

November 2025

Dear Brethren:

"Act now, while supplies last." "This is a limited-time offer. Don't miss out!" "This exclusive one-day sale will not be extended!"

At any given time, it seems that there are all kinds of sales promotions seeking to conjure within us a sense of urgency to induce a rushed response. Some of these products might actually provide value to the customer, but never forget that the most fundamental purpose of this tactic is to create revenue for the merchant.

The very same strategy has been used, as well, by religionists from time immemorial. Ministers, faith leaders, and churches have often sought to create a sense of urgency in the minds of targeted listeners. There are many who may be sincere—meaning that their true intent is to try to "save souls"—but there are also many who simply use religion to "sell" a different kind of product to enrich the sponsor. Contributions of tithes and offerings from those seeking spiritual salvation often create a "cash cow" for those claiming to offer the means to connect with God. Religion, indeed, is *big business*. The image of the corner preacher—standing upon a soap box and proclaiming, "The end is near! Repent and be saved!"—is very clichéd. For millennia, many have presumed the authority to preach in Christ's name, but have wound up turning the very exercise of a sincere Christian ministry into a mockery. Too bad.

At the same time, if you are one who believes sincerely in the existence of an all-powerful God who is offering eternal salvation to human beings according to a prescribed program—and if that Plan is actually real and true—then you cannot simply dismiss every single admonition to "act now." The Bible is full of warnings to take seriously our spiritual obligations:

Wherefore the rather, brethren, *give diligence* to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall (2 Peter 1:10) [emphasis mine throughout].

That very calling is expressed by God to be an invitation requiring an RSVP:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Revelation 3:20).

Seek ye the LORD *while he may be found*, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isaiah 55:6–7).

No doubt, there are a lot of fakers out there trying to capitalize upon God's requirement for religious urgency in order to line their own pockets with earthly mammon. The Bible is full of examples of that. But, that does not negate the fact that God does indeed call, and then requires those called to show fruits of repentance (Acts 26:20).

God wants us to prove whether we appreciate His spiritual calling and then manifest desire to share in those glorious things that He is offering. To the extent that we respond with *some level of enthusiasm and urgency* shows Him that we value His free gift. On the other hand, being dismissive—even for the sake of avoiding being duped by religious charlatans—never shields us from peril. If we refuse to answer the door for *anyone*, we will surely avoid being deceived by *all of the liars*. But, in doing so, we will likewise shun Jesus Christ when He Himself knocks. Remaining aloof and detached, therefore, is a losing strategy, because it discards "the baby with the bath water." In some way, somehow, we must find a means to identify the real Jesus Christ apart from all of the imposters, and then we must *get excited about our true spiritual calling and act upon it!*

Called to Legitimate Urgency

Even though God's words are often co-opted and misused, His admonition to the faithful is still very real:

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, *Redeeming the time*, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but *be filled with the Spirit* (Ephesians 5:14–18).

There is a good reason that Jesus Christ gave the parable of the Ten Virgins as a warning to His legitimate children:

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the

bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh (Matthew 25:1–13).

Christ is making it very clear that any among us who are counted as wise will be acting with urgency *now* to prepare for His unexpected future arrival. Because He refuses to allow us to know when that moment of revelation will be, we are required *at all times* to act aggressively to prepare ourselves spiritually by putting on more of His mind through the Holy Spirit (the oil). Kicking that can down the road is a recipe for disaster. He has created this Plan to preclude our being able to make *a last-minute run to the spiritual convenience store*.

How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth [by an opportunistic predator], and thy want as an armed man (Proverbs 6:9–11).

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. *Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh* (Matthew 24:37–44).

Jesus gave us the perfect example of what we should do through His own action: "I must work the works of him that sent me, *while it is day*: the night cometh, when no man can

work" (John 9:4). Jesus had to live with a sense of urgency to fulfill His obligations before the Father. We must likewise learn to follow that same example daily.

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to *awake out of sleep*: for *now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof (Romans 13:11–14).

Productive Urgency

Taking to heart the need for spiritual urgency is a good start. But that in itself is not enough to produce good results. We can easily get caught up in a flurry of "religious works" and still fail to pass the real test that God has set before us. The Apostle Paul was inspired to write about this very real threat:

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, *not as one that beateth the air*: But *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:26–27).

Comparing our spiritual pursuits to a footrace introduces the need for discipline to train to win an actual race. It is not about just showing up at the track in a warmup suit and looking "athletic." A race winner will have to train to become strong, learn how to time his start, how to stay in his lane, and how to expend energy efficiently through each phase of the race to make it to the finish line and achieve a "personal best." Paul uses the term, "beat[ing] the air," to describe great urgency applied to actions which, in the end, do not actually help a runner win the race. God does not want us just to "look spiritual." He wants us to transform ourselves by breaking bad habits and learning how to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. That is called "spiritual conversion." Conversion does not happen without enduring the discomfort of an aggressive training regime focused upon correct elements. Ineffective training includes lots of "religious activity" without producing spiritual fruits:

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:22–23).

These are ones whom Christ will conclude were focused upon the wrong things, in essence, "beating the air." They looked spiritual, but they did not actually put sin—iniquity—out of their lives, which is the overarching requirement of a true Christian!

Therefore, it is not just about being urgent for urgency's sake. It is about applying urgency to the right areas of life in order to foster real conversion!

Mockers Always Appear

Another reality in life is that anyone who tries to improve himself will face resistance, especially from the taunting of those who doubt, mock, and dismiss. How many stories have been written of ones who achieved great things only in spite of early ridicule of the doubters? Yes, it is true that many make goals for themselves that are never realized, because most are not willing to "pay the price" to achieve their dreams. But every once in awhile, a child with a fanciful goal for himself actually "pulls it off" and becomes a great success. Those kinds of success stories are few by comparison, so, if you make a habit of doubting the "silly aspirations" of every child—such as becoming a pilot, a race car driver, or an astronaut—you mostly will wind up being correct. But making a habit out of denigrating the hopes of all dreamers means that one day, you will surely wind up mocking a future success story. The same is absolutely true concerning those who are trying to fulfill a spiritual calling in this life.

Jesus Christ Himself was mocked for doing work that seemed "too lofty" for His station:

And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? *Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon?* and are not his sisters here with us? And *they were offended at him.* But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house (Mark 6:2–4).

Yes, it is true that familiarity often breeds contempt, so that those closest to you might actually be your biggest detractors. If it was true for Jesus Christ—who was perfect and filled with the Holy Spirit—it will certainly be true for any one of us who sets a goal to become a spiritual overcomer. If you try to change your life for the better, there will always be many to remind you of your past failures. And God forbid that you tell your family and

friends that you have come to believe that you are called to become a member of the God Family! Who do you think you are? Are you better than all of us? What crazy cult have you joined now? The fact is, your calling will be doubted and mocked: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

But the worst kind of mockers are the ones who once believed—like you do—but have since turned away and now hate that they were ever part of God's Church. They call Herbert Armstrong a fraud, and they will treat anyone like a fool who finds value in his teachings:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, *Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:3–7).

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy [Spirit], Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (Jude 17–21).

Because of the long history of religious fraudsters in this world—not to mention a visceral hatred for God's Truth—whoever the true people of God turn out to be, they will be lumped in with the rest and treated, at best, as fools. This, too, is part of the price paid by anyone who will follow the true Christ:

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me (John 15:18–21).

A Day of Revealing

If the Bible is just a collection of fairytales written by men, then the admonitions to become urgent to redeem the time before the return of Jesus Christ can be dismissed as mere superstitious folklore. But if not, and these books are indeed the revelation of a purposeful God concerning His requirements for the saints, then no matter how much religion has been abused in the past, the wise will take heed:

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee (1 Timothy 4:16).

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye *take heed*, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts (2 Peter 1:19).

God has declared what He intends to do, no matter how much the bad acts of men have caused that Master Plan to be doubted and ridiculed:

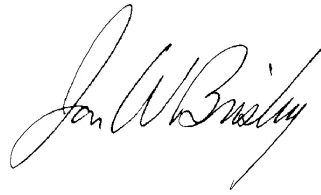
The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Therefore also now, saith the LORD, *turn ye even to me with all your heart*, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and *turn unto the LORD your God*: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil [relents from applying curses to those who truly repent] (Joel 2:10–13).

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, *behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be*. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the

end, the first and the last. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city* (Revelation 22:7–14).

To the true people of God, called to the hope of being born into the Family of God, may you endure every trial—including the mocking of scoffers—to be among those children who grow up to become the greatest of successes. If you believe it, and are willing to fight for it against every obstacle, your Heavenly Father is determined to give it to you.

With sincere love and respect in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jon W. Brisby". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial "J" and a distinct "B".

Jon W. Brisby