

Titus010103-101611  
Bridge of Hope  
October 16, 2011

“The Time Is Now!”

Let's get started with our message for this time of worship. **Titus 1:1-3 (NLT)** *This letter is from Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. I have been sent to proclaim faith to those God has chosen and to teach them to know the truth that shows them how to live godly lives. This truth gives them confidence that they have eternal life, which God—who does not lie—promised them before the world began. **And now at just the right time** he has revealed this message, which we announce to everyone. It is by the command of God our Savior that I have been entrusted with this work for him.*

Today I have come with a message from the Lord. A message that serves as an introduction to a short series we will share this fall. On Sunday, October 9, 2011, I woke up with what I am about to share today. Like Paul said to Titus, I repeat for Bridge of Hope, **“And now at just the right time he has revealed this message, which we announce to everyone. It is by the command of God our Savior that I have been entrusted with this work for him.”** Here is what I believe the Holy Spirit shared with me that day.

This message is about a call of God. This call is to a people. It is a call to His family. It is a call to you and I as we take our place among the community of God's people. Jesus is calling to each of us and to all of us. He is calling Bridge of Hope as a tribe, a family. Do you understand this? It is more than just you, it is us, and that makes it you.

How you answer is important because it affects everyone else. You are not alone in your walk with God for you stand among a people and He is calling us. It is God's heart that everyone will respond and follow His call, but God knows that some will not. Why will they not respond? It is because they are too captivated with the other gods to follow Him. Some will not follow because they refuse to live by faith in Christ. Others have rejected His call before and will reject His call again. Many are simply too busy to listen or respond.

While it is the heart of God for all to respond and follow His call, He will not be holding back those who are willing and obedient. Do you understand? Jesus is not planning to wait for you this time. God is raising a people for this day. He has been raising a body of believers to live the mission that He gave to us. We are in this together, but we will all have to decide if we are really in this at all. The will of God is plain and easy to understand. He calls to us all, He calls to a people, and He wants us to follow Him.

The message of His call is simple and easy to understand. It is the same message He has given to us before, but we, as a people, were not ready. We listened, we responded, but we soon found ourselves backing away. We were not prepared for the struggle of His call nor the strength it takes to live out such a calling. And so God waited and taught us more. He led us along the way as we wandered and grew. Today God says, “The Time Is Now!”

It is time to be His people, the community of God, called, Bridge of Hope. He has given us the foundation upon which to grow and expand the influence of His kingdom through us. He has

provided all we need to get the job done. Now comes the day where He asks us to trust Him fully and take what He has patiently taught us and use it to make disciples as we live as disciples of Jesus. Now is the time!

- **IT'S TIME TO GO!**

1. **The time of preparation has ended.**
  - God has been preparing His people.
  - He has been getting us ready for the work to be done.
  - The time of training and preparing for what lies ahead of us has come to an end. It isn't that we will not learn more as we go, because we will.
  - Simply put, He has prepared us and now we can go.
2. **It is time to move forward, it is time to stop standing still.**
  - Some have waited patiently for the time to move forward; and it has come.
  - Some are fearful of taking steps into areas they are not sure of; the time has come to move.
  - God's call to you and I is about movement.
  - It is about taking steps of faith that bring praise to Him.
  - It is about not staying in the same place you have been, so you can go where He is calling you to work with Him.
  - We must be willing to move; we must be willing to stop standing still.
3. **Hebrews 11:8-9 (NIV) *By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.***
  - Abraham understood the importance of obedience and faith working together as he trusted God for the things he didn't know as he stepped out on what he did know.
4. **It is time to go even though you are not certain of where you are going and to step out by faith as you follow the voice of God.**
  - He has spoken to us and given a vision to pastor this area where He has planted us.
  - He has taught that we are missionaries, all of us, and that we have a purpose to fulfill. We are Bridge of Hope, a sent people who are ready to share the Gospel with people all around us.
5. **The time has come to obey in body, mind, and heart as we all move in the same direction at the same time to achieve the same goal.**
6. **Are you ready to go?**

- **IT'S TIME TO RUN!**

1. **Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV) *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.***
2. **The race has been marked out for you.**
  - It is time to run the course that has been set.
  - It is not an aimless course without direction.
  - The way has been marked and Jesus has gone before you and prepared you for what is ahead.
3. **The opportunity you needed for conditioning has been given.**

- You have had extra time to get ready.
  - The Holy Spirit has reminded you of truth from Christ, truth that has made you ready this time.
  - 4. **Galatians 5:7-9** (NIV) *You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough."*
    - Some have run before but for many different reasons they have chosen to sit on the sidelines recently.
    - It isn't God who persuaded you to watch when you could be participating.
  - 5. It is time to run the race that God has marked out for you.
  - 6. Are you ready to run with the horses?
- **IT'S TIME TO LIVE!**
    1. **The way to live has been taught.**
      - You are not going blindly into the place you do not know, you have been taught how to live rightly and it lights your path as you go.
      - Over time the Holy Spirit has revealed the truth of the Gospel and you have discovered how to live as Christ's disciple. He has reminded you of things you knew all along.
    2. **It is time to live what you know.**
      - The markers have been put in place.
      - Matthew has taught you who to follow and the character of God's people. Deuteronomy taught you the importance of family and the legacy you give to the next generation.
      - Live it. Be the example of a true disciple of Jesus.
      - Give the next generation that follows you a reason to serve Jesus.
    3. **It is about living in the way that disciples of Jesus are supposed to live:**
      - **1 Peter 2:11-12** (NIV) *Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*
      - **1 Peter 2:16-17** (NIV) *Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.*
      - **1 Peter 3:8-9** (NIV) *Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.*
    4. **It is time to live rightly.**
    5. **Are you willing to live the way of Christ?**

Conclusion: **2 Corinthians 6:1-2** (NIV) *As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. **THE TIME IS NOW!** The time is not tomorrow, or six months from this day, it is now. We must overcome our propensity to think we know better than God and have time to do what we had planned or wanted to do. There is urgency in this call and it demands an immediacy of response.*

Shed the sin that entangles you and impedes your progress. Throw off the restraints of the ways and concerns of this world. Cast down the vain imaginations that keep you held captive. Why be caught looking at the wrong place and find yourself captivated from what is really worth looking at? Cast down such thoughts and place your gaze in the right direction. When our focus shifts from Jesus to the troubles of our world and those who try to lead we lose our way. We are restrained because we are not looking in the right place. The struggles of this world will weigh anyone down when that is what they focus on. The problems of life will restrain the strongest of people when that is what they choose to look at.

Get rid of the gods that have captured your heart. You say that you have no other gods except Jesus. Then why are so many other things more important than Him? It is time to rid yourself of the gods of your land and have your heart once again captured by the One True God, Jesus Christ the Lord.

Listen to the instructions God gave to the people of Israel as He prepared for them to enter the Promised Land. **Deuteronomy 11:16-17** (NIV) *Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce, and you will soon perish from the good land the LORD is giving you.*

The time is now and God looks for His children to respond and get the job accomplished. Where we fell short before, it is time to get it right now. In this day and at this time Jesus says to us, *“Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.”* ( **2 Corinthians 8:11-12** NIV)

Let us exchange gifts with Jesus and then go on mission to exchange gifts with one another and the people He sends us to. Are you ready and willing now?