

Sermon title: A thousand years is like a day [1Peter 3:8]

Our Epistle reading for today speaks about time. In particular, “how we see it” vs. “how God sees it.” How we perceive time impacts how we use it. I often tell people – “what you think happens after death” impacts how you live life today. If you see yourself as an eternal being you will live differently than if you believe “this life is all there is,” “the treasures of this life is all there is. Our epistle lesson from 2Peter 3:8 tells us that God, in fact, sees the passage of time differently.

“Beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

This reminds me of a story. There is a young boy speaking to God. Boy says to God! “To you a minute is like a 100 years.” God replies “Yes, time is nothing to me.” Boy says “God! To you a million dollars is the same as a penny.” God replies “Yes, material wealth is nothing to me” “Well, then,” says the boy “Can I have a million dollars?” God says “Sure, no problem.” “In just a minute.”

So what is meant in our scripture lesson when it says “with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” Some people think that it is a physical difference. When a thousand years pass here on earth, God only sees a day pass. It helps to explain why He hasn’t returned for two thousand years. They believe that for God, the entire history of mankind has barely been a week. But there is no scriptural reason for making that assumption. Rather, it is a statement that God’s perception of time is different from ours. Because sees things as part of an eternal plan, His timing is different from ours.

There was a reason why Peter wanted us to know this. In Jesus’ time, just as in our times, people wondered if God was really there. They wondered because it was talking so long for Judgment day to come. Many had sacrificed much of their worldly lives and they were looking forward to living in the new Heaven and new Earth as Jesus promised. But, the waiting was getting longer. And the years passed. And for some, decades passed, and still no Judgment day, no justification, no freedom from Roman persecution. Because of this some started to doubt that Christ would ever come back. And as a consequence, they decided that it didn’t matter how they lived their lives. They started to live like the pagan non-believers in the local area. Their focus changed from living lives pleasing to God, to living lives which pleased themselves. They were falling to the temptation of sin.

So Peter wrote this letter to encourage God’s people. “Stop being tempted by the world.” “Stop acting like you belong to this world.” When Peter wrote “with the Lord a day is like a 1000 years” he is reminding us that God has always kept His promises, but He will do so in His time and in His own way. He will return, but we don’t know when, not even the angels know. He will return, but when we least expect it, like a thief in the night... totally unexpected. God works on his own schedule, for His own divine reasons. And we are to trust that. We are to trust that our loving God has plans for good for us. We accept

we will not understand his plans, because our finite human minds cannot comprehend his eternal divine plan. And we, as the created, are not to question that. So, St. Peter, encourages us to be faithful and always believe that God's promise to return will be fulfilled. God has promised that you are an eternal being, one destined by God's will to enjoy a place of no tears, **no** more death no sorrow, no pain [Rev 21:1] where all wrongs shall be made right, where the sufferings of this present time *are incomparable* with the glory which we shall experience in Heaven. (Rom 8:18)

The problem is that many times we forget that. And when we forget that we are eternal beings we will allow Earthly clocks, Earthly time-tables, Earthly plans to dominate us. And what is the result? When we allow earthly plans to dominate us, things will not always roll out as planned. Things will not always go as planned because it is a sinful world. And when things do not go as planned, we get frustrated. When we allow earthly timetables to dominate us we will feel rushed for the world always pushes us to do more and more.

For example The world teaches that "more is better." We are taught to organize our time, increase efficiency, sometimes even steal time. If we can accomplish a certain amount of work in one hour then if we can get more done in that hour, then that is better. The world tells us that "More is better." But the sad thing is that none of this leads to peace. Back in the 70's, Disneyland had a ride called the carousel of progress. You sat down in a moving theatre and watched displays of the technological progress of the last century. The final display was the home of the future. The idea was that technology would advance so far that humans would not have to work. Machines would do all the work. Our lives would be a life of leisure. But fifty years later, we have seen just the opposite. We have not become a world of leisure rather we have become a world of busyness. In the eyes of the world, if you are busy you are important. you're really milking everything out of life.

But you know that's not the whole story. It's okay to be occasionally busy. But in reality, being overly busy in the long run cuts us off from the time we need to cultivate the important relationships in our life: relationships with our spouse, our kids, our friends, with God. In fact, in the eyes of the world, it's bad not to be busy. In the eyes of this world, if you are doing nothing if you are wasting time, you are sinning. That's what the world thinks. We are made to feel guilty if we aren't constantly "doing something." More than that, if we buy into the world's view of busy-ness, we become judgmental of others. We are judgmental and critical of others who are not busy. Finally, the worst thing about the "busyness mentality" is that it causes doubt about God's love. When we focus on OUR timetables, on Earthly timetables, our busy-ness timetables and God does not deliver on our expectations.... we can be disappointed, we can be disappointed... in God....

So what has happened? The "Busyness" mentality robs us of joy makes us judgmental, make us doubt God. It is important to note that "Busy" brings no peace. The world

would have you work forever in futile busy-ness. Satan wants you snared by the busy mentality. caught in an eternal “rat race.”

But God has not left us here. That is not the life that God wants for us. God has called us to focus our lives on Him. Thou shalt have no other God’ before me” Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your might. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Do that! Have God as the center. Have God as the center then all other things will fall in place.

The meaning of life is not “to be busy.” In fact, the meaning of our life has nothing to do with “what we do” at all. Because of the cross, our meaning of life comes not from “what we do” but from “who we belong to.” Because of Jesus we belong to God. We are the children of God. and we live according to His purposes. God does not call us to busy-ness. In fact, God instituted the Sabbath the day of rest. And He commanded that we observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. We “rest” because it is important to have God as the priority. It is also a statement that God has given us all the time to do what is necessary for the week. God does not call us to busy-ness. As the preacher in Ecclesiastes says “There is a time for every purpose under Heaven.” God has given us all the time to do what is necessary for the week. God has given you enough time to do all that is needful... to do more is sinful. What do you think of that? God does not call us to busy-ness.

There is a special word for time in God’s eyes. It is called Kairos. It is a very interesting term. It is something you want to keep in mind always. So there are two words meaning time: Kairos and Chronos. Chronos, physical time, clock ticking time, marks out the cycles of the physical world. It is the clock of busyness. Kairos, on the other hand, marks out the key events which fulfill the purposes of God. Living in Kairos means trusting that God has given you all the chronos time needed to do the work He has put before you. As Christians, living in kairos returns to us the joy of serving. You are responsible only for that which God has brought before you. For example take volunteer work at church. The purpose of service is not to do more or to get more people to do more. The purpose of getting people involved the purpose of serving was so they could use the gifts which God has given them. The joy of serving comes when it is an exercise of the gifts which God has given us. Living in kairos also keeps us from being judgmental. If the work I am doing is simply living out God’s purpose for me, then I will not need to worry about others having to be like me, having to work like me. I will want for them to do the things which use the gifts which God gave to them. And I can rejoice when they do. Living in kairos returns my trust in God. Because I know that all things will come about in the proper time. Rather than telling God how and when things should get done, I await His timing. God does not call us to busy-ness. God calls us to live in His Kairos. God calls us to have Him as the center of our lives. When we center our lives upon Jesus all the rest of our life will fall into place.

I would like to leave you with a final image. The beauty of a piece of music is not in cramming as many notes into the song as possible. The rests are just as important. In a beautiful piece of music, there is the right number of notes, no more, no less. Each note played at its proper time. Each rest, experienced at its proper time. Together forming rhythm and music. Our life is a song written by God. The beauty of that life will not be in cramming as much events as possible. The rests are just as important. In a Godly life, there is the right number of kairos events, no more, no less. Each work played at its proper time. Each rest, each celebration, experienced at its proper time, together forming a life of rhythm and music. May you experience the song which God has written for you with joy. Amen.