



A Spiritual Encouragement Message April 23, 2021

Embracing Time

by Andrew Lemus

What were you doing Friday the 13th of 2020? For many of us that was the day before things shut down for over a year. Schools were closed, workplaces shut their doors, restaurants stopped serving, government facilities shut down, and the list goes on. This past year has been a rather perplexing one for most of us, as we look back on how unique it was. One thing it did show us is how vulnerable our lives are to the circumstances we find ourselves in.

We never lost hope. Sure, we might have grumbled, complained, had a pity party, and got angry a few times at the circumstances we found ourselves in, but we pressed on, looking toward the future, hopeful for what time might bring. While we can't know what tomorrow might bring (James 4:13-14), we know that those who live for the Lord today will persevere through whatever storms this world has to offer (Matthew 7:24-27). Even though the world might be crumbling and falling down around us, we as Christians, have hope and embrace the time ahead. We embrace what the future can bring, and the peace, comfort, and joy on the horizon.



Time is a great healer. I can't even begin to imagine what it was like for the young Joseph to be sold off as a slave by his brothers. The concern he must have had as he was handed over to strange men with a future that was unpredictable. Those days, weeks, and months must have been so challenging, scary, and daunting for Joseph (Genesis 37:12-28). Yet, we read in Genesis 41:51-52 that over time God had caused Joseph to forget all his hardships brought on by his family. If you are going through challenges in your life, remember that time can be a great remedy for the troubles you are in the midst of (James 1:2-4). Like the saying goes, "Time heals all wounds".

Time reveals the truth. A prayer parents give to God is for the protection of our most prized blessings, our children. We can empathize with the deep grief Jacob went through as his children showed up with blood-

soaked garments, telling him the made-up story of his son Joseph being killed by wild animals (Genesis 37:28-35). Time passed, over two decades, and the truth of his sons' horrific sins and the truth that his son Joseph still lived came to light (Genesis 45:25-28). There are times when injustice, wickedness, malice, and other deeds of the flesh conceal themselves, but we should embrace time knowing that it often takes just that for the fruits of unrighteousness to be revealed (1Cor. 4:5; Matt. 7:15-20; Luke 5:2).

Time is the great builder. As I was driving my daughter to school a few weeks ago I was shocked to see the huge building that filled a piece of land that used to be a used car lot. It was as if the structure went up overnight! The reality is that I just hadn't been that way for several months and even though to me it seemed fast, to the builders I imagine the project was taking way too long. As children of God we grow, develop, and are nurtured into maturity (1Peter 2:2). We are all falling short in various areas, have weakness in our faith, and humbly cry out to God for His help, nourishment, transformation, and counsel. We should embrace time knowing that as we use our time wisely, God will help us to grow up in Him (Ephesians 5:15-17; Hebrews 5:12).

Time heals relationships. The conflict that Paul, Barnabas, and Mark had as a result of Mark leaving them during their first missionary journey was enough to cause Paul and Barnabas to part ways with one another (Acts 15:35-40). A friendship was strained and no doubt walls of frustration, anger, and disappointment came between Paul, Barnabas, and Mark. Over time we see that the sharp dispute between Paul and Barnabas was healed, and these three men of God were united in work and spirit in Christ (1Cor. 9:6; col. 4:10-11; 2Tim. 4:11). Also consider Joseph's relationship with his brothers! We sometimes have conflicts in our relationships within our families, workplaces, and church. We should embrace the reality that time heals relationships, often to become stronger than they were before.

We should all embrace time. Over time things can be lost and regained, people can crumble and be rebuilt, health can be lost and regained, lost friends can be regained by new ones, and wealth might be lost and recovered. With time comes many blessings, so let us not look to the future with fear, despair, and timidity but with hope, joy, and optimism. Embrace Time.