

## THE ACCEPTABLE TIME

By Paul M Hanssen

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*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)*

To “study” means to be diligent, to make an effort, to work swiftly, to be prompt and earnest, and to labor diligently. In this context, studying does not simply refer to reading books and memorizing vast amounts of academic knowledge. Instead, it involves the committed effort to use haste and diligence in finding favor with God, to be accepted, approved, pleasing, and satisfying to His heart.

Many people study God’s Word but are not swift or earnest in applying the knowledge gained to please the Lord in their personal lives. This kind of study is empty and futile and leads to nothing eternal. Many people study simply to gain knowledge, to preach a sermon or teach a class, to get a ministerial license, to pastor a church, to compete with others, or to satisfy their ego and pride.

However, Paul admonished Timothy to study and to be quick and diligent in searching for God's approval, acceptance, and favor. This does not imply that one can buy God’s favor; rather, His favor is granted to those who earnestly seek Him in the pursuit of finding Him and fulfilling His purpose. God is the author of an acceptable time and season designed for us to find His favor and pleasure.

*Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus (Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. (Acts 7:45-46)*

David found favor with God because he diligently studied how to raise a habitation for God’s presence, glory, and throne (1 Chronicles 15:2-3). He used speed, haste, and an earnest heart to fulfill all of God’s will. The days of King David were an accepted time for Israel to establish the Kingdom and create a habitation for God’s glorious presence. Man did not create this accepted time;

God did. However, man had to respond to God and use the time He allotted to find His favor, pleasure, and acceptance, which paved the way for His Ark and glory to reside among them.

*And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. (Acts 13:22)*

Finding favor with God by accomplishing His Will should be the goal of all our diligent efforts, works, study, prayer, worship, and deeds; “How do I fulfill your will? What is your desire for me, and what would you have me to do?” should be the cry of our hearts. In other words, “What is acceptable to you?”

The question we should all be asking ourselves in all aspects of our service unto the Lord and, moreover, our relationship with Him is, “Am I acceptable to God? Is my life and service pleasing to Him?”

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)*

To know the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God can only be accomplished through obedient sacrifice and by having one’s mind transformed and renewed.

## **APPROVED UNTO GOD**

*And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD. (Exodus 28:38)*

Aaron’s forehead, meaning to be clear, conspicuous, and open (also symbolizing the mind), was adorned with a crown with the inscription “Holiness

to the LORD.” It was the crown bearing the LORD’s Name and His holiness that made his service *acceptable unto the LORD*. Few people recognize the power that is carried on the head, the hair, and the face, and just as few realize the rebellion carried on the head, hair, and face. Typically, the first thing that changes when people distance themselves from God is the hair on their heads and faces. Men start to grow facial hair, which they cut, shape, groom, and style into designs meant to attract the opposite sex. Women cut, style, and fashion their hair for the same reason. God did not give us hair for our beauty but for His glory. The head and face are not meant to display oneself but serve as a mirror reflecting the soul and spirit. In today's culture, as with past global cultures, hair was and is used for sexual attraction. Demons rest on hair and use it to attract the eyes of the opposite sex. A head dedicated to God in holiness carries authority, power, and strength. However, a head given to sensuality attracts demonic powers of rebellion and death. It is time for all those in service unto the Lord to ask themselves, “Is my head, my hair, and my face acceptable to you as a mirror of your glory?”

God operates through visible demonstrations of our outward man. Your presentation states everything about you.

*Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. (Ephesians 5:10)*

## **ACCEPTABLE TIME**

*Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: (Isaiah 55:6)*

The time “He may be found” is an appointed time, a time He draws near and calls, stirs and speaks. This is a time to find favor; this is an acceptable time.

*But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. (Psalm 69:13)*

There is a time that is open for you to enter this favor, but the acceptable time doesn’t last forever. God opens times and seasons for church ages, individual churches, nations, cities, people's personal lives, and circumstances. There

are appointed times for the revelation of His Word and appointed times and seasons of revival. But it is very easy to forfeit and lose the appointed time when we refuse, either willingly or ignorantly, to seek His favor by seeking Him when He may be found.

Daniel 8:19, 10:1, 11:27, 11:29, 11:35 - For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. (Habukkuk 2:3)

Jesus came at an appointed time, a time that the Father determined. Imagine if Jesus would have said, “Uh, not now Father, I’m not ready, maybe later.” No, He came at an appointed time to preach the acceptable year of the LORD

*The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the LORD. (Luke 4:18-19) (Isaiah 61:2)*

The acceptable year (time and season, a revolution of time) means a time pleasing and desired by God. It is a time He desires to reveal Himself and draw near and a time of His good pleasure. Jesus came to proclaim the acceptable time. You have a time that the Father draws near (call upon Him while He is near).

There are times and seasons in the purpose of God. Just as in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the end. In Noah’s day, the LORD said, “*My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years*” (Genesis 6:3). One hundred and twenty years was God’s acceptable time and season for man to discover His favor. However, that season ended abruptly when the rains began to fall.

I believe we are entering a new season, *an acceptable time when God is near*. This will be a time of fruit and harvest (God harvesting the fruit of our personal lives first and foremost). This is the final time and season given to us to study and show ourselves to be approved unto God. This is our time to draw near to Him as he draws near to us. This is not the time to rebel but rather to surrender.

During this acceptable time of discovering His favor, He will send the former and the latter rain of the final revival and restoration.

Study to discover God's appointed time for favor. Study to seek His will. Study to be approved by God; it is through this that your life, relationship, service, and ministry will find power, purpose, and genuine spiritual life.