

Believers Must Adopt This Urgent Attitude in Spiritual Warfare Right Now

I don't know how much the following episode was dramatized for a Hollywood script, but in the movie *Gettysburg*, General Lee is portrayed as being furious with General J. Stuart, who took his cavalry and left the Confederate forces all but blind (without sending in reconnaissance reports) during the early days of the famous Civil War battle in Pennsylvania.

When Stuart finally returns, Lee chastises him, forcefully informing Stuart that many officers believe Stuart has let all of them down.

Stuart demands to know the officers' names.

Lee responds with conviction: "There is no time for that."

Lee proceeds to scold the cavalry officer for leaving all of them woefully uninformed about the Union's positions and says, to make himself very clear, "This must never happen again."

Stuart flinches at Lee's harsh words, puts down his hat, and pulls out his sword, a sign of resignation. "Since I have lost your confidence ..."

Lee slams his fist down on a table and screams, "I have told you there is no time for that! There is no time!"

Their armies were involved in a furious struggle. Men were literally dying. Which men, and how many, would depend on choices they were making, even as they spoke. There was no time to worry about personal squabbles or hurt egos. All energy had to be focused on the task at hand.

There is no time for that!

This sense of urgency and focus in the midst of physical warfare is not unlike the urgency and focus God's people are called to in the midst of spiritual warfare and our general Christian mission. Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, John and even Jude all use the same urgent language to help us understand how vital and pressing our mission before God is:

Jesus: "I must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day" (John 9:4a).

Paul: "But this I say, brothers, the time is short. ... The form of this world is passing away." (1 Cor. 7:29a, 31b).

James: "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, it is sin" (James 4:17).

Peter: "You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming" (2 Pet. 3:11b-12, NIV).

John: "By this we know the love of God: that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ... My little children, let us love not in word and speech, but in action and truth" (1 John 3:16, 18, MEV).

Jude: "I found it necessary to write and appeal to you to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3b).

If you are in Christ, you aren't just saved; you are enlisted. You have been called into a tremendously important work—an urgent work—and there's no time to lose.

—A football player doesn't worry about mowing his lawn the morning of the Super Bowl.

—A bride doesn't blow off her wedding to watch a sitcom.

—A fireman doesn't finish his sandwich when a building blows up.

Why?

They all have more urgent things to do.

That's the attitude we need in the kingdom of God. What every believer is doing is crucially important. Because our message is so precious, because the Holy Spirit within us is so powerful and because the work of building God's kingdom is so necessary, we don't have time to waste.

Jesus told his disciples, "'As My Father has sent Me, even so I send you'" (John 20:21). The classic Christian writer Andrew Murray wrote, "The Lord Jesus gave Himself entirely and undividedly over to accomplish His work; He lived for it alone. ... As with Jesus, so with us. Christ's mission is the only reason for our being on earth ... When I believe this, and like my Lord in His mission consecrate myself undividedly to it, shall I indeed live well-pleasing to Him" (Andrew Murray, *Like Christ: Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Conformity to the Son of God*, 81-82).

Too many think our salvation is all about us—personal peace, assurance, happiness and security. One of the greatest needs in the church today is more workers. Not just believers. Not just church attenders. Not even tithers. It is workers, those who believe that to be saved isn't to wait for heaven but to get busy bringing heaven's presence and authority to this present earth as ambassadors for Christ. {eoa}

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