

## **8-28-22 Message OCCUPY TILL I COME**

Intro:

Wednesday night just as we were starting our midweek Bible Study and prayer meeting my wife got a call from Gene Accardi that Elaine's mom, Midge Accardi was not responding and had stroke like symptoms. Elaine and I immediately left and went over Midge's house and found her on her recliner and was not responding. We called an ambulance and took her to the regional hospital in Scranton. My wife and I and Peter and Gene were with her till about 6:00 AM and she seemed to be resting peacefully when the nurse came in about 5:55 and told us that there wasn't any more heart beat and Midge had passed away.

Now those 12 hours that were wrapped around Midge's last hours on earth made me think about the fact that we are all going to go through the same journey someday.

David put it this way when he called Solomon to give him his last charge.. he said, "I Kings 2:2 I go the way of all the earth..."

In other words this is the earthly process that we are all going to go through. The only exception will be for those who are alive when the Lord comes to resurrect his saints. Midge was 93 years old. She lived a long life, some would think, yet it does not seem that long when you look at where we are in the road map of our journey on this planet.

For about 12 hours, as we spent time at the bed side of Midge Accardi, I could tell she was struggling to live. It was a struggle to breath, a struggle to get comfortable on her bed. Then they asked if we wanted to let her have a pain killer and that settled her down but it was not long after that she fell asleep never to wake up in this life.

Yet this I can say, Midge had a good life. Except for those last 12 hours, she lived a life relatively free from major struggles.

When you spend time like we did at the bed side of someone who leaves this planet you can't help but think about what this life is all about.

The truth is someday we all will travel that path that David, called the way of all the earth and this is a humbling thought and journey. Think about this: God brought us into this world for a reason and someday he will take us out of this world on a set time he has determined.

The whole time we stayed at Midge's bedside, I could not help but think that we are just biding our time on this earth until he calls us home.

A verse comes to mind that articulates this journey that we are going through..

The verse that comes to mind is Luke 19:13 where he said, Occupy till I come..

That is what we are doing, just busying ourselves, living our lives until he comes or until he takes us home.

Peter and Jean had been taking care of Midgy and she was getting weaker and weaker. So she needed help just going to the bathroom. She had been pretty much making trips back and forth between the recliner in her living room it has been a real struggle for her and Peter and Jean.. then the other verse that comes to mind is this:

Psalms 90:9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale [that is told].

The Bible says, the wages of sin is death, there is no easy way to die. I think this is what Moses was talking about. As he witnessed a whole generation of Israelites pass away and as Moses saw it, they perished in their sin .

As I thought about life those 12 hours we spent with Midgy in her final struggle I could not help but think of this verse ... Occupy till I come..

That is what we are doing .. occupying living out our lives, Jesus said this to his disciples. Now this parable about occupying ourselves in this world till Jesus comes back for us, was motivated by this statement.

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

The Jews really thought that the Messiah was going to come and immediately usher in the Kingdom. This is what they believed.

Now this is part of the problem we face in this life. There are so many things that happen that we don't understand. We think God should do this or that. We read into the Bible what we want to read.

The early disciples.. had a hard time understanding this concept of the messiah going away.. and the Jews even today have a problem with this.. The Jews want a Messiah that will immediately bring peace and prosperity for Israel, solve the Palestinian Conflict, and secure safety for Israel..

Those early disciples were no different, they expected and wanted Jesus to immediately usher in the Kingdom. Jesus shared a parable.. to help prepare his disciples for his departure..

READ:

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

Luke 19:12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

Luke 19:13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

Luke 19:14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this [man] to reign over us.

Luke 19:15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Luke 19:16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

Luke 19:17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

Luke 19:18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

Luke 19:19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

Luke 19:20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, [here is] thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

Luke 19:21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

Luke 19:22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, [thou] wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

Luke 19:23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

Luke 19:24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give [it] to him that hath ten pounds.

Luke 19:25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

Luke 19:26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay [them] before me.

### **OCCUPY TILL I COME**

Now in this parable you have the people involved in this narrative. First you the Lord who is going away to receive his Kingdom, that is Jesus Christ, our messiah, and our King. He spoke this parable because the Jews thought that the messiah was going to usher in the Kingdom immediately. He spoke this parable to correct them. To this day the reason the Jews reject Jesus as their messiah was because he did not usher in the Kingdom. Since he did not bring deliverance to Israel, he could not be the messiah.

Judaism affirms that Jesus did not fulfill the messianic prophecies by ushering in an era of universal peace (Isaiah 2:4), building the Third Temple (Ezekiel 37:26-28), and gathering all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 43:5-6)

Now every human being is somehow represented in this parable

What is compelling about this story is this: You're in it, every single one of you somewhere. There are only three possibilities. You are either a true servant of the nobleman. You are a false servant of the nobleman. Or you are his enemy. There are no other categories. It is again one of those amazing illustrations that Jesus invents that is comprehensive and embraces all of humanity.

Again there are three type of people in this parable:

Now in the parable you also have those who are his true servants. Hopefully that is all of us. To us he says, Occupy till I come..

Then you have those who claim to be his servants but are really tares amongst the wheat. They are unfruitful and neglectful and disobey the command to occupy till he comes.

Then also in the parable you have those who reject him and says this..

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay [them] before me.

So you have his servants who are doing his will..

You have those who pretend to be his servants and are not doing his will..

You have those who hate him and do not want him to reign over them!

Consider what are we to be doing in this short life that the Lord has given us.

Hopefully this morning I am talking to those who are his servants and want to do his will. There may be some who are pretending.

Now I do not think there are people here who hate him, so you are either here doing his will or some may be here, thinking they know him but don't...

So is command to us is this: **OCCUPY TILL I COME..** What does this mean?

So what are we to be doing in this life that he has given us:

Occupy!

***I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO OCCUPY TILL I COME***

pragmateuomai, prag-mat-yoo'-om-ahee; from 4229; to busy oneself with, i.e. to trade:-occupy.

----- Dictionary Trace -----

pragma, prag'-mah; from 4238; a deed; by impl. an affair; by extens. an object (material):-business, matter, thing, work.

The word occupy means be busy, trade.. work.. do business..

The Lord wants us to live our lives.. in such a way that we are serving Him and busying ourselves.. in his business..

What did Jesus mean when he said occupy till I come..

***1. To occupy Means To Keep His Business going While He is Gone  
He wants us take care of his business.. while he is away..***

Each of us receive a pound to invest in that business. Since each person receives the same thing, I have to conclude that pound represents our lives. This God has given to each of us. He has given us a life to live. That life needs to be invested in taking care of our King's business. This is the Kingdom business.

Did you ever notice how when a business closes down it does not take long for the grounds and the building to deteriorate ...

You can see this with the Clifford market, and Northeastern Farm Equipment.. buildings..

Building goes without heat.. Paint seems to peel quicker  
Grass grows up around the grounds..  
Windows soon are broken.. and torn up..  
Things are neglected.. etc..

THE LORD DOES NOT WANT TO SEE THAT TO HAPPEN TO HIS BUSINESS...

When business is not being transacted soon things fall apart..

In the day that the Lord said this.. the main commerce was agricultural.. If a person had a piece of property they could plant crops.. get gain, live off of what they grew and sell above this.. and gain more..

God likens his church to a vineyard in many other parables.. He is looking for us to nurture that vineyard to see a healthy spiritual return..

God wants us to take care of his Church while he is gone..

## **2. *To Occupy Means to Work***

Mathew Henry:

They that trade diligently and faithfully in the service of Christ shall be gainers. We cannot say so of the business of the world; many a labouring tradesman has been a loser; but those that trade for Christ shall be gainers;

Proverbs 13:11 Wealth [gotten] by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.

Christ expects us to be labouring for him while he is away..

I Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

We have a lot of people who are not willing to work for the Lord.. Too busy with their own agenda...

Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

## **3. *To Occupy Implies we are people without a King amongst hostile people..***

Man without a King is a man without a country..

We are pilgrims and strangers..

The citizens hated him and did not want him to rule over them...

So too they who hate him may be hostile to us and hate us..

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

Hebrews 11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

Hebrews 11:16 But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

I Peter 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech [you] as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

I Peter 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by [your] good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Some say Jesus shared this parable as he walked between Jericho and Jerusalem which was about 17 miles because they were familiar with the fact that the Kings like Herod who ruled, had to get their authority to rule from Rome. Also these Kings when they were set up as Kings were brutal with their enemies. Remember, it was Herod who killed all the babies 2 and under in Bethlehem when he felt his throne was threatened by a messiah. So in light of this he shares this parable.

Mean while, the servants of the true Messiah were counted as enemies by the citizens of this world. In light of this fact he says, Occupy till I come. This includes tough times since the citizens hated him they will hate his servants.

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you.

John 15:19 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.

John 15:20 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.

We are commanded to do our Lord's business.. Occupy till he comes in a hostile world, a world that hates their King. Therefore the world will not be excited about our efforts to serve him.

#### **4. To Occupy implies that we should be victorious over the enemy..**

The Bible says, that Salt that has lost it's savour is good for nothing buy to be trodden under foot.

Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

We as Christians need to be an influence on the world. However, when the world influences us we are good for nothing and will be trodden under foot!

One of the definitions of Occupy is as follows..

*take control of (a place, especially a country) by military conquest or settlement.*

*"the region was occupied by Britain during World War I"*

*synonyms: capture, seize, take possession of, conquer, invade, overrun, take over, colonize, garrison, annex, dominate, subjugate, hegemonize, hold, commandeer, requisition*

I John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

## ***II. To Occupy means to fulfill his commission and work..***

We have the word occupation .. from the word occupy..

What was our Lord's commission?

What was his job description?

What was his work?

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

The Jews did not realize that Jesus came first to seek citizens for the Kingdom and was not concerned about the elements of this world. He was not seeking to salvage institutions, lands, economies, earthly domains..

Luke 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

The Jews wanted power over Rome, a nation, the glory, power.. etc..

Jesus wanted men to come to repentance and salvation. That is why he said, the Kingdom must start within us through salvation.

This is why Jesus said, my Kingdom is not of this world.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault [at all].



Jesus came the first time into this world to recruit citizens, he was seeking sinners to come to repentance. He came to seek and save the lost. He came to translate people from the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God.

John MacArthur:

Jesus was saying, before I come to set up a kingdom, I must do a salvation work. He comes first as Savior. Then He comes as King. To split that out a little bit and make simple sense out of it, He did not come to overthrow Rome and set up an earthly kingdom. He did not come to right all wrongs socially. He did not come to straighten out all civil inequities. He did not come to make the nation or the world moral. He did not come to establish economic justice. He did not come to institute Jewish triumphalism. He did not come the first time for this. He came to save. He came to do the work of salvation. He came to offer salvation to all who would confess their sinful lostness, repent and believe in Him and to die on the cross and rise from the dead to provide the sufficient atoning work that would satisfy the justice of God by which He could forgive sinners.

His stories were always about this, lost sheep, lost coins, lost sons, a beggar, Lazarus, hated by everybody but loved by God who ends up in heaven, the salvation of the leper, the salvation of a publican, the salvation of two blind men, the salvation of a despised tax collector named Zacchaeus. It was always stories and stories and stories about salvation and events about evangelism which ended in the salvation of men and women. Everything pointed to His coming to establish an internal kingdom. Chapter 17 verse 21, "The kingdom is within you." The first time He came to save, He didn't come the first time to make the world a better place to live in. He didn't come the first time to right all the earthly evils, to fix things, to end in justice, to stop abuse, to bring an end to crime, to destroy all wicked institutions, to end poverty, injustice, slavery, corruption. He didn't come to stop that. He came to seek and save that which was lost.

The world lauds preachers that do not park on the eternal but seek reformation not transformation. Martin Luther King Jr., preached a social Justice Gospel and the world loved him for that. What we need to turn this country around is repentance, and conversion, not reformation, and social reform. We need transformation and not reformation. Our Lord's agenda is to see men saved.

He did not come to over turn Rome, remove earthly kings, fight against inflation, poverty, crime, corruption, and a host of other earthy symptoms of sin. He went after the sinner, and sought to bring them to conversion. This would solve all the other problems in one shot.

The New Covenant involves a new heart.

Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Jeremiah 31:32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:  
Jeremiah 31:33 But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.  
Jeremiah 31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

This is what our Lord's commission was, and this commission he passes on to us. He says, be about this occupation. This will solve all our other woes in one fair sweep.

When that man came to our Lord and asked him to mediate between he and his brother about their earthly inheritance he refused..

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.  
Luke 12:14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

When the crowds wanted to take him by force and make him king, he avoided them.

### **III. TO OCCUPY TILL HE COMES PRECLUDES WE SHOULD BE READY FOR HIS RETURN**

He said, I will come. He did not say when.

He purposely does not tell us when, because he wants us to live our lives with an expectancy of his return.

Our Lord will come back. There are many mockers who deny his return. He is coming. He will return.

Everything that people are clamoring for our Lord will take care of when he returns.

When he came the first time His mission was to come and seek and save the lost.. That should be our mission today...

When He returns he will make everything right ..

When he came the first time he did not strive but was meek and mild..  
When he returns he will rule with a rod of iron..

When he came the first time he did not bring judgment on rebels.. he wanted to save rebels..

When he returns he will put down all rebellion against himself and God..

So many are occupied with political matters in this life, environmental matters in this life, injustices, causes, issues, controversies, racial injustices, social injustices, causes, and concerns of this present life.

All these will be made right when Jesus returns.. However, in this life only one thing is needful and cannot be made right in that day and that is the salvation of souls.

II Corinthians 6:2 ..... behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.)

If a person has not repented in this life and gotten right in this life there is no getting right when our Lord returns. We need to occupy ourselves with this concern.

Why put a new roof on a house that has a bad foundation and about to collapse?  
Why paint a car that does not have a good engine?

Why try to white wash a world that is going to Hell?

Jesus never bothered because he knew there was no use..

Until he returns and takes his rightful position of leadership none of these things will be of concern.

When Jesus returns he will straighten out heath care..  
When Jesus comes back he will straighten out the environment..  
When Jesus comes back he will right all wrongs..  
When Jesus comes back he will bring peace on earth ..

But when he comes it will be too late to get saved... now is the time to do that.

Now is the time to repent.

### **Conclusion:**

Today we must be busying ourselves with this great command. **OCCUPY TILL I COME..**

There are three types of people in this world when it comes to this command...

- 1. Those who are busying themselves with this command.. and will hear these words. Well done my good and faithful servant..**

## **2. Those who are neglecting this command and think they are all right.**

No doubt there are some like that, that are listening to this message.

Luke 19:20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, [here is] thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

Luke 19:21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

Luke 19:22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, [thou] wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

Luke 19:23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

Luke 19:24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give [it] to him that hath ten pounds.

Luke 19:25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

Luke 19:26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

Here is a warning to those who are just pretending to be a Christian. Those who hide their Christianity. Those who can blend in with the church and blend in with the world. Those who have one foot in the church and another in the world. Those who professed Christ in word but in deed deny him.

Matthew 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Matthew 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Matthew 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither [can] a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Matthew 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Matthew 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

II Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

This parable has a warning to those who profess salvation but do not possess salvation.

## **3. Then the third type of people in this world are those who hate Christ..**

Luke 19:14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this [man] to reign over us.

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay [them] before me.

When Jesus comes back .. there will not be one of his enemies that will enter that Kingdom.

Now we must busy ourselves to spread the message to everyone.

When he comes he will set his sheep on his right hand and his goats on the left.

Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.. there will be no election process.

The FBI cannot stop him..

Congress can not impeach him..

There will be no protest against him.

There will be no politicking that can protect the liars and ungodly rulers of this world. They will have to bend their knees and confess him.

When he comes only those who have acknowledged him in this life will be allowed to enter that Kingdom.

The purpose of this message is to encourage you to Occupy till he comes.

Monday we will be having the funeral for Midge Accardi. It was Sunday Night October 27th after I came back from a church service in the Philadelphia area that I made a phone call to Peter Accardi and told him that I thought the same thing that happened to him happened to me. I didn't know all the details. I had a lot of questions about it. I remember he said to me, call my Mom and Dad and go to church with them. That's exactly what I did. It took a few weeks to get together with them and the devil did all he could to stop me but we got together sometime in November and they invited me to church and I had dinner with them that Sunday afternoon.

Midge Accardi helped me in so many ways back then. I was a sinner saved by grace, she was a sinner saved by grace. But she took her pound and invested in me in those early days. I didn't know anything. You know all of us receive a pound. When I looked up how much a pound is worth monetarily, I found varying ideas. It would vary depending on if it is gold, or it is silver. Either way it was not a lot of money. It was a humble amount. Maybe worth three days wages.

This reminds me of this verse.

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much....

What is our lives worth? Those last 12 hours spent at the dying bedside of Midge Accardi made me realize that our lives are very frail.

In those early days we used to have Bible studies, and Midgy, Elaine and I would read books of the Bible.. We read the whole book of Revelation together those early days. I just could not get enough of the word of God when I first got saved.

Midge Accardi took her pound and invested in her son Peter Accardi, in her daughter Elaine, and even in me. I think when she stands before the Lord she will be able to say thy Pound hath gained at least three or four pounds. There is no way Hank Accardi would have ever been saved except for Midge Accardi. This is all we can do in this life. Occupy till he comes. Invest your pound for the Kingdom.

How about you?

What are you Occupying yourself with in this life..

Here is the command OCCUPY TILL I COME..

Jesus is coming soon!