

Motivation to Change

- Urgency:
- Wait for circumstances? or Create the circumstances!
- Today is the first day of a new year.
- We can use this day to create a sense of urgency.
- *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 2Tim 4:1-3*

The Urgency of the Race we Run

- *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Heb 12:1-2*
- *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1Cor 9:24-27*

Moses – Sought to Create Urgency

- *"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, 16 in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. Deut 30:15-16*
- *But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, 18 I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. 19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; Deut 30:17-20*

Joshua also Forced a Choice

- *And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*
Josh 24:15

Peter Sought to Force us To Diligence

- *Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles 1 Peter 4:2-3;*
- *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 1 Peter 4:7*
- *For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? 1 Peter 4:17*
- An urgent need to make assessments and changes.

Paul's Sense of Urgency

- *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. Phil 3:12-18*

Setting Goals – Making Plans

- *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Rom 13:11-14*

Keeping things in Perspective

- *Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor 4:16-18*
- *Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in (all) holy living and godliness, 2 Pet 3:11*

Making Plans

- Put off old man and put on New Eph 4:17ff Col 3:1-15
- Relationships with our brethren. Mt 25:31-46;
- Hospitality. Rom 12:13; I Pet 4:7-10
- Evangelism. I Pet 3:15; Col 4:5-6;
- Becoming a teacher. Heb 5:12-14
- Reading and Learning Scriptures. II Tim 3:14-17
- Pray without Ceasing. I Th 5:17; Eph 6:18; Col 4:2-3
- In everything give thanks. I Th 5:18; Eph 5:20; Col 3:15
- Putting on the armor of God. Eph 6:10-18
- Adding to your faith II Pet 1:3-11
- Removing the works of the flesh. Rom 7-8; Gal 5:16-25
- Equip ourselves for the work of ministry. Eph 4:11-16

Seeing Things Clearly

- *Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment. Eccl 11:9*
- *Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them": Eccl. 12:1*

Remembering Our End

- *LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. 5 Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor. Selah 6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow; surely they busy themselves in vain; he heaps up riches, and does not know who will gather them. 7 And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. Ps 39:4-7*
- Knowing our end. If we can do this, everything else will fall into place.

Teach Us to Number Our Days

*We finish our years like a sigh. The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for **it is soon cut off, and we fly away.** 11 Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. 12 So **teach us to number our days**, that we may **gain a heart of wisdom.** Ps 90:10-12*

Pressing on

- *Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 2Pet. 3:11-13*