

When Your World Is On Hold

There comes a time in each of our lives when we must fully realize that things have changed, and our world as we once knew it, is temporarily put on hold or gone forever. If our lives should take the normal course of events, an example of that kind of understanding comes as we accept the fact that our life is actually coming to an end, simply because it has run its course, or we are terminally ill. If we are wise, the finality of that season allows us to focus on the importance of our relationship with God and our preparation to soon be with Him. In those waning moments, hours, days, weeks or months, all of the events and situations that may have formerly distracted us, should we be less focused, fall away as virtually unimportant; in most cases not worth even thinking about. We are too busy living in the absolute, unadulterated truth, that we will be face to face with God in short order. Nothing else is remotely as important.

In the course of our lives, however, there come times when the kind of intensity with which we face death is needed to face the next days that God has for us. We come to a realization that our lives, as we know them, are either temporarily, or permanently changing. We may lose our job. The economy may crash. We may become ill or hurt. Loved ones may die. There is really no limit to the possible events that bring God's reality to life itself comes into focus. Overnight, in the course of weeks or months, or in an instant, we may be forced to deal with circumstances that were unthinkable before they happened.

As the Lord's plans unfold, as all things fall in His order for this season in time, those of us who see the signs indicating that the "Leave it to Beaver" kind of days may never be our portion in life, need to make some quality choices. We need to understand that life as we once knew it could soon become no more than a faded memory. The life that may soon be our portion will require God's power for us to prosper as He sees prosperity.

As we read of the first churches, those around the time Jesus walked with them, or those soon after His removal, we need to realize that those days were comprised of people, people just like you and me. They are not simply names in a book. They were flesh and blood ordinary people simply walking through the day to day life God had given them. These people had decisions thrust upon them when the world they once knew, sometime only moments before, was put on hold. Some of them had to flee in the night when their homes were confiscated. Some had to adjust to prison life. Some saw their children and their friends die in the arena in front of jeering, demon possessed crowds, moments before they faced the same plight. When any one of those fateful moments occurred, we, those of us in this generation, need to know what distinguished the urgent from the important for them? What allowed them to make heart choices that either pleased our Lord, or denied His ways?

I am convinced that the answer to those moments questions were determined long before they happened and can be summed up in two words: realization and preparation. Those with the mind of Christ took an honest appraisal of the times and circumstances in which they lived and where their world was heading. Realizing what the possible scenarios that could soon affect their lives may be, they wisely ran to the only real source of hope, Jesus Christ for preparation. In knowing that the days that remained for them were no longer to be lived for their own comfort or personal profit, they prepared in a way that would have eternal impact instead of temporal gain. The heroes of that time were as dead to themselves and their own, fleshly, desires as Jesus was when He walked with some of them. They

came to the realization sometime before the events occurred, that the worth of their lives was determined by God's interpretation of value, not what they wanted to be important.

Only the fool fails to recognize that our world is changing rapidly, possibly with the same consequences that the people of that day faced. Those changes will require us to live in the kind of focus that we would have if our last breaths were counted. People with harmful agendas may cause us to need to adjust to a world that is forced upon us, all at a moment's notice. One bomb, one man-made disaster, one illogical decision by those in power, wherever they may be, one new law, could modify our world. There are limitless possibilities that have the potential to put the world as we know it on hold temporarily, or permanently. That is the world we live in at present. It is not some conspiratorial or radical kind of thinking. It is as much truth to the understanding heart as it was centuries ago.

With that in mind, if the above paragraphs are true, what kind of people should we be? What should our focus in life from this instant forward be? What should be the priority of our days? How do we prepare our children? What is important enough to redirect the thoughts and decisions of our days from God's desire for us to attempting to keep whatever comfort zones we have left?

Realizing the times that are ahead for us, our only priorities should be God and His ways, and Christ and His heart; both positions empowered by the Holy Spirit. Each of us must live in the reality that those who saw their days numbered lived. It is time to get our affairs in order; first with God, and then with our personal world. We must determine what is significant to God for us and then head in that direction with the zeal we would have if we were taking our final breath, facing Him in moments. We must determine to overcome the demands and circumstances of this world as Jesus did, and begin living in the spirit of the world that is really our home. We must face each and every moment as if things could possibly never be like them again. We must prepare now, through the power of God, for what may be our portion in the next heartbeat.