

The Sands of Time

Looking Back on Our Life



- The flow of sand through an hourglass
- As we watch it begin to flow, seems like it will take far longer than an hour.
- The sand at the bottom seems to be hardly rising at all.



The Sands of Time

Looking Back on Our Life




- The flow of sand through an hourglass seems like it will take far longer than an hour.
- Youth for most of us passed like this.
- Life appeared as if it would last forever.
- Yet like the hourglass, it moved quickly and now it is gone.





Day By Day in Youth

- In youth, as life passes day to day, it initially feels like we will live forever
 - exciting and life changing firsts.
 - walk and talk, read and write.
 - new friends, new sports, learned new things.
 - We looked forward :
 - high school, driver's license, first date,
 - graduation, college, starting a career,
 - getting married and having children.
- 



God Gave us Youth as a Precious Gift

- *For he will not dwell unduly on the days of his life, because God keeps him busy with the joy of his heart. Eccl. 5:20*
- It is the greatest of blessings if the gospel came to us at this stage.
- *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*

At A Critical Moment Changing the Course of Life

- *I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Rom 7:9-11*
- This is the time to turn to the Lord so He can help us work through these complicated things



30's and 40's

- crashes down upon us our youth is gone.
- With faith and wisdom perspective changes
- Life is now longer a series of firsts,
- A time to remember those firsts.
- Birthdays, Anniversaries, Reunions Memories
The future which brought anticipation and excitement changes to a time for loss as we slowly reach our middle age.





What Might Have Been

- Bad decisions: pangs of sorrow and remorse.
- Learned too late, wasted time, mistakes
- Evil companions of youth: opened doors into sin
- Mastery eludes us and guilt plagues us.
- *Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O Lord. Ps. 25:7*
- Turn to the Lord for forgiveness and mercy
- Continue on looking for other solutions.

A New Set of Firsts

- first grey hair, wrinkle, glasses,
- first signs of health problem to come
- The loss of those we love
- End of our life draws ever nearer.
- children leave home,
- *To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: 2 A time to be born, And a time to die; ... 5 A time to gain, And a time to lose; A time to keep, And a time to throw away; (Eccl. 3:1-2)*

God Designed to Bring us Back

- ✦ sin cursed world is no longer designed to be an eternal home.
- ✦ The beauty of God's original creation a hollow shell of what God had created "very good."
- ✦ no matter how hard we try we cannot fix
- ✦ *I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind. 15 What is crooked cannot be made straight, And what is lacking cannot be numbered. Eccl. 1:14-15*

To Remain Content – New Perspective

- God offers explanation for why
- What we can do to avoid and prepare for it.
Internal shift must occur as our body ages and shows signs of the coming end.
- Time for eternal soul to becomes focus.
- Exchange the excitement of youth in change
- Replace with the precious and great promises wonderful of a new home and a new body.

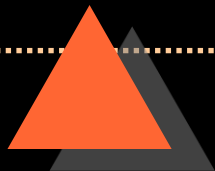
A Change of Outlook

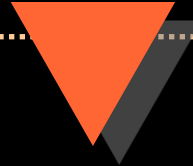
- *though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ... 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2Cor. 4:16-18*
- If we don't make this shift life becomes bleak and empty. Future is full of sorrows



God Wants us to Avoid

- *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": ... 6 before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well. 7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. 8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity." Eccl 12:1*





The Sooner We Return to God

- There are great blessings to those who remember their Creator in the days of youth.
- Obeying the gospel early in life offers the wisdom and insight that walking by faith brings.
- Regardless of when, we begin to run our race into eternity to gain the imperishable crown of glory, righteousness and life.
- *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, 2Tim. 4:7-8; 1Cor. 9:25; Jas. 1:12*

Where Did We Obey the Gospel?



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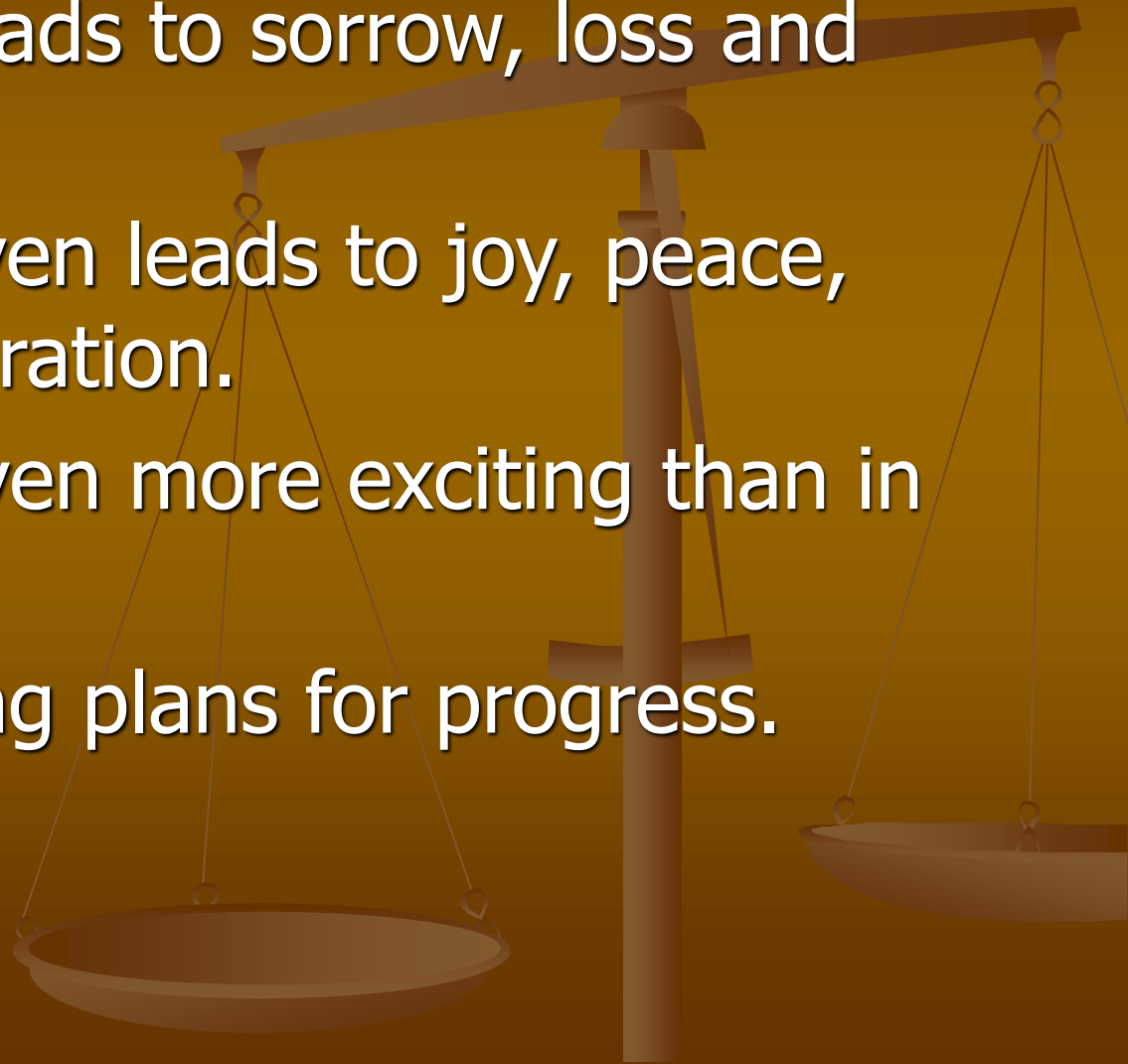
Time for us to Know our End Know the Measure of our Days

- *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. 6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Ps. 39:4-6*



A Time to Exchange Futures

- A future here leads to sorrow, loss and death.
- A future in heaven leads to joy, peace, hope and preparation.
- Life becomes even more exciting than in our youth.
- We begin making plans for progress.



God's Wrath: No Exaggeration!

- *For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; We finish our years like a sigh. 10 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*

- ◆ Life in this sin-cursed world a foretaste of the wrath to come.
- ◆ 70 – 80 years – Yet the best we can hope for is labor and sorrow;
- ◆ For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
- ◆ The Power of God's anger more than we can imagine.
- ◆ We must number our days.
- ◆ Plan to use them as wisely as possible
- ◆ Repent of all our failures
- ◆ That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

2023 is Gone – Another Reminder of Brevity of Life

- It is never too late to change until life ends.
- We can look back on 2023 to gain a heart of wisdom.
- The failures must be repented of
- The joy of salvation must be strengthened.
- Obedience, faith, trust, praise and adoration must grow and strengthen

We May not have Progressed as much as we could this year.

✦ *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. Rom 13:11-13*

