

New Year's day 2023

For the first day of 2023 Paul says *it's time to wake up because that last day for us is nearer now than when we first put our faith in the Lord. Night is almost over, and day will soon appear. We must stop behaving as people do in the dark and be ready to live in the light.*

Make the most of your time – a great message for the first day of 2023 – don't waste time.

How much time do you spend with God?

How much time do you have?

Just the other day I was driving home and I was so tired – I decided to take a power nap in the truckies parking bay near mount Barker.

I laid the seat back – and just got to sleep and a caravan driver came up to my car and tapped on the window and asked me what was the time.

Well that was annoying!

I told him the time and tried to go back to sleep.

I just got to sleep and taxi driver came up to my car and tapped on the window and asked me what was the time.

This was very disturbing.

Any way I told him the time.

I just got to sleep and a truckie came up to my car and asked me what was the time?

I told him - he left – and I was very frustrated.

I was so frustrated.

I got some cardboard and wrote a big sign and put it on the car.

It said: "I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE TIME IS".

I just got to sleep and a bus driver tapped on the window.

He said: Hey mate I see you don't know the time – it's ½ past 8.

I thanked him for the bottom of my heart....!

How Much Time Do You Have Left?

Psalm 90:

*Our days may come to seventy years,
or eighty, if we are healthy;... Teach us to number our days,*

There is this thing on Google called the “death clock”.

You just enter your – age, sex, weight, smoker or non-smoker, pessimist or optimist, or normal and it tells you when you’re going to die.

I put in all my details and said that I was an optimist - it said I’m going to die in 2045 – I’ll be 85.

Then I said that I was a pessimist and it said I should have already died in 2008 – 48 years old.

So then I put in that I was “normal” and it says I am going to die on Feb 19 2032 – I’ll die at 72 - that’s not bad is it?

Do you wonder when you’re going to die?

If you think you’re going to die just go on a diet.

You won’t live any longer, but it will seem a lot longer.

It’s time to wake up! **“Because salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed ..put off things of darkness (evil stuff) and put on the Armor of light (spiritual stuff). The hour has come!**

Clothe yourself with Jesus early in the morning and you will be well-dressed all day long.

God blesses us with time – for a reason.

We all know Ecclesiastes;

***There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die...***

Funny enough the first part is about our bodies.

A time to be born and a time to die. None of us asked to be born. None of us asks to die; it is something God decides. God sees birth and death as his boundaries of life under the sun.

God sees the beginning and the end – we only see the bit in the middle.

Then it's talk about the soul.

A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.

None of us are going to escape the hurts and sorrows of life.

God chooses those things for us. We seek God in pain – it doesn't make sense – but true.

Then it's about the spirit – our inner thought and decisions.

A time to search, for work, for marriage, for friends and a time to give up looking.

There comes a time to stop our own efforts and see what new doors God open's up for us.

There is a plan for us the problem is that God's plan rarely lines up with our plan.

You know If we were allowed to plan our lives I doubt very much if we would include pain, and sickness, and grief, and heart ache – who would include all that?

But you know Solomon (He wrote the book of Ecclesiastes) tells us that a trouble free live would ruin us.

People who are protected from everything end up being impossible to live with; they are selfish, cruel, shallow, and have no guiding boundaries.

God sends these things so that we're taught to look to Him occasionally.

Last night we had the theme -what are you going to take into 2023 and what are you going to leave behind?

Mary and Joseph were told to take the baby Jesus to Egypt to Escape Herod who was going to kill him.

They took Jesus and left incredible evil behind.

I think Paul is asking the same thing of us for 2023 – using the clothing analogy - what are we going to put on – what are we going to take off. The advice is too obvious: Take off all the dark things we do - Put on all the things of the light.

Didn't we hear this over Christmas: The people walking in Darkness have seen a great light?

We have a choice today to live in the light and not darkness.

Again, last night – you should have been there – The strangest thing we are asked to put on the things of the light – to walk with Jesus – to have faith.

Our text said these things are impossible for us to do – on our own. God asks us to do what we cannot do? A bit mean.

It goes on – these things are impossible for us to do on our own but with God all things are possible.

With God we can put off the dark things and live in the light of Christ. Where is God – he's here – this side of heaven he is in this community of faith – he's in each and every one of us.

The new devotion book this year is called Time Out in Christ hands.

It rightly suggests we need time to be with God – Time to be guided by the Holy Spirit, Time to hear the Jesus voice.

When someone says "take your time" it means dawdle along.

When Paul says "take your time" it's a bit more urgent - It is time to wake up. You know that the day when we will be saved is nearer now than when we first put our faith in the Lord.

Take your time seriously. A bible reading, a devotion, a prayer – that's just a start. Amen.

Lord help us to connect to the community of faith – our brothers and sisters in Christ so that we have your help in living in the light of Jesus.