

In search of...



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Our Time is Short

Maybe you didn't know it, but the summer solstice this year (the point at which the Earth is closest to the Sun, resulting in the longest day of the year, from sunrise to sunset) occurred on Wednesday, June 20. Do you realize what that means? It means that ever since that day, nearly a month ago, our days have been getting shorter. Daylight will continue to wane until we reach the winter solstice sometime in late

December. With it being mid-July, and the temperatures being so very hot, things don't seem to be going in that direction. After all, when you look around right now you notice that the sun doesn't set until well after eight o'clock at night. So based on appearances, we are still in the height of summer, and have plenty of time to enjoy the nice warm weather without having to

think about Autumn, yet we are closer than you might think.

Similarly, many people go about this life under the assumption that they have all the time in the world and put off thinking about tougher days; however, our time here is never known to us, nor is it guaranteed. More often than not, life proves to be too short for our liking, too short to get done all the goals we set for ourselves. Think about the parable found in Luke chapter twelve, verses sixteen through twenty-one:

"And he told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

It's a scary thought, but the lesson Jesus was getting

across to the multitudes then still rings true today. Life is very unpredictable and is short, even if you are able to live for seventy years or more, that is nothing compared to eternity. James, inspired by the Holy Spirit, tells us that "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil." (chapter four, verses thirteen through sixteen).

Do you realize how fleeting life is? Have you stopped to think, "I might only have a few more years to live"? Understand that no matter how young or old you may be, today you are closer to death – closer to eternity than any other point in your life. Your time here, along with everyone's, is rapidly fading away. Coming to that realization is a shock to the system, because we all like to think of ourselves as young. It is hard to admit that we are on the other side of the hill,

perhaps because in our way of thinking that would mean "it's all downhill from here." But growing older and closer to death is not seen as a problem in God's word.

Romans 13:11-12 says, "Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." Is this the attitude that you are showing in your life? That the longer we live, the older we get, the closer we are to eternal salvation? I certainly hope so! Here is the heart of the matter: perspective. It really is all in how you look at it; you can either view growing older as a loss or a gain, just like being past the summer solstice either means losing daylight and warm summer days, or being that much closer to Thanksgiving and pretty leaves in the Fall.

One final thing to consider: like it or not, we can do nothing to change the fact that time marches onward. The long days of summer give way to the colder shorter days of Fall & Winter. Just the same,

we grow older and soon are facing fewer years to go than we have lived. Seeing as how we can't reverse or slow down time, our only option is to decide how to use what time we have left. Paul talked about this in Ephesians 5:15-17, when he said, "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

The not-so-vague point is this: don't waste this time! We only have so much daylight to enjoy, so let's take advantage of it! Likewise, our lives as a whole are passing faster than we realize; are we using our time for the Lord? Are we taking the opportunities that come our way to shine our lights and encourage one another? Or will we look back and say, "If only..."?

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Longest Lives

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- The first man created by God (Gen. 2:20)
- Born long after the flood, he fathered Peleg (Gen. 11:16)
- Adam's grandson, who lived 905 years (Gen. 5:11)
- He was Enoch's father and lived the second longest life ever (Gen. 5:20)
- Another of Adam's descendants; he lived 910 years (Gen. 5:14)
- This man died five years before the flood (Gen. 5:30-31)
- This great-great-grandson of Adam lived 895 years (Gen. 5:17)
- He was the oldest person to ever live (Gen. 5:25-27)
- God told him to build an ark, and he obeyed (Gen. 6:9-10)
- He was the third son of Adam & Eve (Gen. 5:3, 8)
- Through this son of Noah came the Israelites (Gen. 11:10-11)