

December 2008



Cyberspace News

Michigan News

## The Time Is Now

Elder Charles Moore

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It should be said that although God is the Master of time, we are not. In fact, we are pretty much the slaves of time. The clock is always ticking, and there is never quite enough time left. In thinking about time, we must think clearly about the past. It should go without saying that *the past is past*. What we have done is done and there is nothing we can do about it. And people who can allow the past to be past are very fortunate. You see, the past can bind us. It can imprison us.

Some people live in the past. It is in this sense that the past can enslave us. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with memories. In fact, good memories are exceedingly valuable. But the memories of our failures and our fears, and the times we were hurt by others; these are the things that can drag us down. So, in one sense, we need to let the past go.

In another sense, the past is very much alive in us and it should be. The past has shaped us. It has made us who we are. Because of our experiences in the past, our character has been formed the way it is. So in a real sense the past is present with us every moment. How do you view your past? Is it something that still haunts you, or is it something that helps you? We must deal with the past effectively if we are to live in the present happily.

In thinking about time, the next thing we must deal with is the future. Our yesterdays are behind us. Our tomorrows are not yet here. In fact our tomorrow may never come. God holds our future in His hands. None of us have a guarantee of tomorrow. But we should think realistically about the future if we are to live effectively in the present.

The future can give us hope. As we face the beginning of a new year. What will this year hold for us? We certainly hope that it holds good things. One thing it does hold is the promise that it may be better than the last year. It also holds the promise that things needing change in our lives may in fact be changed. While there are no guarantees, it does hold the promise and the hope for good things in 2009.

On the other hand, the future can give us a false hope. It can provide a false sense of security and thereby keep us from living effectively in the present. By assuming that we do have the guarantee of tomorrow, we can postpone many of the things we need to be doing today. This false hope that we will be able to accomplish something "tomorrow" provides many people with the excuse they

want to put off the very thing they need to do today.

I heard a story of a pastor visiting newcomers to the community. The wife began to attend church but this man always put the pastor off. He said that he would come to church just as soon as he got straightened out. Each time the pastor would visit him the man would make the same reply. As soon as he got straightened out he would come to church. Finally, the man died. The pastor was called upon to hold the funeral. As he stood behind his pulpit in the church sanctuary looking down at the coffin with the man inside, he thought to himself, "Well, he finally kept his promise." Be careful not to let your promises be fulfilled the same way.

The bottom line of the whole matter is that we only have today. This is why the Scripture says that "**Look, now is the acceptable time.**" (2Corinthians 6:2a Net Bible) It is an affirmation that we live in the present. The past is gone. The future may never arrive. But now is here.

Now is the only time we can accept and it is the only time acceptable to God. The question we must answer is: What are we going to do with now? Are we either living in the past or the future? Are there things we have been putting off until tomorrow---things which we should be doing today? Are you sitting back thinking that there will come that perfect situation which will enable you to be involved or fulfill that dream? It will never come.

This is the message we need

(Continued on page 2)

to hear at this time of year. We must live in the **now** in 2009, because it is the only time we have. Thank God for the past. Thank God for whatever future there is awaiting us. But live **now**. We must live now in terms of our personal lives and also in terms of the church. You see, we cannot simply wait for the future to come upon us. If 2009 is going to be lived for Jesus, it must be lived one day at a time. Every day will be today. The only time we have to live is **now**.

So, there are no resolutions to make other than the decision to live **now**. And the questions which you need to answer today have to do with what God is telling you to do **now**.

What are the issues with which you need to deal with today? Are there sins you need to confess today? Do you need to make a decision to make Him the Lord of your life? Is there a service He wants you to engage in? "**Look now is the day of salvation.**" (2Corinthians 6:2b Net Bible). This is your time.

In terms of your commitment to the local church, what is the Lord telling you to do today? The church is you, and is only as strong as you allow it to be by your commitment and service. Are you involved, committed, active, alive, pressing-in, dedicated, and dependable?

Are you involved in the ministry of the church by giving of your time, talents, and tithe? What is the Lord touching in your life today? What will you do about it? Whatever you do, you must do it **now**. It is the only time you have.

**Edited and adapted from a sermon called "The Time Is Now" by J David Hoke**

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This is a special time of year when family and friends catch up with each other and acquaintances are renewed. I tried to catch up with quite a few this year and want to write and let you know how these folks are getting along.

David Charles' surgery was a great success and he has been enjoying having his daughters and son with him for a week at a time. He and Ruth are very thankful for their blessings and are also thankful for the prayers offered on his behalf from all of you. Rip and Norma Ripley report physical problems that are improving and are really thankful for all of God's blessings these many years. Norma tells me that they were blessed with a wonderful visit from Mark Dorsey recently. Dorothy Layton is getting ready to embark on a new voyage. She is going to pack up and move to a smaller place. Pray for her that she takes all the right things and leaves behind the rest. DuWayne Chapman tells us he is about the same physically and gets out to enjoy church weekly and shopping trips now and then. He loves to keep up with us via the newsletter and picture page. Laurie Eckles enjoys her boys and was able to spend the vacation up north at their beautiful log house. Rob and Lynn Vaughn had a lovely weekend

with their 3 sons, 2 daughter-in-laws and 3 grandchildren. I tried to gather some pictures of family gatherings. Kane and Jennie Begeman were in Michigan from Arizona for the holidays. Seth lives in Cleveland, but Nick lives in nearby Toledo. Ila Baker spent Christmas at her daughter Sandy Fine's home with some of her great-grandchildren.

Christmas was missing a main ingredient this year...our usual Christmas Eve service! I got caught up in the memories and decided to write a little about it. Remember these are just tidbits through the years. About 40 years ago when we met in a little renovated school house near our present church, Judy Begeman decided we should have a Christmas Eve service and spoke loud and clear about it. Some of us were not in favor, but she was so enthusiastic that we finally caught her fever and agreed that it would be nice. (Of course no one would come so we were sure we would not have many.) The main memory I have of this first service was the wonderful chicken salad sandwiches Judy made and the Russian Tea Cakes for dessert. Those are little round white nut cookies that Judy made for years for each family and we all doled them out like gold because they were so delicious. Little did Judy know what a wonderful yearly event that first service would spark. Lynn Vaughn wrote "One of the memories that I have of the schoolhouse church Christmas Eve is playing "O Holy Night" on the old upright piano and my Dad (David Charles) playing the violin with me. I can still picture the rooms and the windows and the pews and the platform and of course Judy's cookies are never to be forgotten. I would pay quite a lot for 6 of those right about now. I remember she used to give the family a pack of cookies and my share was 6 cookies."

Forty wonderful years of programs and magnificent refreshments. I remember one year that Thelma Chapman was hostess and the beautiful fruit platters. We have done complicated musicals, Especially for Shepherds under David Charles' directorship and terrific plays, Papa Panoff with Dick Lane dressed in a beard and old clothes, so well disguised that some people did not know him, candlelight services with real candles and more wonderful, wonderful years of memories. I could write a few paragraphs on the different programs because they are certainly varied. We usually have a church completely full and one year some left because the crowd was great and no seats could be found. As some of you have heard, we cancelled this year's service due to a strong stomach virus that many had that week. Fear not, we will come back in 2009 with added enthusiasm. Forty years is too long a tradition to abandon our annual event. We wish each of you a belated Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Words that can be typed with one hand tied behind your back:  
'Stewardesses' and 'lollipop'.

## Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

We had sleet, snow, lots of snow, power outages, and spring-like weather this month. Dave and Terrie Fedor and Charlie and I went on an investigative trip through sleet in early December and saw many a car along the side of the road as they journeyed to the Creation Museum in Petersburg Kentucky. We thoroughly enjoyed our time together and exploring the museum. Both families are looking forward to taking their grandchildren back for a visit someday.

At the beginning of this month, Marshalla Goins and Katie Begeman received the right hand of fellowship as they officially joined our church. We have known each of them and loved them for years. Nate Valentine has served this month as Worship Service MC. His reverent scripture readings, graciousness and mellifluous voice are appreciated. Don Daniels is the man who is always ready to pitch in for variety time. He recently gave us a story about a little girl who loved her artificial pearls and couldn't give them up to her father when he asked. It was only when she willingly surrendered them out of love to her loving father, that he gave her real pearls. Isn't that just what we need to do with our heavenly father?

My mother, Dorothy Austin's good friend, Ollie Young, passed away this month, leaving a gap in her life but relief that his time of suffering is over. Richard Brown, a new member of our church, suffered a mild stroke at the beginning of the month but we were so happy to see him back at church the following week, with some weakness on his right side but his smile in full bloom.

We practiced faithfully for the annual Christmas Eve service throughout the month of December. Imagine our dismay and sorrow that we cancelled the first Christmas Eve service in forty years because of a particularly nasty stomach flu that laid its victims low sometimes for as long as 12 hours with nausea and hesitant to eat for days. We truly regret not having the program because Christmas Eve is a time of year when we prize coming together with so many visitors and praising God for our dear Savior's birth. All who had the virus have since recovered and only a few people came down with the flu after the program was cancelled.

Going through our Christmas lists from year to year

shows us what has changed from year to year and what has stayed the same. Our church had several experiences this year during this month that caused us to think about what is essential. To borrow a line from a sermon this month by Elder Moore: "The Conquering Christ of Christmas will get us through the coming year, even in the face of the killing of the innocents."

We did treasure many of the usual joys of the Christmas season. Kane and Jennie Begeman came east to visit family from Phoenix. Families gathered for Christmas dinners. We rang the bell for the Salvation Army and enjoyed running into various friends and relatives. Sydney Begeman rang the bell with several groups of people during their assigned stint and even taught Aurine Moore a few bell-shaking dance moves during their stint together. Nate Valentine and Charlie Moore paid visits to see Ila Baker and Violet Chapman. Charlie Moore delivered food baskets. Joel Valentine and I enjoyed a fabulous Gaither Christmas Concert in Toledo Ohio and found that our seating at the top row of the Seagate Convention Theater was the best in the house.

Bekah Smeltzer had to stay behind when her parents Joe and Kathy, headed to Florida for their visit with David Charles, who had a remarkable recovery this month from heart valve surgery and his dear wife Ruth. On Christmas Day, Bekah discovered her parent's basement flooding. She prepared a Christmas dinner for Aunt Kay and Uncle Jim and they worked with her to repair the damage. Later in the evening, Charlie Moore went over to help scoop up more of the flood waters. Kathy Smeltzer, upon her return home reported that the Christmas visit to Florida changed many Christmas traditions but reinforced for her how much children mean to their parents during the holidays - and vice versa.

Wanda Arquette had surgery recently on her colon but she had a happy tribe of Christmas seasons visitors, with Leslie, Tom and Rebecca Miller and Eric and his family gathering. Leslie had hoped to come for a visit but the Christmas Eve program cancellation and car trouble the following Sabbath prevented us from seeing her. We'll hope for next year. Until our next issue, may God be with you and you with Him.

### A New Way to Look at the Book of Isaiah from Sermon Central

It is interesting that there are as many chapters in Isaiah as there are books in the whole Bible. These chapters divide into thirty-nine and twenty-seven, as do the books of the Bible in the Old and New Testaments. The tone of the first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah has an Old Testament ring, while the remaining chapters thrill with the evangel of the New Testament. The last twenty-seven chapters divide into three sections, each containing nine chapters. Isaiah, in his center division, deals with the Messiah. Of the nine chapters in the "Messiah" section (49-57), the center chapter (53), gives the clearest view of Calvary to be found in Old Testament Scripture. It seems appropriate that Isaiah's name means "salvation of Jehovah."

**CHURCH OF THE  
LORD OUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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## **New House**

A family had spent the day moving from their farmhouse into a brand new house in a development nearby.

Very early the next morning, their 3 year-old son ran in to the parent's bedroom to wake them up.

The mother dressed him and told him to play in the yard.

About 20 minutes later, he came running back.

"Mommy, Mommy," he exclaimed, "Everybody has doorbells - and they all work!"





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THE TIM & DIANE  
BEGEMANS



ILA BAKER & GREAT-GRANDKIDS



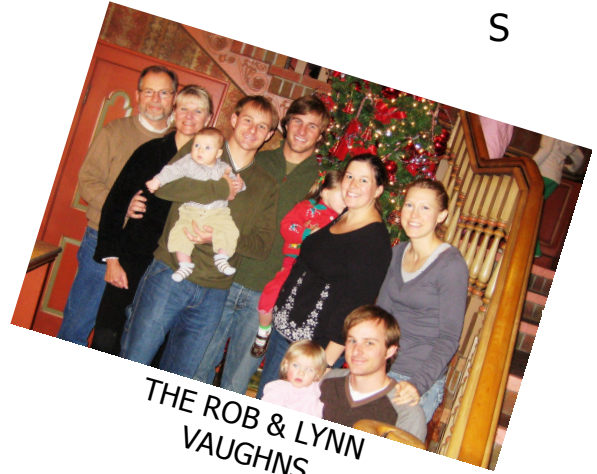
BEKAH SMELTZER &  
THE DEHAANS



THE LARRY & PEGGY  
CHARLES



THE ROB & LYNN  
VAUGHNS



MARCIA MOORE



CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE PAST



2001



ESPECIALLY FOR SHEPHERDS



2001



1996



1999



2001



1999