obedience. It's that **we need it!** This is about **being true to who we are in Christ**. St. Paul says: *"you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of the Light."* This is done by obeying what the Lord asks of us, which is why St. Paul calls us to "try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

**God is not in the business of creating associates. He's in the business of creating sons and daughters.**

I think this is an important statement for us to consider. **What is the difference between an associate and a child of God?**

- **An associate** is one who relates on some level with the other, possible even doing what the other wants for a time (like an employee doing his job), yet he remains his own lord or decision-maker... once an employee leaves work, he makes his own choices – possibly even to find another job.
- Jesus shows us that a **child of God shares the very nature of the Father**, and therefore he/she **thinks** and **acts** just as the Father would himself. The Father's business is the Son's business. This is why when Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus replies:

*How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. (John 14:9-10)*

This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit for each of us. The Holy Spirit is a gift that we could never deserve or earn! And he is freely given to us to **recreate us** so that we **no longer** live in darkness, but that we would **walk by his light**, **thinking** and **acting** as a child of God.

**And the Holy Spirit wants to take root in the soil of our hearts.** When we have willing hearts, the life of God grows and spreads within us, changing our **desires**, our **perspectives**, giving us an **eternal outlook**, **bearing fruits** of faith, hope, and love as we give way to the Spirit's work and act according to his will.

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### **Remaining Under the Lordship of Jesus**

One of the greatest temptations for us as Christians is to **believe that the status quo is enough**. In other words, the great temptation is to get comfortable with how things are, what we've done, and thinking that we no longer need to change or that we've done enough.

In our walk with the Lord, there is a tendency to eventually "box God in", limiting what we are willing to let him do in our hearts. We can receive him with joy and, along our journey, we realize he is asking us for something we may not want to give, or give up.

It could be a change in schedule. Maybe He wants us to forgive someone. Maybe he wants us to set aside more time to pray, or to watch less TV. Maybe he wants us to trust him and step out in faith for healing. And for any number of reasons, we don't want to obey. **When we do this, we no longer operate under his Lordship like a child of God, but instead operate more like an associate.** And that affects our ability to hear his voice, to walk with him, to see him act in power in our lives.

Thank God that we can repent and be forgiven! But this is why St. Paul urges us:

*<sup>15</sup>Therefore **be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,** <sup>16</sup>**making the most of your time, because the days are evil.** <sup>17</sup>**So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.** (Eph 5: 15-17)*

**Make the most of your time, because the days are evil.** We certainly see the darkness in our world. We know the devil is a liar and a thief, and he is heavily influencing the world today. We see it in the media when it selectively picks and edits clips to produce a particular narrative, so as to deceive people and bring them to their viewpoint. We see it in corrupt governments. We see it when society calls what is good evil and what is evil good.

Yet, no matter how dark the world gets, we have the **light of God!** Through the Holy Spirit, we can understand what God's will is for us, if we seek him with a willing heart. And God's desire is to immerse us in his Divine Life, to love us, heal us, and fill us with his joy!

Last week, Dottie Potter referred to Ralph Martin's prophecy on Pentecost May 1975. In that prophecy, we are told:

*"I want you to be prepared, my people, **to know only me and to cleave to me and to have me in a way deeper than ever before.** I will lead you into the desert...I will strip you of everything that you are depending on now, **so you depend just on me.** A time of darkness is coming on the world, but a **time of glory is coming for my church, a time of glory is coming for my people.** I will pour out on you **all the gifts of my spirit.** I will prepare you for **spiritual combat; I will prepare you for a time of evangelism that the world has never seen.... And when you have nothing but me, you will have everything...."**  
(given by Ralph Martin, May 1975, Pentecost Monday at St. Peter's Basilica)*

Our flesh may cringe at some of these statements. We don't like to abandon things we've depended on. But what is God really saying here? He wants us to **grow up, to walk in the spiritual life like we never have before.** To avoid playing with the *currency of this world* that bears no fruit for the kingdom and to use the *currency of God's kingdom*. This is good news! When challenges face God's people, it is to refine us, to help us **shine more brightly** as God's children. God wants to make us **Saints!**

**How we use our time tells us a lot about what we love,** what our priorities are. **Our time is short.**

None of us knows how much time we have left, or for that matter, how much time the world has left. God wants us to make **every moment** count.

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**Can you imagine the difference** Christians could make in the world if each and every one made every moment count? If even in just their free time they choose to intercede, evangelize, or maybe develop media that could reach a multitude? We cannot make choices for others, **but we can make our own choice**, and we can intercede that the Holy Spirit be poured out on this world, even as he was poured out on Pentecost so that hearts would be changed and set free, and so the Kingdom of God would advance and demolish strongholds. **Can we surrender our time to the Lordship of Jesus?**

### **Concluding Prayer**

I would like to conclude with a prayer, and I invite you to pray along with me:

Most Blessed, Holy Trinity, we are humbled by your great love for us. We are humbled, because we know that, we have only tasted a small portion of your love, of who you are, and you surpass our greatest imaginations. You created us from nothing, in order to give us everything, to bring us into your Divine Family. You created us in time so that we could participate in your creation, making choices that bear fruit *now* and *for generations*, ... and then rest with you for all eternity.

You amaze us Lord. Your **love**, your **mercy**, your **desire for us** amazes us. Time and time again, you have shown us that you are for us. And we say “yes” Lord, “yes” to the further work that you want to do in lives Lord. We open our hearts to you, now. Precious Holy Spirit, renew your wonders in us. **Teach us** your truths. **Write your will** upon our hearts. Speak to us about the **obstacles you find in our hearts** and **change our desires**, so that we **desire you** above all.

Lord, you are so interested in mankind! Help us to participate in your desire for those around us. We want your light to *shine brightly* through us. Help us to make your priorities our priorities. Help us to fight for your Kingdom, for souls that are being lost. Lord, we pray this for us *and* for your whole Church, that you would set ablaze a deep zeal for *you* that increases our love, our trust, and that helps us to use our time for your glory.

We pray this in your Mighty Name, Amen!