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Hold to God's Unchanging Hand

*Time is filled with swift transition—
Naught of earth unmoved can stand—
Build your hopes on things eternal,
Hold to God's unchanging hand.*

*Trust in Him who will not leave you,
Whatsoever years may bring,
If by earthly friends forsaken,
Still more closely to Him cling.*

*When your journey is completed,
If to God you have been true,
Fair and bright the home in glory
Your enraptured soul will view.*

Refrain:

*Hold to His hand to God's unchanging hand!
Hold to His hand to God's unchanging hand!
Build your hopes on things eternal,
Hold to God's unchanging hand.*

WORDS: Jennie Wilson (w. 1904)

MUSIC: F. L. Eiland (w1904)

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Time is Flying

By Wilburta Arrowood

It amazes me how fast time flies by. I have been a Christian for sixty-five years and it seems like just yesterday that a small group of us on a cold December day drove 27 miles to a distant church building to use their baptistry, since we were meeting in the living room of an old house and had no such facility. I did not even imagine I would be a Christian this long, because I did not imagine God would allow me to live this long.

I see young people making grand plans for their future, and I applaud their foresight. However, many do not realize how limited their time may be. Before I even graduated from high school one of my classmates was killed in a car accident. A bit later one of the young women died of a genetic disease. A few years after that one of my best friends took her own life after being diagnosed with MS. Her school-aged children returned from school and found her.

My point is, life is short at best, and at its worst it is really short. Scripture says our life is but a vapor. Have you ever watched a boiling pot and seen the wisp of vapor rise and vanish? That is how our life here on earth is compared to eternity. That should give us pause when we think how very important the time we are allowed is spent while here.

Jesus said in Mark 13:31-33, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone*. Watch out, stay alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is."

There has been much speculation, and several men have tried to declare the exact time all this will take place. Others look at history and determine it has been 2000

years since Jesus said that and we are still going. We still have lots of time. Maybe.

Matthew 24:36 again tells us, “But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” It may be another 2000 years before that time comes, or it could still come today, as I write this. The reality is, for those I mentioned above, time on this earth has ended. The timing of when the final day comes is no longer relevant to them on this earth. Just as theirs did, our time here may end before the final end of time. The very vital question is not when it will happen, but rather will you be ready when it does?

We need to be immersed in God’s word and know what He expects of us, then we need to do those things. Of course, we know we could never earn our way into heaven, but we also learn that there are certain prerequisites. That does not mean we have to spend every breath “doing good things.” It does mean we need to be focused, and yes, we are allowed to “rest,” but even in resting it should be with a pure heart and mind, doing pure things. God has promised us a beautiful life after death here on earth, whether we last to the end of time, or our time ends prior to that. It is our job to make sure we are in line for that beautiful life. I can assure you, we do not have another 2000 years to get ready, even if this earth does last that long. God has already given us plenty of time to prepare. Are you using it wisely?

Wilburta Arrowwood, Napoleonville, Louisiana



What Time is It?

We all seem to be slaves to time. The earliest timepiece was the sundial invented by Egyptians. Then came the hourglass. Clocks evolved over thousands of years because people always wanted to keep track of time.

I think we all remember a time, especially when we were children, that time seemed to go so slowly. For me, waiting for Christmas morning seemed like an “eternity.” Then, we couldn’t wait to get out of school for the summer. School years also went very slowly. We couldn’t wait until our sixteenth birthdays so we could get our drivers licenses. Then it was graduation. The “can’t wait” times are endless.

Time did not exist before the creation. God has no need for time. “A day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” 2 Peter 3:8

As humans, we gauge everything we do by time. As we get older, time speeds up—or so it seems. Time goes no

slower or faster than when it began. God created time for us. He set time in motion at creation. That’s why it is so hard for us to fathom eternity. Our finite minds just can’t grasp it.

The wise man, Solomon, says in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, “There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to root up, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance . . .”

Every year in March and November, we try to manipulate time, and we call it “daylight saving time.” Some people like it and some don’t. The law that made daylight saving time permanent was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1966. Originally, it was designed to give people more daylight hours in the spring and summer months to conserve energy. It was used gladly by farmers. It gave them more hours of light for harvesting.

We can try to manipulate time all we want, but God gave us 24 hours each day—that includes one “day” and one “night.” Genesis 1:5. “I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it,” (including time) – author’s own words. Ecclesiastes 3:14.

Everything we read about heaven in scripture tells us that it is wonderful, glorious, and beautiful, but that is as far as I can go in describing it. Eternity means that we will see our Savior face-to-face. I long for that time, but I can’t begin to imagine it.

Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:9, “He has saved us, called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ before the beginning of time.”

Time is important, and we are not to waste it. Time is a gift. Let us use it wisely.

Mary Anna Melton, Rolla, Missouri



NEARER THAN WHEN WE FIRST BELIEVED

Time is an elusive commodity. Time began when God spoke creation into existence. Time marches along despite our efforts to use it or save it.

Nelson’s Bible Dictionary says, “God is working in our present time-space world; therefore, the present time is to be used for God’s purposes and glory.” When we think seriously about it, we recognize that time belongs to

God. Time began with creation, and time will end at some point unknown to us. Many generations have predicted the end of time, but time will end only when God decrees it to end. When an hour glass is turned upside down, sand begins to fall from the top chamber to the bottom chamber. That is how our lives are ticking away..."

For centuries, people have tried to predict the end of the world. Quite a few years ago, a cult in New Mexico predicted a date and time for the end of time. They sold everything they had, climbed on top of their houses, and waited to meet the Lord. Their predicted day and hour came and went. Since their appointed day, at least 40 years have passed. Jesus said in Mark 13:32-33, ³² *"But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* ³³ *Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come."* Time will end at some point, but we have no way of knowing when that will occur.

We are warned not to plan as if time belongs to us, James 4:13-17. Most of us try to use our time wisely and productively. Mankind is creative. Thousands of inventors have produced "time saving" appliances and tools. We use time-saving devices, but we must spend time taking care of such devices.

When this country became a nation, light was hard to find if the moon had not yet risen. After the sun went down, homes were lighted with candles and/or lanterns, but their light was still somewhat dim. Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb, and it has allowed us to work long after the sun goes down. Productivity grew greatly because of his invention. The invention of electricity—especially electric lights—changed the lives of people in the 1930's and 40's. Light bulbs have since been improved and adapted over the years. Neon lights draw attention to businesses after dark. Halogen lights are even brighter than the usual light bulbs. The lights we depend on nowadays are beneficial to us in many ways.

We speak of time in various terms, such as a long time ago or the distant past. Paul exhorted the Ephesians to make the best use of time (Ephesians 5:15-17). James wrote that we are but "a mist that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away," James 4:14. Colossians 4:5 says, *"Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of time."*

In Romans 13:8-14, Paul wrote a beautiful section regarding Christian duties toward our neighbors. The key verse for this discussion is verse 11, ¹¹ *Besides this you*

know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed."

Quite a few years ago, a popular song by Jim Croce was titled, "Time in a Bottle." The first line of the song is, "If I could save time in a bottle..." But we know that it is impossible to save time as in storing it to be used later. Precious moments cannot be stored to use again later. We must make good use of our time as we serve in the Kingdom.

An old hymn begins with the words, "Time is filled with swift transition..." The remaining words of the song encourage us to "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand." Many people are stressed and struggling in life. Time is elusive, but God's hand is eternal. Let us all use our time serving Him each hour of the day. Let us share a kind word of encouragement, a hug, a reminder that God is in control, even when our world seems to be spinning out of control. As Romans 13:11 says, we are all, "nearer than when we first believed!"

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, Missouri

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***Lost time is never found again.* – Benjamin Franklin**

**The key is not in spending time, but in investing it. –
Stephen R. Covey**

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**Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone
else's life. Steve Jobs**

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Time Quotes via the Internet

We kill time. We save time. We rob and get robbed of time, we lose time, and we have all the time in the world. But no one of us is powerful enough to stop the march of time or slow it down.

Is it something far beyond our control? In fact, no. While we cannot influence the flow of time, we still can get the most out of it. Becoming a wise time manager sometimes is similar to mastering a sorcery, but the results are worth the effort.

Being the master of your time means getting more done, staying energized, and doing more things you enjoy. We've collected the best time quotes from the greatest minds of the world – use them as an inspiration or as guidelines for improving your time management.

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INTERNET INFORMATION REGARDING TIME

[What is Time in Society and Culture?](#)

Time is an important element in society and culture. It was psychologist Robert Levine who analyzed different cultures and **their attitudes towards time**. He found out that the more economically developed countries like the USA, Germany, or Japan are fast-paced. That is to say, those cultures greatly value time since “*time is money*.”

On the other hand, countries with poorly developed economies are slow-paced. Cultures such as the Middle East, Latin America, or Eastern Europe nurture a more relaxed attitude towards time. They are more *family and socially oriented*.

Sometimes, however, these orientations may not be as clear-cut. For example, even though the Japanese appreciate time and punctuality, they are a fast-paced living culture that *views social relationships as important*.

Thus, the way people behave towards time depends on their cultural traditions, beliefs, and socio-economic status.

Timekeeping in Different Cultures

We’ve already mentioned that Western and Eastern cultures have different attitudes towards time. The same applies to how they **track their time**.

Western cultures (including some parts of East Asia, **such as Japan**) tend to measure their time “by the clock.” According to their understanding, each activity should have a precise beginning and end.

On the other hand, **measuring time in Eastern cultures is event or personality-related**. That is to say, they don’t let time interfere with their judgment. They will gladly prolong the meeting or schedule it for the next day if participants have family-related obligations. Each activity or event should have a natural beginning and end.

Different understandings of time come to attention when people from different cultural backgrounds have a formal meeting together. Cultures that measure time by the clock will expect all participants to be punctual, whereas event-time cultures wouldn’t be so strict. Therefore, different time understanding can lead to misunderstandings between cultures — such as the ideal time when members of a multicultural team are expected to arrive at a meeting.

Time Orientation

The way we look at **the different eras in time** also reflects our time understanding. This is referred to as *time orientation*.

For example, nations with a long history that survived wars, had past achievements, or lived in monarchies hold

on to the past more than nations with a relatively short history.

Therefore, certain cultures are *past, present, or future-oriented*.

We’ve prepared a more detailed description of each orientation below.

Past-oriented Cultures

These cultures don’t have *long-term perspectives* and avoid risking by introducing changes.

Italy is an ideal example of a past-oriented country. Italians are known for their exquisite craftsmanship and artistic history. They stick to their past achievements and obtain new ones relying on the knowledge of their ancestors.

Moreover, Britain and China are past-oriented since they have a long history too. Like the Italians, they are proud of their past achievements and live their lives respecting their traditions and beliefs.

Interestingly, even though the Chinese are traditional and past-oriented, they do have a **long-term perspective**. They cherish their traditions yet carefully pave the way for the future of their heirs.

Editor’s Note:

All of the above information was taken from the internet. No specific authors were identified on the site, so no specific authors could be mentioned.



Fred Willmon

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Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by members of the Rolla Church of Christ. Sunrise is printed and distributed (primarily via email) to individuals and congregations around the country. All previous issues can be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveandlove.org>. Click on the Resources tab, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

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