

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

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a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isaiah 1:4). We need to confess our sins. In Washington, in every state capitol, and in every city hall in these United States, we need to make way for sober and righteous leadership. We shall do it or else! For, "Brethren, the time is short."

III.

There is a third sphere where the truth of our text needs to be emphasized. I am thinking of the Church's responsibility for the evangelization of the world with the good news of Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." Ah, that puts a time limit on us! The age will end. The night will fall. The door will close. The sickle of harvest will be laid down.

Who knows precisely when this age of the Church's witness to the world will end and Christ return? No one! But there are millions of believers who feel the end is not far away.

And besides, whether the age of the Church's responsibility is about to end or not, it is clear that some of the largest fields of missionary endeavor are now standing open to the Christian Gospel with but little assurance that they will remain open much longer. In China we had our great opportunity at the end of World War II. But our government elected to back Western Europe against the rising Communist tide and to write China off as a loss of not too great importance. Now, with Communism in the saddle in China, the door of freedom for the missionary is closing. The time was short, and we let it slip from us.

At the moment Japan is the wide open door in the Far East.

The opportunity for missions is almost unprecedented! And yet, world conditions being what they are, it must be added: "The time is short." What we do, we must do now!

IV.

I cannot conclude without narrowing the application of this text to our personal lives. Some of us have unfinished business with Jesus Christ, and we are much too careless about it. Some of us have an exterior coating of Christianity, but Christ has never been allowed to storm with His love the inner citadel of our hearts and capture us at the center for Himself. Some of us have made promises to ourselves or to Him that at an early date we would make our decision and cast our lot with Him, but we go on day after day with those promises unkept.

Today there is a voice calling to us: "The time is short! The time is short!"

You may be in the exuberance of youth. No matter. The time is short.

You may be in the prime of middle years. No difference. The time is short.

You may be in the feebleness of old age. All the more reason why you should listen: The time is short!

What will it be like with you—you who are delaying to take your sin-sick soul to Jesus Christ while the opportunity is so richly yours? Christ's word to you is plain and ever so winsome: "Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be as red as crimson, they shall be as wool"

(Isaiah 1:18). What will you do with Him and His call? You must make up your mind. The time is short!

WESLEY ON PERFECTION

(The following quotations are from Wesley's Journal, and Works).

"A man that is not a thorough friend to Christian perfection, will easily puzzle others, and thereby weaken, if not destroy, any select society."

"By perfection, I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, ruling all the tempers, words, and actions, the whole heart, and the whole life."

"If you press all believers to go on to perfection, and to expect deliverance from sin any moment, they will grow in grace. But if they lose that expectation, they will grow flat and cold."

"As to manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work; both preceding and following that instant."

"As to the word perfection it is scriptural, therefore, neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach Him to speak who made the tongue."

"It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and one great means of retaining it is frankly to declare what God has given you, and earnestly to exhort all the believers you meet with to follow after full salvation."

"It is nothing strange that those who love the world should not love to continue with us. Our road is too straight."

Down the stream of nature driven
They seek a broader path to heaven."

However, let us keep in the good old way and we know it will bring us peace at last."

"I find by long experience it comes exactly to the same point, to tell men they shall be saved from all sin when they die; or tell them it may be a year hence, or a week hence, or any time but now. Our word does not profit, neither as to justification or sanctification, unless we can bring them to expect the blessing while we speak."

"Christian perfection is surely another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, every one that is holy, is, in the Scripture sense, perfect. Yet we may observe, that neither in this respect is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, as it is termed; none which does not admit of a continual increase."

"To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the society; because he that could speak thus in our congregation cannot be an honest man."

"By Christian perfection, I mean, 1. Loving God with all our heart. Do you object to this? I mean, 2. A heart and life all devoted to God. Do you desire less? I mean, 3. Regaining the whole image of God, What objection to this? I mean, 4. Having all the mind that was in Christ. Is this going too far? I mean, 5. Walking uniformly as Christ walked. And this

surely no Christian will object to. If any one means anything more, or anything else, by perfection, I have no concern with it."

"Let none rest in being half Christians. Whatever they do, let them do it with all their might; and it will be well, as soon as any of them find peace with God, to exhort them to go on to perfection. The more explicitly and strongly you press all believers to aspire after full sanctification, as attainable now by simple faith, the more the whole work of God will prosper."

"Many years since I saw that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before, of the way how to attain this; namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith! This I testified in private, in public, in print; and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses."

I have found the plain reason why the work of God has gained no ground in this circuit in all the year. The preachers had given up the Methodist testimony. Either they did not speak of perfection at all (the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust) or they spoke of it only in general terms, without urging the believers to go on unto perfection, and to expect it every moment. And wherever this is not done, the work of God does not prosper."

"I went to Sheffield, and on Tuesday met the select society. But it was reduced from sixty to twenty; and but half of these retained all that they once received. What a grievous error, to think those that are saved from sin cannot lose what they have gained! It is a miracle if they do not; seeing all earth and hell are so enraged against them."

"Two things are certain: the one, that it is possible to lose even the pure love of God; the other, that it is not necessary, it is not unavoidable; it may be lost, but it may be kept. Accordingly, we have some, in every part of the kingdom, who have never been moved from their steadfastness."

"But surely we cannot be saved from sin, while we dwell in a sinful body. A sinful body? I pray observe, how deeply ambiguous, how equivocal this expression is! But there is no authority for it in Scripture: the word sinful body, is never found there. And as it is totally unscriptural, so it is palpably absurd. For no body, or matter of any kind, can be sinful; spirits alone are capable of sin. Pray in what part of the body should sin lodge? It cannot lodge in the skin nor in the muscles or nerves, or veins, or arteries; it cannot be in the bones any more than in the hair or nails. Only the soul can be the seat of sin."

OBITUARY

Rev. Odber L. Brown

The Rev. Odber L. Brown, a Nazarene minister, died on Nov. 3rd at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Helen Griffin, at South Portland, Me., after a short illness, in his 85th year. He was born at Lower Brighton, N. B., in 1866, where his parents lived and were members of the Reformed Baptist Church there. He is survived by his widow and one grandson, Warren. The funeral service was held in the Nazarene Church at South Portland, and interment was made in that city.