TITLE: In His Time

TEXT: Hag. 1:1-11; Ezra 5:13-16; 1st Pet. 2:4-5; Heb. 3:6; Acts 7:48; Ro. 12:1; Eccl. 3:1-8

INTRODUCTION: We sang one of my favorite choruses’ a few minutes ago…

 “In His Time, In His Time,

He makes all things beautiful, In His time,

Lord please show me everyday

As your teaching me Your way,

That You do just what You say,

In Your time!”

 This is a Chorus that states a deep theological truth about God…. That everything done in God’s time is beautiful! Everything done in Gods timing turns out beautifully.

 And I have found that often the opposite can be true also, that things that we do that are not according to Gods timing can turn out disastrously.

 Does anyone know what significant event happened 30 years ago this April? (Probably Not because it may only be significant to myself and Pam)

 This April it will be 30 years sense I left grocery retail management and entered the ministry.

 Something I learned early on was the importance of Gods timing….

Example: Actually, the lord had started preparing Pam and I for the call He was placing upon our lives to go into the pastoral ministry a couple years earlier than this… It was then that we learned a valuable lesson in waiting on God’s timing.

 As God was preparing my heart to go into the ministry full time He started working on me a few years earlier.

 At one point I started to get excited about the idea and convinced myself that God wanted us to pack up and head to Christiansburg Virginia to go to Bible College at a new Foursquare Bible college campus.

 We took this trip to check it out and see if we got that witness from the Lord that this was what He wanted us to do. I had already convinced myself that it was.

 When we got there and started checking things out things seemed to really be falling in place.

 At the college they really encouraged me about one of my major concerns, going back to school at my age (pushing 40).

Another concern was affordable housing and they lined us up with a local realtor and that worked out as well. This was cool! Just what I wanted!
 Then in the early morning hours of the next day while we were in our hotel lying in bed, the Lord spoke very clearly.

 He said NO! This is not the time!

 In retrospect what had happened was in my enthusiasm I got ahead of God and God’s timing and everything fell apart….

 We got up the next morning and we were really feeling defeated, feeling like we had totally misunderstood God calling for our lives. It was a long trip home.

 I gave it to God and pretty much said: OK, I like my job so I will just stay doling what I have been doing.

 Two years later on the way home from work one night as I was driving down I-35 I heard the Lord speak to my heart in a very clear and profound way.

 He simple said: Now is the time!

 And with that seeming misplaced thought I had a full understanding of what God was saying to me and what He wanted me to do.

 Now was the time to leave my job.

 When I got home I talked with Pam about what had happened and she bore witness to its rightness.

 I believe that God will always confirm obedience to His will through peace.

 Even though we had absolutely no idea at this point what we were to do other than my resigning from my position, we had a Philippians chapter 4 peace about it.

**Philippians 4:7(NIV)**  **7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

 I had the next day off so when I got up one of the first things that I did was type up my resignation letter to my company giving them 30 days notic after working for them for 22 years..

 It wasn’t an hour after my typing up that letter that the doorbell rang and God placed someone there to reveal to us a door of opportunity that would lead to my credentialing as Minister of the Gospel.

 Gods timing is always perfect! In Gods Timing everything turns out beautifully! Everything comes together perfectly…..

 As Christians God has called us to do things, not in our time, but to wait on Him and do them in His time.

 We have an example of the importance of doing things in God’s timing in the pages of Scripture….

**Hagg 1:1 (NIV) In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest:**

**2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, `The time has not yet come for the LORD's house to be built.'"**

**3 Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai:**

**4 "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"**

**5 Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.**

**6 You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."**

**7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.**

**8 Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD.**

9 "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house.

**10 Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops.**

**11 I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."**

To fully understand what is happening here we need to go back to something that happened 18 years earlier when the Israelites where still held in Babylonian captivity under King Cyrus…..

**Ezra 5:13 (NIV) " in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God.**

**14 He even removed from the temple of Babylon the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in Babylon.**

**"Then King Cyrus gave them to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor,**

**15 and he told him, `Take these articles and go and deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem. And rebuild the house of God on its site.'**

**16 So this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem. From that day to the present it has been under construction but is not yet finished."**

God laid it upon the heart ofKing Cyrus to send a remnant of Israel back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple of God.. (it was Gods timing for this to be done so he worked in the heart of a heathen King).

 After a few years Cyrus died and King Darius took over, and to this point, 18 years later, the house of God had still not been finished.

 The people started the project but they had run in to some difficulties so they quit building! Because of the difficulties they had encountered they determined among themselves that it wasn’t Gods time for the temple to be built.

 So God confronts His people Israel through the prophet Haggai……

 First the Lord speaks to Haggai….

**2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, `The time has not yet come for the LORD's house to be built.'"**

These people say-- These people have determined it is not My time..

Then the Lord speaks through the prophet to the people….

**3 Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai:**

**4 "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"**

**5 Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.**

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 What had really sidetracked the people from building the Lords house was, not the difficulties that they had encountered, as much as their desire to take care on numero-uno first!

 When you build a house what is it that is usually among the last things that you do?

 Put the finishing touches on the walls. You do the trim work and Put up the paneling

God says to them….

**4 "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses,** (your finished houses) **while this house** (My house) **remains a ruin?"**

Notice what God says next….

**5 "Give careful thought to your ways.**

**6 You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."**

 God says, think about it! You plant much but harvest little!

 You eat but never have enough! You drink but never have your fill! You put on clothes but are never warm! You earn money only to put it in a purse with holes in it!

 Folks this is a good test of whether we are living our lives within the will of God, living our lives in His timing and not our own.

 Do we feel like we have planted much but harvested little?

 Do we eat, drink and partake of the things of this world but are never really satisfied with what we have? Always looking for more?

 Does it seem like we work our tails off earning money but it seems as though we put it in a purse with holes in it? For every dollar we make it seems like we lose two?

 If this describes our life could it be that it is because we are living our lives in our timing and not the Lords?

 That even though He has things that He has called us to do we have placed them in second place to getting our house established?

 In short, God was saying, Think about it folks! Are you living under the blessings of God or under the cruse of God?

 On the subject of Gods timing Jesus said it this way…. **But seek My kingdom and My righteousness first, and all these things will be given to you as well!**

**7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.**

**8 Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD.**

9 "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house.

 How many times today do we get so busy building our own house that we neglect the house of God that we have been called to build?

 You may say, what house has God called us to build today?

 **1Pet 2:4 (NIV) As you come to him, the living Stone--rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him--**

**5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

 As Christians we each have all been called by God to build up a spiritual house. A house for Him to reside in! A house that His Holy Spirit can indwell.

Hebr 3:6 (NIV) But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

This building in which we worship in is not Gods literal house—not where God resides, not where God lives.

Acts 7:48 (NIV) "However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men..

These four walls in which we sit on Sunday mornings is not the house, the dwelling place of God. We are Gods house! We are Gods dwelling place! If we have received Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord of your life then He has taken up His residence with us!

The Greek word used here for house is:

**3624 oikos {oy'-kos}**

**1) a house**

**1a) an inhabited house, home**

**1b2) the house of God, the tabernacle**

 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house!

 Folks, as Christians, we are the house, the tabernacle of the living God!

 God is here in this building but it is only because He entered with us! He came in when we did because it is He who indwells us! He who has taken up residence within us! So wherever we go He goes!

 Don’t get me wrong or miss understand me.

 To me, as to many of you this is a very special place.

 It is our house of worship. I was saved within these four walls. This is where I met Jesus and invited Him into my heart to be the Lord and Savior of my life many years before God called me into the ministry…(That was my pew!)..

 But what makes this house of worship so special is the worshippers who gather here to worship Jesus. Both past and present..

 I want you to focus on what it is that each of us has been called to and been called to do as a Christian….

**1Pet 2:4 (NIV) As you come to him, the living Stone--rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him--**

**5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

 We have been called, past and present tense, to build a spiritual house for God.

 So that we can become a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

 In the Old Testament, who was it that resided in the house of God? Who lived in the temple?

 The priesthood! The priest lived in the temple and there they served God day and night --24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Church, **we are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

The main difference between us and the priesthood of the Old Testament is that they lived in the temple of God while we are the temple of God!

 What we have in common is in what we have been called to do…..

**Build a spiritual house and be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

What is the spiritual sacrifice that we are to offer to God?

 There is only one that Scripture says will be acceptable to Him.

**Roma 12:1 (NIV) Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship**.

 The spiritual sacrifice that we have been called to offer up to God, the only spiritual sacrifice that will prove to be acceptable by Him, is the sacrifice of our bodies to Him.

 Not sacrificed to Him in death but sacrificed to Him in life! Or sacrificed to Him while we yet are alive.

 The sacrifice of living our lives committed and dedicated to Him.

 Notice it says that we are to be a “holy” priesthood!

**40 hagios {hag'-ee-os}**

1. **most holy thing, a saint**
2. **one set apart unto God**

 It speaks of someone who is allowing God to do His redemptive work of sanctification in their life. Allowing God to change and transform us into the very image and nature of Jesus.

 When is the time that God wants to do this work within us?

 Scripture assures us that His time for this is always now!

 In the days of Haggai the people were so busy paneling their own houses that they neglected the house that God wanted them to build…

 I think the same is often true with us today.

 We get so busy working on our own houses that we neglect the house that God wants built..

 Often we find ourselves planting much, but harvesting little. We eat, but never have enough. We drink, but never have our fill. We put on clothes, but are not warm. We earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

 Church, we need to hear the Word of the Lord to us this morning…

**7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.**

**8 Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD.**

Are you, am I building the house that God wants built with our lives-- A house that He can take pleasure in-- A house that will bring Him honor? A house where others can be introduced to Jesus?

Does this describe our life this morning?

 Are we, like living stones, being built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, one that offers up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ?

 Solomon, the wisest man to have ever lived writes..

 **Eccl 3:1 (NIV) There is a time for everything,**

**and a season for every activity under heaven:**

**2 a time to be born and a time to die,**

**a time to plant and a time to uproot,**

**3 a time to kill and a time to heal,**

**a time to tear down and a time to build,**

**4 a time to weep and a time to laugh,**

**a time to mourn and a time to dance,**

**5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,**

**a time to embrace and a time to refrain,**

**6 a time to search and a time to give up,**

**a time to keep and a time to throw away,**

**7 a time to tear and a time to mend,**

**a time to be silent and a time to speak,**

**8 a time to love and a time to hate,**

**a time for war and a time for peace.**

There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven…

 God has a time for our redemption and salvation.

God has a time for us to build a house for Him to dwell.

God has a time for our sanctification, to become more and more like Jesus.

 His time is now!

 Have you made His time your time this morning?