**January 5, 2020 “It’s About Time” (Psalm 90:12)**

**First Colony Church of Christ, Houston, TX**

**SLIDE 1 Intro. Welcome to first Sunday of new year, “Year of our Lord” 2020 (in Latin we abbreviate A.D.)**

 **A. At least that’s what WE call it.**

 **1. anyone of Jewish descent who already celebrated the New Year back in September: went from 5779 to 5780 A.M. “Year of the World.” Date goes back to year 3760 BC, year 0.**

 **2. Muslims also celebrated New Year already, in August; it was out with 1440, in with 1441 A.H. “Year of Hijra,” migration from Mecca to Medina which showed who was with Muhammad. Happened in 622 AD. (Shouldn’t it be 1398? No, math doesn’t work b/c lunar calendar.)**

 **3. Chinese New Year still three weeks away on January 25, 2020. They’ll welcome in year 4718 A.H. (dating back to beginning of reign of legendary Emperor of China)**

 **4. 6 weeks after that, members of the Baha’i Faith will celebrate the New Year 177 B.E. (Baha’i Era), which dates back to the year a Persian figure founded that religion.**

 **\*Goes without saying that the starting point on our calendar is really important--what a given culture or religion considers to be the pivotal moment in their history. For us, coming if Jesus.**

 **B. Ideally, it’s much more than point of reference on calendar, a number we take for granted, don’t think about. It’s our point of reference for everything including how we spend the time we have.**

**I. And we are “SPENDING” it.**

 **A. May be interesting to you that most people don’t think time is something you can “spend, buy, sell, save, waste.” In our part of world, long time ago we turned time into a concrete thing. Most cultures/languages have no way of saying what I just said. Makes no sense.**

 **B. Part of our cultural heritage. If you’ve been in other parts of world, you may say they’re not as time conscious as we are? More precise way to say that is that they’re not as clock conscious as we are.**

 **1. Clock time orientation means we measure time with this mechanical device (like one on wall) that is very important.**

 **2. In many other cultures, the event itself—like a church gathering—is more important.**

 **\*We’ve all heard missionaries tell stories about the difference. And the frustration it can produce.**

 **C. Closer to home, we’re not all on same page even here:**

 **1. in church, some of you wish we’d just ignore the clock; not be so uptight about time. (You obviously are not part of the Children’s Ministry.)**

 **2. in our marriages, how many of us have had to negotiate different approaches to time? You want to leave early, she doesn’t or vice versa. And maybe don’t define “early” same way.**

 **a. I started preaching every Sunday six years ago, which meant we now take two cars to church. That solved that problem in our household.**

 **b. I learned some time ago to my shame that I had forced Beth to live at my pace. Since then we’ve been trying to linger.**

 **c. We were out walking once and she said, “It’s like for you, life is an obstacle course. You get over one hurdle, can’t wait to see the next hurdle is. For me, life I like a rose garden. And I won’t you to spend more time with me lingering in the rose garden.” Me: “Can I bring the pruning shears?” Do some multi-tasking?**

 **d. HARD to linger when there’s so much to do!**

 **1) former professor who said he was born two weeks late and been trying to catch up ever since.**

 **2) and there IS much to do.**

**SLIDE 2 3. The apostle Paul himself wrote: “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.” (NKJV “redeeming the time”)**

**SLIDE 3 D. So feel need to hurry! Some of us are infected with what John Ortberg calls “hurry sickness.” Haven’t had check-up lately, you’re in luck. Here are some symptoms:**

**SLIDE 4 1. rush through daily activities**

**SLIDE 5 2. multi-tasking (which I thought was next to godliness). Then I learned that “multi-tasking” like checking Facebook WHILE you’re wife is talking to you is next to getting no points at all for listening.**

**SLIDE 6 3. clutter: too big a hurry to put things where they go.**

**SLIDE 7 4. superficiality: don’t have time for depth**

**SLIDE 8 5. inability to love**

**SLIDE 9 6. sunset fatigue: nothing left in tank at end of day**

 **\*All GOOD reasons to go back and talk about the Holy Habit of Sabbath.**

**SLIDE 10 E. I don’t know if Paul suffered from hurry sickness.**

 **1. He certainly felt the urgency of his calling. Even wrote, “If you’re not married, don’t get married b/c time is short” (1 Cor. 7:29)**

 **2. Seems like it’s getting shorter older I get. B/c it is. Every year is smaller fraction of my life. It is flying by, isn’t it? 2020? Are you kidding me? Just now getting used to whole 2000 thing. Remember when I was much younger thinking, “If I live to see year 2000, I’ll be 40!” Hard to imagine being 40. Now looking back at 40 thinking, wow, that was 20 years ago? Where did the time go?**

 **3. From God’s perspective, 60 years? Nothing! Barely a blip on timeline.**

**SLIDE 11 a. Ps. 90:12 reads: “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”**

**SLIDE 12 b. Peter (2 Pet. 3:8-9), quoting that same Psalm, gives us this lesson in perspective: 1000 of our years is like one of His days.**

**SLIDE 13 II. Seems like a big piece of learning to “number our days” is learning difference between *chronos* and *kairos*.**

 **A. Yes, 2 Greek words, but this time the difference is really important. We don’t really have the right single words in English to communicate same difference.**

 **1. Chronos: relentless ticking of the clock, passage of time. Chronos = Father Time (old man, gray beard, scythe in hand)**

 **2. Kairos: more about timeliness or timing. But those words don’t really capture it. When I held our first child in my arms for first time and then first granchild—those are kairos moments—profound. Something really important has just happened. Our lives will never be same.**

 **B. Here’s the challenge for the day, challenge I’ll set before us all for 2020, the conclusion of this message (even though I still have more time): *Can we make this year a Kairos year instead of just a Chronos year?***

 **1. I.e. when we come to New Year’s Eve 2020, will we look back and say, “yep, lived another year; check it off; how ‘bout that.” Plowed same old ruts; just got deeper, we feel more stuck. 2. Or will we say, “We lived this year . . . on purpose, aware of God’s Presence and purpose in our lives” and then be able to look back over our shoulders and testify about divine moments because we were paying attention! B/c we weren’t rushing from one activity to the next. Could we look back and say “I had the time of my life,” (and not b/c we went to a Sandals resort).**

 **C. An important part of the story of Jesus is timing—like the timing of His arrival.**

**SLIDE 14 1. John the Baptist would shout it to anyone who would listen, “The time has come, (Kairos) the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15)**

 **2. Of course Jesus Himself VERY aware of his purpose and yet very patient.**

**SLIDE 15 a. To his mother (John 2:4)**

**SLIDE 16 b. and to his brothers (John 7:6-8): “My time (*kairos*) has not yet come” (Kairos)**

**SLIDE 17 c. Gets closer: (John 12:23; 13:1; 17:1).**

* **“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” (John 12:23)**
* **It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time (*kairos*) had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. (John 13:1)**
* **“Father, the time (*kairos*) has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. (John 17:1)**

 **3. Paul would write:**

**SLIDE 18 a. Rom. 5:6: “You see, at just the right time (*kairos*), when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.”**

**SLIDE 19 b. 1 Tim. 2:5-6: “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time (*kairos*).”**

**SLIDE 20 c. 1 Tim. 6:14-15: . . . “to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time (*kairos*)—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords.”**

**SLIDE 21 d. Titus 1:1-3: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time (*chronos*) and at his appointed season (*kairos*) he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior.”**

**SLIDE 22 Conclusion**

**1. In 1985 South Africa, apartheid still entrenched, group of South African ministers launched a movement against institutionalized racism/segregation, saying, “The time has come. The moment of truth has arrived.” Called for change in petition known as “The Kairos Document.”**

**2. I don’t know if you make New Year’s resolutions or not. But I wonder if you or I don’t need to issue a “Kairos Proclamation” of our own in some way. What impact would it have on our congregation if say:**

 **a. married couples who’d really stopped communicating said, “O.k. it’s time. It’s hard, especially when we’ve been sweeping things under rug and ignoring them. But we’re just watching time slip away. If we don’t do something different, *chronos* is going to win and this marriage is going to die without a fight, even if we never divorce.”**

 **b. families who’ve just slipped into auto-pilot, not really being intentional like you set out to be. Life takes over. The kids are in school, growing up so fast. Where is time going? Calendar is so jam-packed with ballet, and soccer practice, sometimes you feel enslaved to that calendar. What would 2020 look like if you really parented on purpose?**

 **c. your own walk with the Lord—when it’s just you and him in the dark at night alone—you did nothing different this year? Gonna end up in this same spot this time next year? And the *chronos* will just edge out any chance you had at recognizing this moment in your life—this season, this year—as a Kairos moment?**

**3. Please tell me you’re not really going to just watch the clock run out on you? Tell me you’re going to seize the moment—this divine moment—listen to the spirit of God saying “Come, follow me. Come, and be whole. Come, and be made new.”**

**4. It is about time.**