

Two questions. Almost all Bible study and Gospel preaching put great and consistent emphasis on answering Two vital questions. Each and every week we find unique approaches, or maybe lean back on tried and true methods, to fully understanding and embracing the answers to these two questions.

1st Q – “WHAT?” – What shall we do? (**Acts 2:36**). It was asked on Pentecost by those who wanted to be saved. We never stop asking this question. What shall I do as a Christian? (**Ephesians 2:10**) What is that work God would have me to do? And so, correctly, we preach often on what God’s people must do:
-- *Read the Bible, Encourage God’s People, Be a Light to the World, Worship Wholeheartedly* --

2nd Q – “WHY?” – The first question only matters because of this second one. Why should we do these things? -- *Why be baptized? Why read? Why encourage? Why make moral choices? Why be here today?*
Of course, the answer will always be GOD, or some description of His awesomeness:
(**Acts 2:32,36** – Jesus is amazing, powerful and worthy!) (**Ephesians 2:8-10** – God’s grace is given to us).

And let’s be clear, preaching that teaches you WHAT to do and WHY to do it, will always be needed. They will continue to the end of time, Lord willing many of which from this mouth, and they should.

However, there is a Third Question that must be asked. Without asking ourselves this third, related question, we render the first two... well, often impotent and soon forgotten. Yet, when we give this third question the same gravity and importance as the first two, lives will change every day, even this morning.

3rd Q – “WHEN?” – When should I do what I know to be right? This cannot come before the others, but it must come with them! Without it, we learn things, feel something, but then time passes, sermons are forgotten, we become used to hearing the same things over and over, and change never comes!

It is almost like there is this huge black hole between WHAT/Why and... WHEN. We almost never get across it, and on the rare occasions where we eventually do, all of the substance of the first two questions is lost and we are ready to do something but don’t even remember what or why.

This morning we will talk about what to do for God and why we should do it, but far less than usual. You are an intelligent person. You know the Word. The real questions are:
When will you do what you know? When will you start? Why not this morning?

- I. Our Father of Faith acted Immediately and Decisively
 - a. **Romans 4:11-13, 16** – We are righteous if we have the faith of Abraham.
 - b. **Hebrews 11:8-10, 17-19** – WHAT and WHY were clear to Abraham and He obeyed God.
 - c. But WHEN? When did he leave his homeland behind? When did he offer his son?
 - d. Answer: IMMEDIATELY. With Urgency.
 - i. He did not wait *until the fear of God subsided* in order to see things clearly.
 - ii. He did not wait *until he felt mentally prepared* to follow through on the task.
 - iii. He did not wait *in hopes that God would put in place some alternate plan!*
 - e. Time and again He proved His faith by addressing and answering the 3rd Question:
 - i. **Genesis 12:1,4** – “So Abram went forth...”
 - ii. **17:10,23** – A big and challenging job. He did it “the very same day.”
 - iii. **21:12-14** – This must have been difficult, but he did it first thing in the morning.
 - iv. **22:1-3, 9-10** – The hardest thing any parent could face. He acted immediately.
 - v. **24:1** – He got it all done: WHAT and WHEN God said. And God blessed him!
 - f. How many know exactly WHAT God wants and WHY it should be done for Him. And yet...
 - i. They think on it for weeks and see if it just works itself out.
 - ii. They focus on other things first thinking that will make it all easier.
 - iii. They give it some time just to make sure this is God’s will (though text is clear).
 - iv. All the while, wanting God’s blessings... NOW!
 1. We want from God NOW. He asks: “WHEN?” --- Exactly! Do right now!

- II. Disciples of Jesus act Purposefully and with Urgency
- a. It should be no surprise to you that children of God in Christ, who are also children of Abraham by faith, would likewise act immediately and decisively in doing right. (**Luke 9:57-62**)
 - b. **Matthew 24:41-43** – Certainly we can see this when talking about the judgment to come. He didn't say to think about getting ready, or one day be alert, but to do so NOW. *Later is never the right time to prepare to meet the Lord. Amen?*
 - c. **Matthew 25:14-16** – This is Jesus' most potent story to make this point. The first two men didn't know how long they had, nor what they would have to give Jesus, but one thing they understood: act IMMEDIATELY to ensure the greatest GAIN!
 - d. **Matthew 25:22-23** – Notice, the reward was given not based on total amount, but amount accomplished based on what he had. Most we can grow depends on WHEN we start!
 - e. I don't know what I will have to offer Jesus when He comes back:
 - i. *How many souls did I help get to heaven?*
 - ii. *How many hours spent in prayer in His name?*
 - iii. *How many days where worship was the centerpiece of my existence?*
 - f. I know this: children of Abraham and disciples of Jesus start TODAY! Immediately.
 - g. NOW is the answer to When! That's the very best I can do for Jesus.

III. When will you Act to do what is right for your returning King?

a. **Serve the Christians**

- i. *Meeting someone. Calling them. Doing for them. Sacrificing for their good.*
- ii. *Praying with them. Studying with them. Worshipping faithfully beside them.*
- iii. *Have them in your home. Take them out for lunch. Visit them at their home.*
- iv. The WHAT and WHY are not difficult to see. You've heard that sermon often.
- v. **Hebrews 3:12-14** – TODAY – that's the answer to the WHEN question. Reach out Today. Invite Today. Give Today. Pray Today. Now, with urgency, for their good!

b. **Say "No" to Sin for Good**

- i. Every person in this room deals daily with the problem of sin. Each of us knows what specific efforts of the devil we fight. So, the WHAT is easy to see.
- ii. Maybe it is *profanity, negativity, immorality, laziness, bad company, or lack of God.*
- iii. And the WHY is not beyond our knowledge: we fight sin because sin hurts us, it hurts others, and it hurts God. How shall we who died to sin still live in it?
 1. *One day we will get around to facing our demons and dealing with this.*
 2. *Just a few more dances with the devil and I'll mature past this phase.*
 3. *When a few things in my life change, I'll be in a better place to do better.*
- iv. All of these excuses have failed to ask the right question and answer it the right way!
- v. **Ephesians 5:15-16, 17-18, 7-12** – WHEN? Now. Today. Make the most of this day, right now. Fools put off dealing with sin. Say it: Today I am going to make this right. I'm going to put this behind me." (**I Peter 4:1-3** – NO Time Left for Sin!)

c. **Submit to Christ in Baptism**

- i. There are some who do not know WHAT they must do to be saved? But most here know exactly what to do. There are some who do not know WHY they should submit to Christ in baptism. But most here do. And yet, there are still people in this room who have not been baptized. How is this possible?
 1. *"One day I'll know enough. One day the time will be right."*
 2. *"I'm just not ready."* (Not ready to do what Christ has told you to do?)
- ii. It is not a lack of readiness. You have just fallen 1 Question Short -- WHEN?
- iii. *"When should I do what I know is right? When should I be right with God?"*
- iv. **Acts 2:41** – "That Day!" **Acts 22:16** – "Why do you delay?"

Hell will include many people who knew a whole bunch of things about God. They knew WHAT He wanted. They knew WHY He deserved it. They just never found the right time to obey. WHEN?