

Knowing the Time **Romans 13:11**

11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

How many times a day do we look at the clock to find out what time it is?

Or how often do we look at the clock to discover that it is later than we thought and we are going to be late?

Paul wants people who read this book to take note of what time it is.

Not on a clock but in the chronology of time.

You remember me telling you about visiting one of the businesses up town and them offering us a calendar for the church but I told them that the congregation was more interested in something of a shorter duration of time.

There is an interesting passage over in the history of David.

1 Chronicles 12:32 (NKJV) **32 of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times**, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command;

Wouldn't be wonderful if we had some leaders today that understood the times?

Jesus criticized the foolishness of the religious leaders for they could discern the weather by looking at the sky but could not discern the signs of the times.

Matthew 16:1–3 (NKJV) 16 Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; 3 and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

I finished a book by Russell Kirk in which he continually uses a phrase to describe the wisdom of our age. He says they know the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Never have we lived in a day when people had more knowledge but less wisdom than today.

It used to be that Christians were the exception to this but not always.

Christians in many places have bought into the secular ideas of our time and have set aside the wisdom that comes from God.

Paul tells us that it is time to wake up and know what day and age we are in.

In *Against the Night*, Charles Colson quotes Whittaker Chambers, a former communist spy who became a Christian and a passionate defender of the West, but who died despairing of it:

It is idle to talk about preventing the wreck of Western civilization. It is already a wreck from within. This is why we can hope to do little more now than snatch a fingernail of a saint from the rack or a handful of ashes from the fire, and bury them secretly in a flower pot against the day, ages hence, when a few men begin again to dare to believe that there was once something else, that something else is thinkable, and need some evidence of what it was and the fortifying knowledge that there were those who, at the great nightfall, took loving thought to preserve the tokens of hope and truth. *James Montgomery Boice, Romans: The New Humanity, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991–), 1699–1700.*

I watched a new clip this week where everyone was cheering and clapping. The governor of New York had just signed an order allowing abortion at any time prior to birth, for the full 9 months.

It seems that the only people who are eligible for a lethal injection are the unborn. And then I heard that Vermont is going to do the same thing.

We missed it because we were not here last Sunday but it was nationally recognized as Sanctity of Life Sunday. That is why you have an insert in your bulletin.

Do we have any idea what time it is?

I. And do this

A. Do what?

B. What we read in the previous verses.

1. 8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

C. This again shows the importance of this message we preached last time.

II. Knowing the time,

A. The generation of Jesus did not know the times.

1. They missed the promised Messiah.
2. Even the disciples were lead astray by their own personal and political desires.
3. They too looked for one to deliver them from the Romans instead of from their sins.
4. Luke 19: 41-44 41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the

things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 “For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 “and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

- B. 20-30 years later Paul writes to the Romans because they had settled into their daily lives.
1. We all have that problem.
 2. We look at those around us and we develop a mind set congruent with them.
- C. Jesus in many parables warned future generations of not knowing the times.
1. Luke 12: 43 “Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 “Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 “But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 “the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. 47 “And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 “But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.
 2. Matthew 24:36 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 “and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 “Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 “Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect
 3. Matthew 25: 1 ¶ “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2

“Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 “Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 “but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 “But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7 “Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 “And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 “But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10 “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12 “But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

III. What time is it?

- A. If you have never been born again now is the time to repent & believe.
- B. If you are a lackluster Christian, it is time to get involved.
- C. If you know that you are on your way to heaven, it’s time to tell others the gospel.
- D. Ephesians 5:15-17 (NKJV) 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.