

Appointed  
2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:6-14  
Archibald Wallace

Everyone of us has a Calendar or a Book in which we write down things to come, places to be, times to do this or that. We put down the date and a note about what it is that's coming. We are planners and we accept the plans of others and we write it down, so we won't forget, so we'll be there. We've done it so much, we know what happens on the second Thursday of each month, and where we ought to be at eleven on Sunday mornings. We know when certain things are going to happen, like Thanksgiving in November or how long it takes to have a baby, or when the fun of a three month vacation starts when the school year is over.

Perhaps the most famous passage about appointed times is the passage Solomon gave us:

Ecclesiastes 3:1---

There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens:

2        a time to be born and a time to die  
          a time to plant and a time to harvest

or

4        a time to weep and a time to laugh  
          a time to mourn and a time to dance

And on and on we go with appointments—the Bible says there are times for everything, appointed times. In creating, God established these times, set up the appointments. We know to plant in the Spring, We know the first frost is a good time to make our stews. Those who lived in New Hampshire knew to cut the blocks of ice in January and store them in the ice sheds under sawdust, so they would have ice in the summer. The Druids knew when the sun reached its solstice in England and built Stonehenge to confirm it and worship the return of the sun year-after-year. But, these are all appointed times, and while they are important, there is something else about the word Appointment that we need to consider.

Maybe the word of God brought to us by the prophet Habakkuk will help.

In Habakkuk 1:2-4 and 2:2-5 God speaks of something that's coming—an appointment God is going to keep with us. Let's let God tell us:

Habakkuk 1---First it's Habakkuk speaking

2        How long Lord must I call for help, but you do not seem to be listening?  
3        Why do you make me look at what appears to be an injustice?  
          Why do you tolerate the wrongdoing (that is happening to your people)?  
4        The law appears paralyzed (to help) and justice never (seems to) prevail

Habakkuk 2

2        Then the Lord replied  
          Write down this revelation  
          And make it plain on tablets  
          So that a herald may run with it.

- 3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time;  
It will speak of the end (of these times)  
And will not prove false.  
Though it (might not come as fast as you desire), wait for it.  
It will certainly come and will not be delayed.
- 14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea

### The Word Of The Lord!

God was telling his people in exile and scattered across the world that a time was coming, an appointed time, when God was going to intervene in history, and send one who would bring the knowledge of the living Lord for all the world to see and hear, so that all might know of God and see the glory of God first hand. An appointed time, a date set; on God's calendar, a date revealed to the prophet Daniel in Jewish poetic form, the date--69 weeks from the decree to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. The number 69, meant weeks of years, meaning specifically 69 times 7, or 483 years, and the decree was by Cyrus, once he came to power. The date just happened to be the exact year Jesus was born.

But there was more than just announcing the appointed time for the earth to be filled with the knowledge of God, There was also to be an appointed one,  
one who would reveal God's grace, God's gift of life for all the world,  
one who would destroy death by giving life to all who believed,  
one who would bring God's Good News, the Gospel, that God so loved the world, God could not help but redeem and rescue it.

An appointed One! Promised on a date certain, a promise delivered, as we who live on the after side of the promise delivered, know from the witnessing of the 550 who saw and told of the risen Christ in the days following the cross.

So, we have an appointed time, and an appointed one, coming to an appointed place, to deliver an appointed message. And all the appointments were kept. Christ has come. Every word promised has happened. But the idea of appointments doesn't end with Christ's death and resurrection. There are other appointments—even one for you and me in. Let's read of it in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:6-14:

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1

- 6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God (grace) which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
- 7 For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.
- 8 So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner.
- 9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life---not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.
- 10 But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death, and has brought life and immortality to life through the gospel.

- 11 And of this Gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.
- 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.
- 13 What you have heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching.  
(Salvation by grace through faith)  
With faith and love in Christ Jesus.
- 14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

#### The Word Of The Lord!

Paul reminds Timothy that he, Paul, was appointed to be a herald, an apostle, a teacher. Appointed, meaning an official act by God, meaning that he was chosen, meaning that he had not earned the appointment—it was God given, and Paul was appointed for three particular purposes:

Herald – meaning preacher,

Apostle –meaning one sent by God to tell the world the Good News.

Teacher –to explain and open all that Christ said and did,

All three--that the world might know about the God of love, who loves all in the world, and has made sure all will have an opportunity to hear the Good News and to choose eternity with God. This is grace at work, God's grace, —a gift, not earned, not merited, something God did and does, because God can't help it. But to make sure this Good News gets to the world as intended, Christ Jesus appointed apostles from his disciples, and his apostles chose successors and they chose successors and it has passed to each new generation through the laying on of hands that we do here each time new officers are ordained.

In Paul's eyes, he had to be wondering, how it was all going to work. Paul was in prison awaiting trial, uncertain of the outcome, wondering but accepting that God's act would not pass by without bringing change to the world. Don't be ashamed of the Gospel he bellowed to Timothy, the young preacher he set up on Cyprus. Don't worry what other humans can do to you; don't worry about what to say; don't worry if it's all going to work. Do your part and get out of the way so that the Holy Spirit can do what the Spirit has been sent to do –convict us of our sin, convert us to see the truth, and change us to walk in a new way, following a new voice, telling the world of a new truth –that we don't have and aren't the final word—God is!

According to Paul's understanding of appointment, no one plans to be a herald or a teacher or a disciple or an apostle. God chooses us, God appoints us to serve in whatever capacity God calls us to serve. I certainly didn't plan on being a Herald. I heard God's voice saying come. I need you. I resisted, but doors kept opening bringing me closer and closer to what god wanted, and doors kept shutting on the path I chose for myself. Finally, I walked through the doors God was opening and I became a teacher, a herald, a n apostle. Specifically, the door opened to let me be a help to those in God's church who were under attack by their own parishioners

Parishioners who worried about worship about going past 12,  
who had unvoiced and unrealistic expectations of what a minister should be  
who relished the power they temporarily held  
who thought their way was God's way.

I was called to this ministry, not believing God's church could be infested, especially since we had so much information about the Pharisees, the false leaders of the church, in the Bible. But soon, there was a first situation, then a second, and by the time I retired from the law, I was averaging 200 cases a month. Some were handled by one call; some took weeks of trial in church courts or in civil trials. It broke my heart to leave this to others but time and age were saying it was time. I then thought I would just rest. It was then I was appointed to be a herald for the Presbytery, as Moderator, as a member of CPM and later COM, as a member of the Trustees and Mission Council, as Acting Stated Clerk and Acting Executive Presbyter. And God kept opening doors—God brought me here and said keep preaching, keep teaching, and by the way, don't stop helping those under attack in other places.

I have learned from my own experience and from Paul's clear word to Timothy, I was and am appointed, just as you are appointed. Soon, 2<sup>nd</sup> will be electing officers again—elders, a Trustee. The Holy Spirit has been at work pointing out God's appointments to these positions to us. Soon the Holy Spirit will lead us to vote in favor of those appointed and chosen. New elders will step forward, appointed for the task, and they too will be encouraged to lean on Paul's core teaching that no one earns this, no one is elected because they are worthy. All of us, all are chosen, and all are appointed because God's grace has fallen upon us and is within us and is our order of march.

Appointed—our word for today; meaning—an appointed time, an appointed place, an appointed Savior, appointed Heralds, appointed Teachers, appointed Apostles. Appointed means we are all part of God's plan—even in 2022. But, I worry, because the worlds of modernity and post modernity have led so many away from Christ and Christ's church. Our pews are empty, our institutions are no longer valued, our future is uncertain. The world says we are irrelevant. But we have been appointed and we have the greatest message ever given—the truth of the risen Christ. And God has promised that God's word will not return empty. To overcome the irrelevancy assigned to us:

Maybe we need a new medium to use to tell the world about Christ. Marshall McLuhan thinks so.

Maybe we need to take greater risks. The Apostle Paul went to the world with nothing.  
Maybe we need to leave our comfort zones and just go. The Apostles left Jerusalem.

Maybe we need to stop studying the part of the gospel that is comforting and read some of the the great commission that isn't.

My prayer for all of our officers is that you might hear God's clear call to be a Herald, to Teach and to be an Apostles in word and in deed. My prayer also is that we take to the world God's great gift to us—the Good News of the Gospel, because each of us, each of us, has been appointed.