

Concerning A Sense of Urgency

Promise: God provides the food and drink of salvation to all

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Isaiah 55:6-9; Ps 27:1-13; Phil 1:12-14, 19-30; Matt 20:1-16
(16th Sunday after Pentecost (Pr 20), 9/20/20)

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. — v. 6

Lead In – You no doubt know the Aesop Fable “The Boy Who Cried Wolf”? You will recall a young boy, bored to tears watching over the town’s sheep, tricked the nearby villagers into thinking a wolf was attacking the sheep. He found a perverse delight in watching the townsmen scramble as he cried “Wolf” as a false alarm. And he repeated this false cry. But when finally a wolf did actually appear, the boy’s cry went unheeded. Those who heard the cry assumed it was another false alarm, with the result that the sheep are all eaten by the wolf...

I. There Is A Sense of Urgency Throughout Scripture

- A. Time and availability will run out, and soon!
- B. So is Isaiah’s cry merely a false alarm?

II. Different, Not Mutually Exclusive, Senses of Urgent

- A. The emotional, excitable, adrenaline producing kind
- B. The mental, disciplined, vigilant kind...
- C. The emotional comes and goes, can’t be sustained!

III. Understanding the Urgency In the Isaiah Text

- A. The appeal to the food and drink of salvation...
- B. The sense of seeking by way of hearing...
- C. Eating is urgent, not only when near starvation...

Parting Shot – There’s a sense of urgency in our Gospel Reading as well. Emotionally, the laborers hired at the 11th our were likely at the time more emotionally urgent, much like the workers who bore the brunt of the day’s labor were at the hour when they were first hired. But those hired at the first hour could not afford to lose the benefit of a more sustained urgency, for if they walked off the job...

2 Co 6:2b Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Rv 3:3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

Mt 24:43-44 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Examples: Night watchman at a museum, or watchmen (sentries) guarding the gates and walls of a city....

Isaiah 55:6-9 ESV

The Compassion of the LORD

¹“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. ⁴Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. ⁵Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Mt 25:3-5 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept.

Mt 20:1-2 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.”

Mt 20:14-15 Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?

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