

Setting Your Direction For Life

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[0 : 00] Where are you? We can think of this in a lot of different kinds of ways. Time wise you've entered a new year. The old is gone. You have to start using 2023 now when you write a date down. You've got to kind of get the brain into gear on that don't you?

Things have changed time wise. What about spiritually so? Where are you? Are you on the right track? When you look back to a year ago, where are you compared with back then? Are you growing? Are you more spiritual or less so? Are you closer to the Lord or less so?

So today is a good time to reflect, isn't it? On this question, where are you? And to think also of the way forward, the way ahead. Where are you going? Where are you going this year ahead? Are you going to serve the Lord?

Well, this time of year, people make New Year's resolutions, don't they? It's a new year for all of us. I urge you of this theme of making some preparations. Make some preparations.

Really, New Year's is a time we look back. We reflect on where we were. Back in time, we consider, have I grown since the last 1st of January? Have I grown? Have I grown more in my spiritual life? Have I learnt more of the Word of God?

[1 : 34] How is my prayer life? How is my prayer life? How have I served or not served? How is my heart? With God, is it colder? Has it grown harder? What has changed? If anything, have I been on the right track? Where am I? Am I spiritually stronger or less so? Maybe I've grown weaker. Let's be honest.

Maybe where I'm lost. Maybe where I am is the right track, but I've gone slower. I've taken my foot off the pedal spiritually. My spiritual life is weaker. Am I taking all the opportunities to fellowship that I can? Or am I just settling for the least? Am I doing the minimal? Or am I wanting to go deeper, to grow stronger? Where am I? Here we stand at a new milestone, really, isn't it?

And it's a time for New Year's resolutions. Where are we? We look at where we stand, where we are. We look at the past, we look at the present, and we look ahead at the future.

What lies ahead? Are things going to be any different a year from now, when it's the next 1st of January, if we have that long? And we look at our families, our children. Where are they? Where will they be?

I know I was just taking time lately to look up some old photos on my computer, and it was going, you know, this time last year, this time seven years ago. And I think some of my grandchildren were, like, down here, and now they're up here.

[3 : 15] And we think, time flies, doesn't it? Where are we going to be a year from now, our children, our grandchildren? They're learning from us, aren't they? From our example, where are you?

Often it's a time people, as I say, can make a New Year's resolution, or maybe two. Maybe they'll decide to drop some things and take up some new things in their lives.

Today can be a good time to make a resolution, to take stock, to decide where we want to go. Jonathan Edwards had a whole list of resolutions.

I'm resolved, I'm resolved, I'm resolved. You can look it up on the internet, it's quite interesting, what he resolved. What he said, I'm decided, I'm resolved, I'm resolved to do this.

I'm going to determine to do this. The Bible says to examine yourselves. What way are we going? Maybe we need to change track. There's things that we'd like to change, I know.

[4 : 14] For some, it could be a time to change. Maybe some would say, I'm going to stop smoking, stop drinking. I'm going to decide to eat better, to get in shape.

I could do with some of that. To work at something important, to make some changes, a New Year's resolution. Fact is though, most New Year's resolutions last until January the 2nd.

Question is, how can you make 2023 the best year ever? It's always a good time to make some commitments that really count. So to decide to choose what's good, to get rid of some things,

what's no good in our lives.

So I'm speaking on that theme today. I want to urge you to resolution, to make some decisions, to make some preparations.

The Bible says this, it says, prepare to meet thy God. You can make 2023 the year that you decide to follow Jesus. To get ready for eternity.

[5 : 21] To go forward spiritually. To recommit, to decide within yourself, prayerfully with God. To prayerfully commit, to recommit, to decide, to trust the Lord.

You can make a fresh start. One day we're going to meet our God. We're going to meet him. Face to face. And that's not something we need to anticipate with trepidation, but with anticipation.

With joyful anticipation. The Bible says prepare, prepare. The Bible talks a lot about this theme of preparing. It talks about preparing the heart.

People want to change for the better. Now the number one best way to change is get saved. Get saved. Get saved. Get saved. I know there's some that attend, that they've confessed.

They've yet to trust Christ. They've yet to be saved. Thank God some have decided to follow Jesus. We thank God some in our number here right now.

[6 : 27] It took a while to decide. It's an important decision. You need to make it prayerfully. You need to make it decisively. To decide to follow Jesus. Number one. Get saved.

And of course we think of scriptures like this one. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. Old things have passed away. Behold all things have become new. That's the very best decision.

The best resolution that you can make is to trust Christ. To be made a brand new creature. A new creation. So one of the best things we can do. The best. The first most. Foremost thing is to get saved.

Number one. Perhaps today is that day for you. One of the best things we can all do is repent. To take stock of the past. To take steps of a new life. To have a heart change.

Some of you have yet to firmly trust the Lord. Today would be a day. A great day to say I want to follow Jesus. It's always a good time to make a heartfelt commitment to follow the Lord Jesus.

[7 : 25] And it's more than just turning over a new leaf. As some would kind of resolve to make themselves a better person. No this is to make yourself a brand new. This is for God to make you a brand new person.

Yeah. Not turning over a new leaf. Not a reformation of your own doing. I urge you. Make this new year a turning point. Spiritually. Where are you?

Are you where God wants you to be? The best place to be is in the centre of God's will, isn't it? Am I in the centre of God's will? Ask yourself that. Are you ready for eternity?

Ready to meet your maker? Who knows? Some of you will transfer from time into eternity. I look back on some old church photos and I think, well, they've gone.

They've gone. They've gone. They've gone. I believe they've gone up, not down. But they've gone. They've gone. They're not with us now. You know, and I don't say that flippantly because it hurts us to think of parting and of loss of loved ones.

[8 : 24] I know that. The parting of loved ones of our number have gone on. But yeah, we have a rejoicing that they've gone to be with the Lord. They've been promoted. But the fact is, some of you could transfer from time into eternity in 2023.

That's a gripping thought, isn't it? That's a glad thought. If you're saved, it's a glad thought. But are you ready is the question. Are you ready? It's time to choose. And we see, as Joshua urged in his day of the number before him, as they were at a decision point.

They could choose Baal or they could choose the Lord. And he said, it's time to make a choice. He says, if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve.

Whether the gods which your father served that were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua made a commitment there, didn't he? Choose today. Today. This day. A New Year's day is a time we look forward. We look ahead.

[9 : 39] We think of what lies ahead. Choose a change of heart, of life. Let God affect that change in you by his spirit. We think of what lies ahead and we want to make preparations for that.

Friends, there's things lying ahead of us that we don't know what's going to hit us. Some of it, we don't know what's going to happen. Really, we don't know what's going to happen. One thing's for

sure, we know the return of Christ is closer today than it was yesterday.

The Bible urges us to prepare. I think of some scriptures like these ones. As it says in Joel 3 verse 9, it says, Prepare war.

Wake up the mighty man. Let all the men of war draw near. In 1 Corinthians 14, it tells of the trumpet sound and that if it's an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

We need some certain sounds. We need to hear the word of God. We need to hear it certainly and clearly. We need to prepare war. We need to prepare for battle. Friends, I want to tell you today that there's a battle ahead of us.

[10 : 44] This year. This year ahead. Now, I've heard some prophesy about 2023 and it's quite faulty to affect some kind of latter-day prophecy.

We can only say what the word of God says because thus saith the Lord is what this book says. And it says prepare war. It says prepare for battle. Friends, wake up the mighty men.

Wake up the mighty men. Now, of late, we're doing a survey. It's gathering your thoughts, giving me some ideas and your feedback and your helpful, constructive and critical feedback, which is good. We've done a survey about the church. It's still ongoing. You might have got an email or through social media. I'm not meant to resort to worldly tactics or such things, but I'm after some honest feedback because that will help me.

It will help us as a church. And thank you for those who have written in some of their feedback. Now, I'm only just starting to filter through and gather some of the comments people have made. And please keep feeding it in.

[11 : 46] Please return your response. We've got this time to respond. Helps me to know where you're at, where you're gauging, where the church is at. Where are you? Where is the church?

Because you are the church. Where are you? And someone wrote this. In effect, these were the words that someone wrote. Where are the men?

I think they are right on. There's some men missing. There's some men not standing in the gap. I think they're right on. As I say, I've been getting some frank and honest feedback.

I need to hear that. Hard truths. This church needs work. When I sent out the survey, I thought, well, I'll get lots of pats on the back and praise and positive feedback.

And yeah, everything's going fine and dandy and rosy. But I need to hear some hard truths. This church needs work. This church needs work.

[12 : 47] Where are the mighty men? Where are the mighty men? Wake up the mighty men, it says. I think, where are the mighty men?

I think they're asleep. I should have got a little picture of a life being at normal or something. You know, there's someone just lounging back and just, you know, snoozing in the hammock on the beach.

Wouldn't that be nice? Where are the mighty men? I think they're asleep. They need to be woken up. They need the sheet ripped off.

But I think the mighty men are asleep, friends. I think the mighty men are asleep. Where are the men? When there's work to do, where are the men? We have some mighty men amongst us. I really believe that.

You're mighty men here. I'm not meaning to condemn or put you down, but there's hard truths. I need to hear. You need to hear. There are some mighty men amongst us, but they are sleeping.

[13 : 53] Prepare. In other words, get ready. There's a war on. There's a battle on. Think of it for yourself. Have you gone to sleep spiritually?

Look, maybe it's the pastor's fault. It's my fault. I'm not stirring you enough. I'm not challenging you, provoking you enough. I'm not being honest enough with you.

Where am I? Where are you? Let me be honest. I've had some honest feedback. Keep those survey responses coming, please. Let me be honest with you.

As we look back, as we look back, where we were, where we were a year ago, two years ago, some of you have grown. Sadly, some of you have grown less spiritually.

You've grown colder. You've grown sleepier. You've grown slower. Things need to change in me, in us. It's a good time to wake up the mighty men this morning.

[14 : 56] Can I wake you up this morning? Wake me up. It's a good time to make some changes for the better, for the better in our life, for the better in our church. And it's time to choose our priorities.

Where are we? We all need to stop and take stock of our lives to resolve to change things. Are we living according to his will? The Bible tells us this. It says, whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Does the glory of God count for us in the decisions that we make, the day-to-day practicalities, in the way that we choose to go?

Where are you? Do you care about the glory of God? And let that guide your decisions. Does the glory of God feature in your decision-making filter? The Bible tells us that life is a vapour.

Here today and gone tomorrow, and so we must be very careful how we live. How many of us aren't going to see 2024? This is a reality.

[15:56] How much window of time have we got left? This may be your last year on earth. That's a fact. It could be.

It's a reality. How about your relationship with God through Jesus Christ? Is it strong? Don't you want it to be stronger? Can we make that resolution, that affirmation?

Now would be a good time to decide to be stronger for the Lord, to be more fervent, to be closer to the Lord, to take his path, to follow Jesus, to let him decide what way you go for your future, that it will all be to the glory of God.

Now would be a good time to take care of your past and bring forgiveness and healing of the stuff that's holding you, the stuff that's snagging you. Now would be a good time to let it go.

Now is a good time to put the Lord Jesus at the top of your priority list instead of just paying him a casual interest. And I'm saying this to me. I'm not condemning. This is an urging that's from my heart.

[17:02] I think it's from God's heart that we establish our priorities, that whatever we do, it's going to be to the glory of God. As we make decisions for the life ahead, people are wasting their lives in inconsequential things.

And life gets petered away in little pieces, doesn't it? Where it just goes and it's gone, another day, gone, gone, gone. Wasted, mostly.

I'm saying for myself. Inconsequential things. And yet eternity is only moments away. Where are you? Make the most of your time for God.

You've only got so much of it. Really it's the most precious commodity, isn't it? It's because it's a finite commodity, time. And it's like sand through the hourglass.

So are the days of our lives. I just love that one. I think that's very fitting. Let Christ be at the center of your decisions that you make.

[18:02] The way you spend your time. The way you relate with others. Think of souls. Ever-living souls. The souls that you have. Your family. Your children. Your loved ones. Your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Let's love one another. Give God first place in your life. In each new day. Think of it. For today is a decision moment. That you want to give God of your best.

That you want to pray and read the word of God more. That you want to grow stronger in your faith. And live your life more for him. For his glory. That you can commit your home, your relationships to Christ.

What about our church and its future? We can look back and say, hitherto hath the Lord helped us. There were risks and decisions that we made that were hard.

There were risky decisions. But God enabled and provided. How can we trust God for what lies ahead? Yet future. There's still big decisions. Big decisions.

[19:02] Just weeks away. How can we trust God for what lies ahead? Joshua and Caleb looked ahead and they saw the blessings of the promised land.

The others looked and they saw giants. And they got scared. And they backtracked. We're at another milestone in our journey.

And can we trust God for his help? And go forward in faith even though there's much that could discourage us? Will we stand fast and preach the truth? Or will we become just another ear tickling church?

This has been true back in Bible days. We see of the disciples. They said to our Lord that people are getting offended with what you're saying. The disciples told our Lord, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended?

After they heard this saying. There's a lot of talk about offending today, isn't there? Oh, you don't offend. Tolerance. Tolerance is the greatest virtue now.

[20 : 09] Accommodation. Oh, you don't offend anybody. And of course, church growth experts would say the pastor must be very, very sensitive and careful and non-offensive.

Sermons must be very comforting and pleasant and soft. There's a place for that. But yet there's a place for offending.

If the truth offends, let it offend. In other words, they're telling our Lord here, tone it down, tone it down, Lord. Tone it down. You might offend somebody. But we need hard truths.

We need hard truths. If we're asleep, we need to be woken up. We don't want to be pulling punches. We need to hear the truth and we need to act upon it. And what's more, act upon it.

Yes. We have need of courage. Wake up the mighty men. Prepare war, it says. Prepare for battle, it says. What's ahead of us, brothers and sisters, in this planet of ours?

[21 : 15] We have need to stand fast. Someone has said this. The two greatest enemies of time are regrets for things we did in the past and worries about what will happen to us in the future.

We need not live in the past or in the future, but live in the present. Where are you? Where are you going to be? Will you have grown if we are to meet together again in this place in one year from now?

Would we ask the question, have I grown? Will it be that you can say, yes, I decided to get back on track. I decided to put my foot on the accelerator spiritually.

I have grown. I'm serving God more than I was then. I am using my spiritual gifts for the glory of God. I am one of the mighty men who's woken up. God's woken me up.

Today would be a good day. A good day to resolve. To be that man. To do that. To make those necessary changes. To make a New Year's resolution. Don't keep putting it off to get right with God.

[22 : 17] Get saved. And get serving. It's time to prepare ourselves. Get ready for what lies ahead. Think of what lies ahead.

I've seen some crazy things lately. You might have seen such things too. In fact, I made a little advert for the church. Just kind of tongue in cheek. Of an artificial intelligence person.

Spruiking about church reunion. It was an artificial intelligence person. And you can pick numbers of them. In fact, this program I've got hold of now. It can take my face and put it on a person.

And my voice and put it into this person. And I can type some things. And it will make me say those things. Or you as well. Artificial intelligence is crazy stuff.

I know my son is really into computers. And he was showing me some amazing things. How they can generate pictures of you that have just come out of the artificial intelligence.

[23 : 19] In different settings and scenes with different expressions. And it's mind boggling. What lies ahead? Get ready. Prepare yourselves.

Now some of this stuff is frightening really, isn't it? We know these deep fakes where they can get presidents to say, I've declared martial law. Or I've declared war on this country or that country.

But you can't believe these videos anymore. Because it's all conjured up. Artificial intelligence.

What's next? They're saying that many jobs are going to be replaced by robots.

I've seen some pictures of shopping without checkouts. It's just grab and go. You get your trolley. And you put your veggies on. There's a scale on the trolley.

And it weighs them. And it gives you the cost. And you've already put your credit card in. You just put all your shopping in the trolley. And you just grab and go. You just wheel it out.

[24 : 15] You don't go through the cashier. You don't go through checkouts. You don't have to talk to a single human being. You just put your stuff in the trolley. Grab and go. Just walk out, it's called.

Shopping without a checkout. This is the world. This is the world we get. This is the world now. It's already. Woolworths in South Australia are starting to roll it out. Even in our state.

Technology is ramping up. We don't know what lies ahead. There's constant surveillance. Constant surveillance. There's more and more censorship. That churches like ours can be black banned and wiped off the internet and deleted at a stroke of someone's keystroke.

We've got to prepare for some things, brothers and sisters. We've got to prepare for more climate change, they say. Oh, so scary.

Climate change. They're talking about artificially dimming the sun now. They're talking about artificially dimming the sun now. Sending up some big scheme to somehow block the sun or darken the sun's rays.

[25 : 22] Who knows what that's going to bring? A new ice age. Who knows? Get ready. I say get ready. I say get ready. Jesus is coming. Amen.

That's a good thing. That's a good thing. And Matthew 24, 44, it says, Our Lord says, Be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man coming.

Whatever your eschatological view, Jesus is coming. Get ready. Amen. Can you say amen to that? No matter what your concept is of the timing of these coming events, one thing is for sure, Jesus is coming.

Get ready. You need to get ready. You need to be prepared. Get prepared. The Lord says it's going to happen in such an hour as you think not. Get prepared. Spiritually prepared.

You and your family. Whatever it takes, get ready. Another need for preparation is to be ready with your testimony. Peter writes this. He says, But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

[26 : 34] I know some of you have been saying, Pastor, I want to come on the witnessing team. I want to come out door knocking. Thank God for you. Need more people to say, yes, count me in. I'm in.

See, Brother Peter Gregory, he'll give you the full training. Amen. Count me in. I'm ready. I'm ready to give an answer. Friends, people, we need to be ready to give an answer.

We need to give our testimony. Paul says in Romans 1.15, So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel. I'm ready to preach the gospel. And that's just not for preachers.

It's for all of us. It's for every one of us. He says, go ye and preach the gospel. Go ye and preach.

Go ye and give the message of the good news. Friends, we've got to be ready to give an answer.

We've got to be ready to witness. We've got to be ready to share our love for Christ, to witness for Christ. Get ready. Another area that we need to get ready to be prepared is to serve God.

[27 : 33] 2 Timothy 2.21, Paul tells Timothy, talking of these vessels, he says, If any man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel, a container, this receptacle, this clay jar unto honour, this vessel, sanctified, made holy, in other words, meat for the master's use.

It means useful, in other words, for the master to use. And prepared unto every good work. It's saying, let a man get ready.

Get right. Get holy. Get sanctified. Be ready for the master to use. He wants to use you. Brother. Sister. He wants to use you. Be ready.

Be meat for the master's use. It means useful. Be a useful Christian. And always get used of God. People will use you up. God wants you to use you for his glory.

Unto his glory. I know some of you have been talking about telling your testimony. And I'm going to do a video of some of you there. They've said, I want you to video my testimony, Pastor. So that I can get it on the internet.

[28 : 39] And I can kind of share my testimony with others. Tell what good things God has done in my life. Be good to do that. Have some little video clips of your testimony. What's God done for you?

Give an answer. The reason for the hope that is in you. Be a useful Christian. Be used of God. What's stopping you from being engaged in the church? And this is one of the questions in the survey.

One thing that's coming through in some of the survey results. As far as they've got about 30 people responded so far. And the most of you are saying, I'm not engaged. We admit that.

I'm not engaged. That's a problem. That is a big, big problem in this church. That's a huge problem. If you're not engaged. Is it my fault?

What's stopping you? What's stopping you? I'm not engaged, Pastor. What's hindering you from serving? What's stopping you? Most of us are not engaged and we admit that.

[29 : 41] This needs to change. What is stopping you? Get ready for the Master's use. Brother, sister, you might not have filled out your survey yet. You might be afraid to now. I'm not engaged.

But do you want to be? Do you want to be engaged? Do you want to be activated? Do you want God to use you? Do you want to be useful? Do you want to be prepared unto every good work?

What is stopping you? Stopping you. Get ready for the Master's use. In other words, be where the Master wants you to be.

Be where the Master can use you. Get to the meetings. That would be the basic thing. Surely that. Get to fellowship. Get to Bible study. That would be a good idea. Get to outreach. That would be a good idea. Get going. Are you prepared? Prepared for the Master to use you. If not, why not?

[30 : 43] How are you getting stuck? How can I help you get unstuck? Think of that children's proverb of the characters getting stuck in the bitumen or whatever it was.

They're just getting stuck and then other people are getting stuck as well. Everyone's getting stuck. How are you getting stuck? What's getting in the way for you? Time is rushing by and some of you are getting grey hairs before you are activating for God.

Let's be honest. Brother, stop waiting. Brother, sister, you're getting grey hairs before you've even started to serve God.

What are you doing? Why are you not working? Why are you not activated? I'm speaking to myself too. As a younger man, I could have made excuses too. And I did for some time.

Like, I'm too busy. You know, I've got this and that. I'm paying off the mortgage. I'm not trained enough. I've got young children and this or that.

[31 : 45] Excuses, excuses, excuses. We stay home. We go to sleep. The mighty men need a wake up.

You're saying, well, I know where I am. I've grown slack. I've grown cold. I've taken my foot off the accelerator. I don't get to church as much as I used to. I know I'm less committed than I was. What's it going to be like in a year's time? Honestly. I know I've been putting off getting involved and being a stronger Christian. Life's just busy for me right now.

It always will be. It always will be. I will get around to it one day. Look, I've got just the thing for you this morning.

I've got just the thing for you this morning. In fact, I should have printed these out. In fact, you can get coins like this. But you can have a coin like this and hold it in your pocket.

[32 : 53] Have anyone heard of this? The round to it? Who's heard of that? Look, I'll show you what it is right here. You said you'd do it when you got around to it.

Here's your round to it. So, I can send you this and you can print it off or you can get coins off the internet. You can get a coin that you keep in your pocket. And when someone says to do something and you think, Oh, yes, pastor, I'll get around to it.

No, pull the coin out and say, you've already got around to it. There's no point waiting because you've got around to it. Yeah? Yeah? Now, another bit of humour this morning.

I went shopping for my wife. And some of you might have seen this on social media. And, you know, I've got a bit of a problem saying, Yes, dear, when Julie asked me to do something.

And so, we're in the shop, just office works down here. They're just about sold out now because of my advertising. I've got the Yes, dear button. The Yes, dear button.

[34 : 00] So, all you men, all you married men or about to be married, I can't recommend this enough for you. The Yes, dear button. And it's got all kinds of little sayings that it says when you press it.

Randomly generated sayings. The easy and painless way to domestic harmony. So, you press the button and it says, Yes, dear. It says things like, I'd love to.

Or, why didn't I think of that? Or, what a wonderful idea. You just press the button. Brethren here today, you've got to get one of these.

It's very cheap. I'll get some commission out of it. But, no. Yes, dear. But, I was thinking more than this, though. What if we had a Yes, Lord?

What if we had a Yes, Lord button? Or, Yes, Pastor. Even better, Yes, Lord. You know, when the pastor's preaching, you say, Yes, Pastor. When there's a challenge from the Word of God, when you read the Word of God and there's a challenge for you, you think, Oh, that's a bit of a hard truth.

[35 : 10] Wake up, the mighty man. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. I'm standing in the need of prayer. Yes, Lord. So, I'll do a demo here for you, brethren.

I don't mean to be too lighthearted this morning, but there's a truth here to say yes to your wife. So, I don't know what it's going to say next, but whatever she says is, Yes, dear. What a wonderful idea. What a wonderful idea. See that? Here we go. If you're happy, I'm happy. Get that? Yes, dear. Yes, dear. Yes, dear. But think of it. I'm being a bit lighthearted, of course, but really and truly, what if we had a spiritual button?

When God challenges about something, when there's a hard truth from the Word of God, and we think, Oh, I know that's what I should do.

I should get around to it. We keep putting it off and putting it off, but what if we said, Yes, Lord. Here I am. You're right, Lord. Yes, Lord. I'm ready. I'm here for you.

[36 : 12] I'm ready to do something. I'm ready to get activated for God. And friends, I just urge you this morning for that. Let me just give you a little further elaboration. And we might come to this place in our life, this point in time, and say, Oh, I'm hearing what you're saying, Pastor.

Yeah, I hope to get more active. I hope to get more engaged. I hope to be a stronger Christian. You know, one day, one day. And I'm just reading a little elaboration on that theme here that I picked up. So many times we all play this little game called, I wish it were. I wish it were next week. You know, you might have plans, right? Oh, I wish it were next month.

Kids go to school and say, Boy, I wish this day was over. You ever felt like that when you go to work? I wish this day was over. Let me tell you the story of the girl who went to college and she just hated it.

But she told herself, If I can get out of school and finally get married and have children, I know that finally I'll be able to enjoy life. So she stuck with it. She went to classes every day.

[37 : 21] She studied. She finally graduated from college. Then she got married and had children. And she discovered that taking care of children was a whole other lot of work.

And she told herself, If I can just get these kids raised, then I'll be able to relax and really enjoy life.

And about that time the kids were entering high school, the husband said, Guess what?

We don't have enough money to send our kids to school and get all the bills paid as well. So I guess you'll need to get a job. Well, she didn't want to, but she knew he was right and they needed the money.

So she went to work and she hated it. But she told herself, If I can just get these kids through school and get all these bills paid, then I can quit work and then I can really enjoy life.

Finally, the last child graduated from high school. All the bills were paid. So she walked into her boss's office and said, I quit. He said, Oh, you don't want to quit right now.

[38 : 16] If you stay with us just eight more years, you'll have a pension for the rest of your life. She thought, Well, I don't want to work another eight years, but there's all that money there and I really can't turn this down, this opportunity.

So she worked again for another eight years. And finally, at long last, she and her husband both retire at the same time. They sold their home and bought a little retirement cottage.

Then they sat down on the swing on their front porch and they looked at the old family picture album and they dreamed about the good old days. True, isn't it?

We could think of all those reasons why I'll get around to serving God when the kids are older, when the house is paid off, when life's a bit more comfy, when I've got all the training and all the knowledge and all the spiritual growth that I need before I serve.

You're wrong. Don't do that. Don't do that. Life is what happens to you while you're making plans to do something else.

[39 : 30] It's the same spiritually too, isn't it? We're going to look back and think, Why didn't I make a decision sooner? Why didn't I do it? Why didn't I start younger?

I urge you today to these things, to wake up, wake up. Where are you? This is not to condemn.

This is to urge you on in this gospel race. Our times are in his hands. We've got no guarantees how long we've got. We don't know what the new day, the new week, the next year is going to bring forth.

We don't know what's going to happen. Chances are things are going to get harder to be a Christian. Chances are it's going to get more and more likely that you're going to be persecuted for your faith. Chances are it's going to be even tougher for you to speak for Christ, to live for Christ, to serve the Lord.

It's going to be hard for you. I mean, who knows if they start this 15-minute city? You might not even be able to go 15 minutes from where you live. Some of you that live further away than 15 minutes drive might not be able to get to fellowship with us anymore.

[40 : 41] There's climate change stuff that's saying you're a prisoner in a certain geographical boundary. It's ridiculous, we know, but we don't know what's going to happen. If you want to serve God, if you want to live for God, start now.

Start now. I don't know what it's going to say, but surely it's my turn. It's your turn. It's your turn to say, yes, Lord. It's your turn to say, yes, Lord. Don't hold off.

Don't put it off. Put your future in the hand of the Lord. I urge you this morning, I pray that you've been encouraged, that you've been encouraged to live, to please your Lord, to live, to do all to the glory of God this year ahead, this lifespan that you've got left to live, that you'll learn to glorify God in every day, in every moment, every hour, every week, every this year, every year that you've got left to live, that you'll learn to glorify God, learn to pray, to praise him, to thank him, to live stronger, to please him, to give him your best.

Get ready for the master's use. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that your word is stirring. Lord, we can get offended sometimes when it presses those buttons of our life.

Lord, help us, Lord, to have the instinct to say, yes, Lord, yes, Lord, I'm listening. Yes, Lord, I will, I will respond. Yes, Lord, I will obey. Yes, Lord, I'm getting around to it and today is the day I'm going to get around to it, not, not some future time that never happens, not some tomorrow that I never see.

[42 : 15] Lord, help us, we pray, each one, to be as mighty men, saved men, serving, woken up. Lord, help us, help us to be such a church, help us to be activated, to love one another, to be a church that loves you, to love one another.

Lord, give us the grace that we need. Lord, we ask you to be glorified in our lives. We pray if there's any present or hearing, but they'll say, yes, Lord, I trust you to save me, if you've yet to trust him, that you'll be born again by your trust, your faith in Christ as saviour, by his grace, that he gave his life for you at the cross, and paid for your sin entirely there, that you can trust that payment on his part, your part, and help us, Lord, to think, yes, today is a day I can say, things are going to change, and they're changing now, they're changing today, because today is the day that I'm going to serve you.

Today is the day I'm going to say, yes, Lord, whatever it is you want me to do, I'm not, I'm not going to stop, I'm not going to get in your way, to do your will in my life, in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.