

# Discussion of "Right on Time"

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[ 0 : 00 ] Jesus is to let us know when we're to let us know when we're to let us know when we're With his brothers, who are his half-brothers, the sons of Mary and Joseph, Jesus has just delivered the bread of life discourse after he had walked on water.

His disciples had witnessed that. He had that moment with Peter. Before that, he had fed the 5,000, which again was more like 20. And so here in John 7-10, Jesus has this encounter with his half-brothers where they are challenging him to go to the Feast of Booths so that he would display himself to them, to the world.

And Jesus says to them that my time has not yet come. Your time is always here. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. Tells them to go to the feast.

He holds on. He goes up later, about midway through the feast. And then that's where we'll pick up next Sunday. Lord willing. Now, if you have your application questions, I have them here.

I'm going to go through those. And the one thing I think we need to keep in mind is that we are dealing with something that is mind-bending. We're talking about the eternality of God.

[ 1 : 48 ] We're talking about the fact that God is sovereign over salvation. But that also we see in Scripture that we have a responsibility. That we are held accountable for the ways that we live in our lives.

For our obedience and our disobedience. And so these two things in Scripture are always being presented to us. And so we know that we are trying to wrap ourselves, our minds around something that is, that something being God.

That is, you know, if we could wrap our minds fully around God, then I think he would cease to be God. I mean, he is, he is unlike any other being that there is.

I mean, he is eternal. There was never a time when God was not. And there never will be a time when God is not. And he is a being who does not exist in time. Time is his creation. Now, if we said that God does exist in time, then really, then he is confined by time.

Which means that time has some kind of power or control over him. And he would cease to be omnipotent. So it cannot be that God is controlled in any way by time. I remember the first time I, this really, you know, was something that I was, started to actually think about.

[ 3 : 03 ] I was reading something by C.S. Lewis. I don't know if it was mere Christianity, but he was describing it as like a piece of paper with the timeline on it, beginning and end.

And God being able to, to look at that time like a piece of paper, like I'm looking at it in front of me and see everything at once. And so we can say that God sees, like I said this morning, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Isaac, Jesus on the cross, you and I simultaneously.

Does that just, you know, yeah, make your mind blow? But so I think the case should be because we're talking about a being who is unlike any other, who is omnipotent, who is timeless and eternal. So the first question of application was to examine your prayers. Are they in the form of orders or expressions of a desire to follow God's will?

Jack has a microphone. But, you know, this one's more for you to think about, too, because I know for me, as I thought about it, I was like, you know, I think sometimes my prayers do take on an order form, though I don't feel like that's what I'm wanting or I'm not thinking that I'm in position to order God around.

[ 4 : 24 ] But if I stop and think about what did I just pray, it's like, that sounds more like an order. Or, you know, God, or it's like, God, I think that, you know, this should happen. Come on, let's like, let's do that.

Why? You have the power to do it. Let's just make it happen. And so I think sometimes we can, if we're not careful, be praying in a way where we're sort of telling God what we think should happen,

not really relying upon his will or his sovereignty, but sort of, in a way, indirectly, what we're saying is, you know, I think that I got it figured out here, Lord, and, you know, all I need is you to put that stamp of approval on it and make it happen.

And you think about how Jesus taught us to pray. You think about when Jesus' prayers were recorded, right? You know, oftentimes you'll see that, and again, he's the Son of God.

He is in the Trinity, is from eternity as well. But his prayers were always coming in the form of, you know, thy will be done, as he taught us, even when he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, yet not my will, but thy will be done.

And I think even when he prayed for the disciples in the upper room, we see that, too, that he's praying for them, but according to God's will. That's what he's desiring.

[ 5 : 45 ] And even what he expresses as his request, they don't take on the form of orders. And so, you know, that's something that I think we need to think about as we pray.

And that's why I encourage you, just as you pray, think about what you're praying and what form is it taking. More of like an order or more of you, you know, underlying motivation being, but yet not my will be done, but thy will be done.

Another thing that's interesting to think about, too, with that is how much time Jesus spent in prayer. I think that's another thing that stuck out to me in my personal Bible study time was just how many hours he would spend in prayer.

Hours. All night into the wee hours of the morning in prayer. You know, and I know, and you guys know, for pastors, if we pray for more than five minutes, it's, well, that was another sermon almost, right, Willard?

And so you think, but Jesus prayed for hours, and he is the son of God, and yet felt it was necessary for him to spend that much time in prayer.

[ 6 : 55 ] And so how much time do we spend in prayer and to examine your prayers? Are they in the form of orders or expressions of a desire to follow God's will? Now, in thinking about that, too, can you think of a group of Christians whose prayers often take the form of orders?

You can think. Okay. Joel Osteen. So we're talking about the health and wealth gospel, which basically is about praying, exercising enough faith, and God is obligated to answer that prayer request.

But again, if we look at Scripture and we look at how Jesus prayed, how he taught us to pray, we don't see that that is, and we read the rest of Scripture, and we know that that is a different gospel. It's not the gospel, right?

We're not praying to try to create heaven on earth for us, but to advance the kingdom of God here on this earth, knowing that our treasure is in heaven. And so, yeah, and I'd encourage you, too, just as you're listening to pastors on the radio or on TV, Jack, can you take a microphone back to us, please?

Listen to how the pastor prays. And even listen to how I pray. And, you know, I wouldn't, I'd be okay if you kindly rebuked me and said, well, Pastor Mike, that sounded like orders this morning, you know?

[ 8 : 17 ] But that's just something that kind of convicted me, too, is am I praying? And basically, my prayers are telling God what he should do, or is my prayers coming in the form of requests, but the underlying motivation is, yet your will be done, Lord.

Okay, go ahead, Wes. As far as talking about the time we spend in prayer, I was at a Promise Keepers once, and they were kind of telling us, it's about exercise, right?

You learn to pray longer. It's not like you just, you're done in 20 seconds. Like, now what am I going to pray about? And so, whenever you do get in, like, groups of people, like you've done different prayer requests on National Day of Prayer and stuff, you might get in groups of three or four or five people, and people start praying, you'll find out that it can go easily 10 minutes or 15 minutes, where it just, and you might pray two or three times in this little group, and it's still something different.

And so, it is a matter of kind of disciplining yourself. Shirley spends a lot of time in prayer every single morning, just close the door. I'm like, I've got to get in there. So, it's a discipline, really.

So, if you want to spend more time in prayer, you just got to get down and do it, give yourself that time, and just do it. And what they were saying at the Promise Keepers, and it's really true, you start finding that you can go longer and longer and longer and longer and not fall asleep and that kind of thing.

[ 9 : 38 ] So, it's just about practice, really. So, if it's something you really want to try to do, just get down and do it. Just try for five minutes, and then you go for 10, just more and more, and it can be done.

Yeah. That's a good comment. I think, okay, Danny, and then Doyleene, Jack. Or since you're already up here by Doyleene, we'll go Doyleene first, and then Mommy. Speaking of the prayers and stuff, I'm not doing it right at the moment, but in the past, when I'm having trouble feeling like I can't focus, or my prayers, whatever, aren't where they should be, I start journaling the prayers, making it a letter to God.

But for me, when I seem to do that, it helps my frame of mind to, for one thing, to keep focus and get my thoughts together, but it also reminds me that my request, the bottom line on all of that, though, should be, Lord, you be glorified in that.

Yeah. And so when you start praying from the perspective that everything you want done needs to also glorify God, or better yet, it better glorify God, it helps change your perspective on how you're praying.

So journaling can help sometimes. If you feel like you're in a rut or you're struggling, write God letters. Yeah, and then you can look back and see how he was at work during those times and how he answered those prayers.

[ 11 : 06 ] What I think I want to make sure that I make clear, too, is talking more about with old orders like ultimatums, either answer this or else, because we should make our requests known to God, right?

That's not an order. I think that we, you know, we make requests. Jesus made requests. Yet again, the underlining motivation wasn't, but if you don't do this, Lord, then I'm, I don't know if I can follow you anymore.

The underlying motivation is, Lord, you know, this is my request yet again. Your will be done. You be glorified in this. That's, that's what the motivation needs to be. So I don't want you to think, well, Master Mike said we can't make requests of God anymore, you know, because that's not at all what I'm saying.

Because I think we've all, we've all had those requests answered, haven't we? We've seen God answer prayers. If you've walked with the Lord long enough, you've seen him answer them almost immediately.

And those give you chills, don't they? Like, wow, you know, how awesome. And then other times you've prayed and it's been a long time, right? And then that prayer gets answered and it's still like, wow.

[ 12 : 13 ] And then other times you've prayed for something and the answer is no. You know, and sometimes I kind of, I've talked with people before who, well, God's just not answering my prayers.

And it's like, well, what were you praying about? Whatever it was. And it's like, well, no is an answer. That is an answer. Oh, I, sorry, Danny, I know you want to, but I was just rambling. But it makes me think of, there's a Garth Brooks song. Garth Brooks, the great Okie from Muscogee? Yukon?

There's a debate. We're going to split. Where was Garth Brooks really from? Yeah, okay. A home of Garth Brooks. They could lie about that, though. So, all right, so wherever he's from, our fellow Oklahoman brother had a famous song that said, I thank God for unanswered prayers.

And I remember talking to Danny about that and I was like, but, you know, he's thanking God in that song or whoever it is, Garth Brooks or it's just a song. But unanswered prayers are answered prayers.

[ 13 : 17 ] They're just answered in a way that maybe you didn't think. So, all of those prayers are answered because no is an answer. Okay. Yeah. Danny? So, I grew up in the midst of the health and wealth.

That's completely what I grew up in. So, whenever I was coming out of that, it was even hard for me to even know how to pray. And so, it just kind of took me a long time of just, like, really having to break down what I had been taught.

And so, I feel like that's something I'm always constantly working on is how to better pray. I don't think we're ever going to completely achieve this level of, you know, I think we should always be open and learning to help better pray.

So, there's a really wise woman at this church here recently that has just really helped me with that. And she doesn't even, she's not even aware that she's helped me so much. But, so if you really use the Lord's Prayer as a framework for your prayer, it starts out with, So, it's helped me if I am, before I even go into any of my requests, I have to acknowledge who God is.

I have to acknowledge, you know, everything. He's all powerful. You know, that he's ultimately, I'm praying because I'm worshiping him. And it helps me to put my, it helps me to humble myself down with whatever I'm asking personally or for other people.

[ 14 : 39 ] It just really helps me to put God up on that pedestal that he should be before I go to him with mine. Good. And that helps with the getting in the right frame of mind.

Why is Jesus, because God is, because we should praise him, because he's worthy of our praise, but it also puts us in the right mind frame for when we do pray. That, you know, God is not mine to order, but I am to obey, you know.

And ultimately, it's his will that I should most desire to be done. Julie, did you hand your hand up?

Okay. Jack, could you take the microphone to Julie, please? Okay.

Okay. You're beautiful. What I've said is that when I, a lot of times when I pray, I do come with, okay, God, here's my laundry list, and here's what I need you to do.

And I found like Danny, if you will reorient and start your prayer with who he is, who he is, and what he does, and the attributes of his character, it's like, well, who else is going to do it?

[ 15 : 53 ] You know, I mean, it's like, because a lot of times I'll be like, I have my agenda, and now I'm going to, I'm going to go do it. And a lot of times he changes that. And so I've just found, as she said, if you just reorient how you start, how you approach him, how you start the approach, that it kind of changes how you approach him with your requests.

I guess is what I'm trying to say. Any other comments? Willard and then Cameron. All this reminds me of a story that Ravi Zacharias told about a young boy, probably Jack's age, that desperately wanted a bicycle.

And so he's listening to a program, a religious program, that his mother is watching on television, and he gets an idea. He said, I went and prayed.

He said, boy, went and prayed. Dear Jesus, you know how desperately I want that bicycle. And you've promised a blessing to me. So I just ask that you give me that bicycle.

Well, nothing happened. He listens to more programming. So he said, well, maybe I need to take a different approach. So he goes and he says, dear God, I claim that bicycle in the name of Jesus.

[ 17 : 22 ] Amen. Amen. And nothing happens. So he's getting kind of desperate here. And then all of a sudden, he sees this little statuette of Mary on the table.

He goes and gets that statuette, and he goes and prays one more time, and he says, Jesus, if you want to see your mother again, that's about how some people pray.

But that just reminded me of that. And back to Cameron, Jack. But I think, you know, for those of you who have the benefit of growing up in the church, as I have, you know, hopefully you've noticed a difference in your, a change in your prayers.

I remember, you know, a big prayer for mine was that a certain toy would be at the store when we got there, and that my parents would be willing to buy it for me, you know. And needless to say, I don't pray like that anymore.

But, all right, Jack, or Cameron. I think, you know, this morning we were talking about, in our Sunday school class a little bit, at least kind of the Holy Spirit and how sometimes, you know, we almost forget about the Holy Spirit, you know, even though it's part of the Trinity.

[ 18 : 31 ] But I think sometimes for me, too, it's like I almost forget I can pray for my prayer life. Like, I can pray for the Holy Spirit to help teach me to fall into His will within my prayer life.

And so I can even pray for my prayer life. I think so many times we, we see other stuff like patience and virtue and wisdom and knowledge, and sometimes we forget that we can pray for that conversation of, how do, how do I best communicate with you?

How do I best, you know, let the Holy Spirit dwell within me to make my prayer life what you need it to be? Good point. I think, you know, an encouragement for those of you next time you pray, too, you know.

Sometimes we don't think about that. Pray that you have a better prayer life. Elsa? Yeah, I just wanted to share a method that I have.

It's called Acts, and it starts with adoration, with praising the attributes of God, which is who He is. And then confession, because many times when we have sin in the midst, it's just like rubble. [ 19 : 42 ] Yeah. It blocks our prayers. And thanksgiving, to have a grateful heart. And finally, it's called supplication. And also, there's this verse, I know it like 90%, if you, if He hears you when you, when you pray, when, I forgot it, when you, He hears you if you pray the word.

Or if you pray, according to His will, He hears you. Yeah. And He gives you the petitions that you have in your heart. Yeah. When I have the privilege to pray the word, I know there's no way to lose in that regard.

Yeah. Good. Thank you, Elsa. Good comments. And I think in thinking about God and how He exists outside of time, a lot of times when we come to God in prayer, for many people, it's because they do have a need immediately, like they're coming to Him for it.

And not to say that you shouldn't do that, but to pray in these ways, as has been mentioned, to remember first who God is. It doesn't have a way of like calming our spirit and clearing our mind, helping us to get focused on what really matters.

And then to remember, you know, God, You have all things under Your control. And so I am going to pray, and I'm going to express these requests, you know, after we do the adoration and the confession and all those other things.

[ 21 : 18 ] They're important in prayer. But then, you know, just that peace of mind that in all things, God has everything under control. Should we pray for our country? Yes. Should we pray for our election?

Yes. Should we pray for, you know, all the different things that are going on in our world right now? COVID, those who are sick? Sick? Absolutely. Absolutely. And we know that God is in control and that God is sovereign, yet does that mean that we just sit back and, you know, come election day be like, well, I'm not going to vote.

Because, you know, whoever wants, whoever God's going to put in position there is going to be in position there. I mean, we know that, yet we still have a responsibility to act. But we'll get there eventually. Let's move on to the next question.

Can I ask you a question about time? Yes. I want to ask a question about time, and I really hope it's not a stupid question.

But because God does exist in light of eternity, that it has no boundaries for him.

[ 22 : 20 ] Do you think the fact that he ordered the day, created time, the day, the night, the seasons, that he did that for us so that we would have some kind of reference to operate in?

Or... Yeah. Well, and to, you know, because we're not, we aren't God, you know? And so, creation is a temporal thing.

The only non-temporal thing is God himself. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. So, there's a lot of ways to answer that question.

And it is a good question. Because, you know, think about, you know, God's purpose for creating in the first place. To give glory to himself. And we're created for that purpose as well. And to worship him.

And, you know, we are bound by time. Yet, you know, God exists outside of it. But he exists right now in our day as well, you know?

[ 23 : 27 ] It's not like he's just out here. He's out here, but he's also in that time span. So, I mean, it's just like, that's a really good question. It's questions that we could really wrestle with for a long time.

I'm just thinking about creation. And why God created. And how much different we are in our limitations as creatures.

As opposed to God who is transcendent and limitless. And it's so hard to wrap our minds around how limitless God is. Because everything we know has some kind of limitations.

Except, you know, and I even think of like space. Space scares me. Because it's like, man, it's so vast and it's so wide. Yet, you know, God has control of all of it.

And, you know, they say it's just the universe keeps expanding. Yet, God knows where those boundaries are. I think God wants us to know just how limited we are.

[ 24 : 24 ] Well, yeah, and that too. That we are, he's worthy of our praise. Because we are limited. What he's done and what he's going to do. Yeah. That gives us the aspect that we need to be.

He really wants you to have that microphone. We need to be, we need to be aware. Yes. Of how short our time is. Yes. So that in a relationship with God or lack thereof, we can do something about it.

Yeah. You know, another thing interesting in reading through, and it's in Luke in my Bible study. But it's there, but it's everywhere. How frequently Jesus tells the people who are around him to have faith.

And how frequently it's their faith. It's their utter dependence upon him. And going to him for healing. Or going to him for whatever. That that's what amazes him. That's what impresses him. That's what he wants. And I think that's part of the, you know, being limited creatures.

We have to have faith. And the one who has no limitations. Expressing our humility and worshiping God who is wholly other. Right?

[ 25 : 27 ] Second question. When are you most tempted to take matters into your own hands and doubt God's sovereignty? When are you most tempted to take matters into your own hands and doubt God's sovereignty?

Wes? And you can speak generally. You know, you don't have to be you personally. Okay, Wes? I think usually it's when it's something that's easier that I've got this under control.

I can't, you know, make someone come to Christ. And I can't make someone do something or whatever. But it's like, oh, I can handle this. I know I can do this on my own.

And tend to not have to trust in God that it's going to happen. It's like, oh, I can get to work on my own tomorrow. It's like, well, what if my car doesn't start? You know, and then I walk out of the, down the street and I twist my ankle. I mean, God could stop me from getting to work if he wanted to, right?

But I'm thinking, I'll take care of this on my own. You know, the whole pull yourself up by the bootstraps thing. I think it's on the simpler things is where you think, I've got this under control and lead the big stuff to God.

[ 26 : 24 ] But there's plenty of times you just need to pray to God for simple things. You know, thank you for that. I woke up this morning and I'm going to make it through breakfast and get to work and things like that.

Yeah, good. Okay, mommy down here, Jack. You ever heard the saying, God only helps those who help themselves? That's not in the Bible. And in fact, it's contrary to the gospel because we cannot earn our salvation.

We cannot help it. We are so helpless that we absolutely are totally dependent upon God for everything, our existence, our salvation, everything else. Okay, Danny? Yes.

There was a time that I had a miscarriage after Jack. And so, you know, that's really hard. And I, Jack would spend a lot of time with Mike's parents when we lived in Kansas City.

And I would purposefully not leave a car seat at their house so they could not take Jack anywhere.

And I wasn't convicted until I was in a Bible study for a while.

[ 27 : 26 ] And I was really convicted that not only was I making an idol out of my child that I'm putting him on this pedestal, and God, you can't protect him as well as I can, but I definitely was not trusting in the sovereignty of God.

So that's something that's always convicted me. And I try to not make such an idol out of my children or put them above the sovereignty of God because ultimately they love him more than I ever could.

Good. Yeah, I think in those moments where we're trying to protect something that we're afraid of losing and we're tempted to try to take matters more into our own hands in those ways, what else? And what other ways are you tempted to take matters into your own hands and endow God's sovereignty, Cameron? I mean, I think this whole time subject plays into that.

I mean, so many times I think, you know, for me it's like I get so busy throughout the week, it's like, oh, I can just handle it. Or, you know, if I come across a situation, I'll just work my way through it.

[ 28 : 39 ] And so often I forget to just take that, you know, quick step back, 10 seconds and breathe and, you know, hey, quick prayer just to settle myself.

But instead I'll be busy and I let life get to me. And so many times we forget to take the time to say, okay, I need to take a step back.

I need to take a breath. I need to look towards God and see, you know, what's his will here? Am I missing something? Is there something I need to do differently?

Is there something I need to focus myself on instead of just letting life kind of fly by? Good. And then Wes over here.

Times when you're tempted to doubt God's sovereignty. I actually thought Cameron was going to go here, but since he didn't, I'll take it. One of the times you might be tempted is talking about time where you're thinking something needs to happen and it's God's timing, not yours.

[ 29 : 43 ] And you're thinking this has to happen soon. I've got to get this thing done. And you're waiting on God and it's not happening because it's not his time. And you're thinking, well, then I just need to, God's not doing, I need to step in and take care of myself, even if it's something difficult.

But just because you're not willing to wait on God and his perfect timing. Yeah. And then I'm ready to go into the examples. I already have three of them right here. You've done your homework.

Yeah. All right. Move on to the second part of the question. Think of those in Scripture who have done the same and how did things go for them. So I thought of Aaron and the golden calf. Okay. And then Jeroboam, he made two golden calves.

Okay. And then I got Moses when he struck the rock instead of talking to it. When he hits it himself, it was frustration, but it didn't end up good for any of those guys when they did that.

Yeah. So talking more about those examples, though, what was the motivation for their doing those things? What caused the doubt in their minds? Why did Aaron make a golden calf?

[ 30 : 46 ] Why did Jeroboam do what he did? Why did Moses lose his temper? Well, technically, Aaron didn't make the calf. He just threw the gold in and out came this. Oh, yeah. Yeah. That was great. I don't know what happened.

The Bible is funny when you read it. It says, I just threw the gold in and out came this. Out came this calf. I think what we know is because they're waiting all those days, 40 days, Moses up on the mountain.

He's not coming back. Again, I guess that's that timing thing. It's like, he should have been back by now. So let's take care of matters on our own and make our own idol, our own God, you know, which is teaching Sunday school class all the time.

And Alistair Begg talks about people would make these idols and they'd stick it up on their mantle and they would fall over. So then they would have to use chains to hold their God, keep him from falling over and stuff.

And it's just so ridiculous to think that if you're making it, then you're the God, not that's the thing. It's just crazy to think you could build something on your own and make it a God. So in two of those, a lack of patience, right, and a fear of the people, you know, yeah, frustration.

[ 31 : 50 ] Moses, you know, just had enough. And he was tired of being, you know, patient with these people who had brought him through so much. And, you know, Moses was gone and the people were starting to get out of control and they were ready to move on.

What does Aaron do? Well, he gives in to what they wanted because, you know, not being patient for Moses to return in fear of the people. Jack?

Like Wes said, when idols kept falling over, it's kind of like they kept failing and failing and failing and failing and they're never going to come and do what you want them to do.

Yeah, because they're not real, right? Saul is one who I thought of. I remember Saul and he's the king and he looks at the part and the king that the people wanted.

And then he's waiting for Samuel to come to make the sacrifices before they go into battle. And what does he see? The people are starting to get afraid. And so they're leaving the battlefield.

[ 32 : 49 ] And so he takes matters into his own hands and he thinks, well, I'll perform the sacrifices. And right as he does that, here comes Samuel who informs him that, you know, now he's no longer going to be the king.

Though that doesn't happen immediately. In God's eyes, it had. And, you know, David would be the king now. So, again, another example where not being patient and fearing people. And I think maybe that's part of when we're most tempted to doubt God's sovereignty is that we're, we aren't patient in waiting.

And maybe we're, and then we grow fearful of either people or circumstances and to the point where those things look bigger than God too.

Impatience is a product of being people of time. Yeah. Doyleen, that's a good point. Because you see how patient God is with people, right?

With Israel and the Old Testament. Yeah. Okay. Doyleen? Well, I just thought I'd bring in a female example. Okay, good. Sarah. Yeah.

[ 33 : 59 ] Abraham's wife. Yeah. Yeah. And she wanted a child and she didn't, she doubted, she believed in God but yet thought she better help him along. And, you know, they ended up with her handmaiden and then that son who now is a nation that is against Israel and all that.

And, you know, she came around and she trusts God in the end. And, you know, she's a great lady for us to learn from. But there was a season in her life there that she had to.

Yeah. Good example. Manipulate things to help God along. And another example we're taking matters into your own hands. They were getting old. Yeah. Well, yeah, they were getting old.

Yep. That's true. Another good example. So, all this to say that when we see people doing that, and again, though, where this is kind of mind-bending is, you know, it's still God who is sovereign over these events as well.

Yet they're responsible. But when they take matters into their own hands, it doesn't go well. It just doesn't ever go well. It's so much better to be patient.

[ 35 : 06 ] I see that a lot with Joshua as he was trying to take the promised land. Yeah. Yeah. Joshua in the promised land. It was kind of the opposite. He would kind of be like, oh, well, we won that one. And so he'd go into the next one and not having given God a second thought, and they lose 5,000 men.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Sometimes they can, things can be going so well. It's like, well, let's just rush right in again, you know, and still remembering that, you know, we're following God.

He's not following us. Let's move on to question three. How should believers balance God's sovereignty with their responsibility to live obediently to him?

All right.

Mike. This is the time, I think, when, like Willard says, the time factor for we humans come into play, I think, more than anything else.

[ 36 : 20 ] Because we are limited, you know, what is man given so many years to live. And I always, I say, oh, I always, I feel like that God has given me the responsibility to do something.

My time is limited, so I need to get it done. And so, God, you understand that. This is my time limit. I'm getting old. I can't do this anymore.

Let's get this done now. And so, that's the balance that I think is hard sometimes is when we realize that even though I am limited on the time that I have, the time that I'm willing to give, by being obedient to him, then I can stretch that time.

And whatever he gives me to do, he will provide the time for that to happen. And I'm like Willard.

The older I get, the more I see that, you know, how silly was it for me to think that I had to do this and had to get it done because God provides the time for it to get done.

Yeah. Anybody else? Wes, how should believers balance God's sovereignty with their responsibility to live obediently to him?

[ 37 : 44 ] Wes in the back, Jack. I thought it was a trick question because in the end, we have the responsibility to live obediently anyway.

So, as far as a balance, it's not like I'm going to be obedient now and then now I don't have to be obedient. We're always supposed to be obedient. We're doing what we're supposed to be doing.

So, nice try, but you didn't get me on that.

I'll clarify the question a little bit better. Because you're, yes, we should always be obedient. I guess what I'm meaning, what I'm trying to get you to think about, and me too, is, you know, the Bible, as we've read all those scriptures this morning about how God has declared the end from the beginning, how he's in control over time, how nothing happens outside of his will, and how ultimately everything will culminate exactly how he wants it to.

You know, he knows when the day and the moment, precisely when Jesus will return. And, you know, we've seen in Revelation the things that we can expect and other things that we see in the New Testament as well throughout Scripture of what the end will be like.

And so we know that nothing can frustrate God's plans. You know, there is nothing that's going to prevent, I believe, our Lord's coming back.

[ 39 : 13 ] And I think even delay it. Yet we see Scripture, like I think of your lesson, Willard, about how we are to hasten the day. You know, how we are to live our lives eagerly anticipating that day and hoping that it's soon and sharing the gospel.

In hopes that we will take the gospel to the end of the world and hasten that day. So it's like it's those two things. And how do we, I don't know if balance is the right word, but we know that God is in control.

Yet I can't just sit back and be like, well, Lord, you know, I see that your church is going to be gathered. And there are going to be people from every nation, every tribe, every tongue, every language.

And so I know that that's going to happen. So why do I have to share the gospel with anybody? I mean, that's where I think some people have danger. They have gotten into that danger zone where then we, but we see so many Scriptures.

We see Matthew 28. You go, therefore, and make disciples. The Lord desires to use us in that. And so even with like, and so what I'm trying to say is we can't get to the point where we're just like, well, whatever I do here doesn't matter.

[ 40 : 23 ] And so that's why I'm trying to say, you know, we live obediently and we should and we seek for that. We know that God has determined to allow, you know, us to play a part in his divine plan.

And so balancing it in that way, I know the victory that's awaiting and I thank God for that. But I know that I have a responsibility and will give an account for my life.

All right, Willard and then Cameron. Jack, thank you. Oh, did you? Like you said, when you know he's going to come back and when I wake up every morning, I'm like, is he here yet?

Is he here yet? Is he here yet? Excuse me. Yeah. Yeah, we should wake up every morning like that, right? I think obedience has to have its root in our sensitivity to the Spirit of God.

What did Jesus do every day? He prayed to seek the Father's will. Father, what do you want me to do? What do you want to accomplish for me today?

[ 41 : 35 ] And he followed those directions. Our life needs to be the same. To be sensitive enough in our walk with God to know what the Spirit of God is inclining us to do and just do it.

That's obedience. You know, and, you know, that's the sovereignty of God fits right into that because he's the one that is going to reveal to us in our heart and our mind through the Scriptures what it is he wants to accomplish and where he's directing us and leading us today.

Our problem is when we set ourselves goals, we have an inclination to do those things in the power of the flesh.

You know, you know, you know, you need to set a goal for yourself to win X number of people to the Lord each week.

All right, so I'm going to go out there and I'm going to do what I can to do that. And I end up doing it in my power of the flesh instead of under the direction of the Spirit of God.

[ 42 : 44 ] And that's the danger we have. And a lot of the whole sphere of this thing, if we're not careful. Yeah. Yeah. Good. Good. Good insights.

Cameron? I think one of my favorite quotes, and I can't remember if it was Ray Comfort, I think. He said, if people that were going to come to Christ were marked with a stripe on their back, my job would be to just go around lifting shirts.

Yeah. But that's not how it works. Yeah. And so, you know, we're talking about, I think, the parable of the sower. I can't remember if it was last week, a couple weeks ago in Sunday school.

And when you think about that parable, I don't remember a spectator just sitting there watching God spread seeds and, you know, hoping. You know, we're not called to sit in a corner and just let God, you know, although he could magically make it all work.

But that's not what, I mean, we have it on the banners right behind you. Go. We're called to go. We're not called to become Christians and then just become a hermit hiding in our houses for the rest of our lives.

[ 43 : 51 ] You know, when you look at Jesus' ministry, he knows he's going to end up on the cross, yet he's not sitting in a cave until it's his time to go be the sacrificial lamb.

You know, he's out. He's reaching the people. He's spreading the word. He's doing everything he can to teach and make disciples. And, you know, he should be the one we look at as the perfect example to follow.

And nowhere in Scripture is he just sitting idly by going, well, I just hope I don't die today. You know, he's constantly seeking the will of the Father, praying, using his time to further the kingdom, not just going, well, it's God's sovereignty, so I'll just sit back and let it happen.

Yeah. Yeah. Good. Good. And so in John 7, 10, when Jesus is talking about time, his time has not yet come.

And then in my study for that, I was looking at D.A. Carson's commentary and the, like I talked about this morning, the three Greek words that John uses for time.

[ 44 : 59 ] And hour or aura is really when John uses that one in his gospel. What Jesus is talking about is the hour or the time of the cross. But then this is a, this is Kairos when Jesus is talking about his time in John chapter 7 here.

In verse 6, my time has not yet come. And he's really talking about the fact that his, the time for him to go to the feast. And I can show you Carson's work on that and it's pretty convincing.

And that's what he's really talking about. The time, I'll go to the feast when it's time for me to go to the feast, you know. And, and knowing too that the Jews were seeking to kill him.

And so this is the balance I see too is, you know, the time, the hour was coming. And Jesus knew that hour was coming. That he had come, that he would die on the cross. And he knew that that hour was coming.

There's nothing that was going to prevent that hour from coming. Yet, back here, he knows that they're trying to kill him. You know, they want to seize him and they want to kill him. And yet he's still, as the son of God, knowing and, and, and, and following God's will and time frame.

[ 46 : 09 ] And it seems like Carson says that he waits because those roads were going to be clear. And he was going to be able to go into Jerusalem and be able to stand up and say what he needed to say without those other distractions.

So, you know, we still see that responsibility. That hour is going to come, you know, even if there was somebody on the street. You know what I'm saying? I hope you understand what I'm saying is that that hour was going to come.

But he still made sure that he was operating according to that timetable. I mean, in other words, he wasn't just like, well, you know, I'm going to, I know I'm not going to die today.

And, you know, and there would be times where they would seize him, seize him, and he would go right through them. Right? And so we see that too. But I guess what I'm trying to say is he's still, and I guess what I'm trying to say, I've said that a lot, reckless, reckless living.

You know, we're not just like, well, I know, because that's putting God to the test, right? Well, I know that the Bible says that the Lord knows my days from before I was formed in my mother's womb.

[ 47 : 09 ] And so let's go jump out of an airplane today, right? Or anything like that. I guess I hope you know what I'm saying. I mean, we still, that's where we find that balance. I know that when my time comes, when all of our times come, it will be according to the divine plan of God.

Yet, we're not, we're going to live obediently. We're going to live responsibly. We're going to live according to what God's word says. We do have a command from him to do so.

Okay. I hope I haven't, I hope everybody's tracking with that. I mean, it's just like, this is mind warping. All right, Wes, last comment, and then we'll pray. Well, I was going to say, also, when Jesus, when he knew he was going to be on the cross, it had a lot to do with the time of day with the Passover lamb.

Yeah, exactly. All that was, he could have gone in there early and they might have tried to just assassinate him at the gate or something. So, it was, Kronos, it was important that way, too, as far as when it really did happen.

But that gets back to the appropriate time that you were talking about this morning, the chiros. Like, now is the time. Not necessarily at 630, but kind of at that, too, because it had to be at the correct time when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed and all that kind of stuff, because he was, you know, foreshadowing all that.

[ 48 : 26 ] It all happened the same way. He is the sacrificial lamb. Yeah. It takes away the sin of the world. Good. So, I'll just boil down to, again, like that main point.

God wants us to know that he's sovereign and divine over time, because that helps us a lot, doesn't it? Especially in this time that we're living in, in this year, with everything that's happening and going on in our country, that we can trust that no matter what happens, God is sovereign.

God is in control. God is in control.

We know that this world is hard to live in, that's fallen under the curse of sin, and we know that we're fallen, too. And so, I think that's why it's so important that God wants us to know, you know, your times.

Like David said, my days are in his hand. My times are in his hand. And to trust in that. I think he really, really wants us to trust in that. In between sovereignty and obedience is mission.

[ 49 : 49 ] Mission. Mission to the sovereignty. To the obedience. In between sovereignty and obedience is mission, is what Willard said, if you didn't hear that.

Good, man. You're coming up with all kinds of... It's sitting up close in the face. Yeah, see what it does for you? All you back row Baptists, yeah, I mean, you're missing out.

All right, let's pray. Lord God, thank you for this time that we've had to gather and to sharpen one another using your word as that object, that object that sharpens us, Lord, as we dig into what your word says and as we think about how you exist outside of time, how you are eternal and transcendent and that you are not bound by time, yet you are in our time, Lord, that you hear our prayers and you know us and you see us right now in our time.

And, Lord, I pray that for each of us as we, you know, look at how our Lord lived here on the earth and his ministry and how he recognized that.

In the same way, Lord, too, that we would trust in your sovereignty, that we would know that no matter what happens in our nation, in our world, that you are behind the controls, and that, Lord, as your word says, you work all things together for the good, that in the end, Christ will return.

[ 51 : 18 ] In the end, you will call your church out of this world. Lord, we will live with you eternally, completely sinless in your presence forever.

And so, God, I pray that for each of us, we would just live our present days in light of that future certainty. And that, Lord, as well, we would just make the most of our days.

That, as Willard mentioned, that we would see our lives that you've given us as one not belonging to us, certainly our salvation being something that we could never work for or earn.

That is also a gift from you. And so, Lord, that we would use these lives that you've given us to make much of Christ and to speak much of Christ. So help us to do that, especially during these days where so many of the unbelieving world, they're so uncertain.

And they live in fear, and they live in doubt, and they live in anxiety and stress. And we see that, Lord, in our neighbors, in our coworkers, in our own families.

[ 52 : 26 ] And so help us, Lord, to be those who know that we have our foundation built upon the rock. And that when the winds come and beat against us, just as they do them, yet, Lord, we know still we will stand, not because of who we are, but because of who Christ is.

And so, God, we pray that you would just be with us as we go into birthday fellowship, as we go into this week. Lord, help us to be mindful of these things, to be prayerful of these things, and seek to be used by you to let our light shine, that people would see that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.

And it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Thank you.