

Wearing Out

By Royce Pendergrass

Things get used up and worn out. Our clothes get old and sometimes have holes, tears, etc. for which they must be thrown away; they are no longer fit to be worn. Food that is stored has a shelf life on it, and sometimes the food gets old enough that the taste makes one sick and that food must be discarded. Tools get broken and used up, and what was once a valuable tool asset is no longer worth anything. As Alice and I made a trip this week, we noticed several houses that were falling down; some appeared to be maybe 100 or more years old. They wore out and fell in, and they were no longer of any use.

More than all these material things, our own bodies wear out. When we're young, that lifetime before us seems to be forever, but before we know it, we're getting old and wearing out. That happens more quickly than we ever want to think! Job said, "You shall come to the grave at a full age, As a sheaf of grain ripens in its season" (5:26 NKJV). Just as the corn and other grains of the field come of age and must be harvested or die, so it shall be with man. Some don't get to make it to a ripe age, but whenever one dies, he has lived to his allotted time, so that is his season.

All of God's earthly creation will come to an end. We know this because we're told so in 2 Peter 3:10, which reads, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up." We must not second-guess God on this. It is going to happen, and we can't stop it!

Yet, there is something every one of us can do. Paul told the Thessalonian brethren, "and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). We have fair warning! The end is coming, and to avoid the horror of it, we must know God. To know Him, we must read, study and know the Word to know what is expected of us. Then, everyone who wants to escape eternal punishment must obey what the Word teaches. That's the only avenue of escape.

The preacher gave this summation in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all." The only reason for man's existence is to serve the loving God Who created him. Any and all earthly accomplishments will amount to nothing in the end. The apostle Paul said, "...the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-

8). One must know and obey the truth as well as live for Christ or suffer the horrible consequence of Hell.

As aging occurs, we lose more time to be obedient to God. As the old saying goes, “Time is of the essence.” As mentioned above about the maturing grain, Hosea said, “Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the Lord, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you” (Hosea 10:12). If your life has not been cultivated for service to the Lord, it’s time to do it now. That’s the only way He will be merciful, because He knows when each of us does His bidding. Perhaps Peter gave us the best warning of the end-time in 2 Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.



[**Editor’s Note:** We can be like the child of God described in 2 Corinthians 4:16. “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” Faithful Christians can know that though their physical bodies wear out, spiritually they can become stronger and healthier. ~ Louis Rushmore, Editor]

Hope By Which We Are Saved **By Robert Rawson**

We are saved by hope (Romans 8:24), and we have the way of life described by Jesus that we practice to maintain this hope. Matthew 7:21-27 teaches us to be wise builders rather than foolish builders. What is the difference? The one who hears and makes the application is wise! The same storms came to each builder, but only the wise builder had built upon doing the will of God.

What is hope? It is built on faith and practice. When we find hope, we have had a challenge of faith that has resulted in success in Christ. What a blessing to know we did not have victory in and of ourselves, but rather the blessing of God was involved in our struggle.

As we ask God’s help in prayer, do we ask believing He hears us and is thoughtful about the best answer possible for us to be served and to grow as well? He listens in a different way than we do; for you see, God knows the ideals and dictates of the heart of the speaker. He knows what we really mean by our request.

What if we speak a glowing set of words and fail to have the effort in our hearts? Is this not an act of hypocrisy? We really didn’t mean it; thus, we ask if God is obligated to give us what we ask.



[Editor's Note: Though sincerity alone is not sufficient, sincerity must accompany every aspect of our obedient response to the Word of God (John 4:24). ~ Louis Rushmore, Editor, Gospel Gazette]