

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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*What time is it?* I wonder if there has ever been anyone who has not asked this question. This question asks a question about *time*...the subject of many questions in the life of many a person. How much time have I wasted... How much time do I have...where is all the time I should have saved when I used a time saving tool or used a time saving approach to all these time consuming tasks? Time is also the subject of many good stories and more than a few great songs. In my younger days the song *Turn, Turn, Turn* emerged onto the world scene and talked about times and seasons. This tune by a British rock and roll group was quite popular to a passing generation but the concept was not original to the writers of the lyrics. Consider the source of the song as part of God's great story in the musings of the Preacher in Ecclesiastes 3:1: *There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven.* The rest of the chapter expands on this dimension called time. The stunning nugget of truth that is hidden in verse 11 explains a lot to me about why time is so foundational, yet so fleeting, to the human creature. Time matters to us because this temporary life truly is a matter of time. *He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart...* Lately I have been thinking a lot about the question at the beginning... *What time is it?* I was thinking about the question again yesterday when I recalled the words of a song that explains, rather than answers, the question:

*When I was young I dreamed of being older ...Now that I'm older I dreamed of being young.  
I dream of a time when there was no time at all...And I wonder where the time has gone.  
When I was young I dreamed of how I'd spend my life...Now that I'm older I spend my life in dreams.  
The things I've planned I've never done...The things I've done I never planned.  
And all the while it's later than it seems.*

***Time...you're no friend to me. As you go tickin' by...I can hear the enemy.  
Each day you add a number to the things I'll never be...Oh Time, you're no friend to me.  
When I was young the road went on forever...Now that I'm older I see it isn't so.  
Once I took my time, now time has taken me...And no one has to tell me where it goes.  
Time...you're no friend to me. As you go tickin' by...I can hear the enemy.  
Each day you add a number to the things I'll never be...Oh Time, you're no friend to me.***

Reading in Ecclesiastes and listening to a song called *Time* can be rather depressing until you realize that although time binds us in this human existence, it is also a vehicle of God's grace to us. Time heals or hardens our hearts when it comes to sin. We are given the time in God's plan to realize our fleshly and fragile nature and know that there is a God outside of time's domain that beckons us to join Him there. In the place of God's place there is no wearing out or winding down. In God's place, in His presence, all is new...all the time. God has set eternity in the hearts of men so they will desire something and Someone beyond this realm. The Lord is coming soon to bring order to a world ruled by the enemy of our souls. Time is ticking away for us and the enemy as well. We are all appointed to appear before God for judgment. The death sentence imposed by the Lord upon the rebellion of our original human ancestors is given to every son and daughter born since Adam and Eve. But the God who is outside of time has given us time to repent and be renewed. And He has given us Jesus...just in time.

Ask yourself these questions as it pertains to your life...*What time is it...How much time do I have...Do I still have time to respond rightly to God?* The only sure answer I have today is the answer to the last question...If you are reading this letter and the Lord has not returned then yes, you still have time to respond...the time is now...the kingdom of God is near...repent and believe the gospel. Trust Jesus with your life...Trust Him with your death. He wants to give us His life to live. Our life has already been taken by sin. Though our flesh will surely and does surely die...little by little or oh, so suddenly... our spirit life that is connected to God's spirit tells us that there is a time where time will be no more. Eternity is where the life that God has breathed into us is meant to be lived out forever and ever...it's time we learned what time it is...time to live and not die. If the Lord God has breathed the Breath of Life into us, if we have been born by the Spirit of God, it is time we learned to live in the Spirit, unbound by time, longing for Jesus and living His life, right here, right now. Breathe deeply the things of God and live! Time may not be a friend to me...but what a friend we have in Jesus...

Blessings to you,  
Pastor Sam