

SEEING THE TIMING OF GOD PLAYED OUT**Acts 18,19****Dr. Larry Lamb – November 10, 2019**

The more we graft the truth of Scripture in our lives, the easier it is to see how God orchestrates His timing on our behalf. Nothing in our lives ever happens without the approval and timing of the Living God. Nothing!

Our view of life is limited; God's view is unlimited.
Our view of life is brief; God's view is eternal.
Our view of life is to get; God's view is to give.
Our view of life comes with surprises; God is never surprised.

That's a reminder to accept the fact that the timing of God often appears mysterious and ill-timed. But with God nothing is mysterious or ill-timed. Our birth was perfectly timed and so is our death. That event that made us happy was perfectly timed. So was the heart-breaking news.

One of the greatest mistakes we can make is trying to fit God and His ways into our prescribed opinions and plans.

From our perspective, we would say that a lot of events in life are not fair. Our disgust with God's timing doesn't shake His character. Even our anger doesn't alter God's methodical ways. One of the healthiest attitudes of life can be when people stop trying to control and manipulate the Living God and submit to God's authority.

From Acts 18, 19 we're going to do a quick scan through these two chapters and export two stories to see the perfect timing of God played out in our lives.

The timing of God in our maturity happens because:

A. God sent a MENTOR into our lives.

Acts 18.24-26

Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, an eloquent speaker who knew the Scriptures well, had arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria in Egypt.

25 He had been taught the way of the Lord, and he taught others about Jesus with an enthusiastic spirit and with accuracy. However, he knew only about John's baptism. **26** When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God even more accurately.

What we know about Apollos:

- He's Jewish
- He's eloquent
- He's astute in the Scriptures
- He's come from North Africa
- He's been taught the way of the Lord
- He's enthusiastic and accurate
- He's acquainted only with John the Baptist and his baptism.

The resume of Apollos was impressive, but nowhere in the text do we read that Apollos was impressed with himself. Not everyone can handle such an impressive life. What's implied is before he arrived in Ephesus from Egypt, he had some in-depth training from someone about the ways of the Lord.

In the perfect timing of God, Apollos was preaching in a synagogue with boldness. A couple named

Aquila and Priscilla were listening to him and after the sermon they did this:

26 When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God even more accurately.

This couple had spent a lot of time with Paul, which no doubt would have proven to be a learning mentoring environment. Now they are about to pull Apollos aside and mentor him.

They took him aside and explained the way of God “even more accurately.”

Was it an accident that Apollos was preaching that day? (NO)

Was it an accident that Aquila and Pricilla heard him that day? (NO).

Was it an accident that Apollos took their counsel? (NO).

God does not do random. He orchestrates our lives with perfect precision.

- Many of you are in Christ today because someone invited you to CVC.
- Many of you love your place of work because someone said, “We’d like to have you on our team.”

- Someone invited you to a community group.
All within the perfect timing of God. God does not do random.

Apollos had a mentor couple come into his life on God's timing.

Here's what you find in a mentor:

1. A mentor will see something lacking in our life. (Everybody has blind spots.)
2. A mentor will make the time to address what is lacking.
3. A mentor will invest time.
4. A mentor will encourage.
5. A mentor models what they convey.

Many people went further in Christ because someone thought they could.

Are you open to being mentored and are you willing to be a mentor?

Here are three areas where I'd like to see our church excel in mentoring people:

1. **FINANCES** – people who are gifted in having financial margin teach people to have financial margin.
2. **MARRIAGE** – people who have biblical wisdom about marriage then mentor others.

(Marriage is the 2nd biggest decision anyone makes).

3. **SPIRITUAL MATURITY** – people who mentor (disciple) others to advance in the faith of Jesus.

The timing of God in our maturity happens because: (1) God sent a mentor into our lives just like Apollos had.

B. God created an **ENVIRONMENT** to grow.

Acts 19.8-10

Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God. **9** But some became stubborn, rejecting his message and publicly speaking against the Way. So Paul left the synagogue and took the believers with him. Then he held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. **10** This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord.

There were two groups of people in this context listening to truth:

- The rejectors (obstinate)

- The acceptors

Paul left the rejectors in the synagogue and went nearby to a place called the lecture hall of Tyrannus and taught there for the next two (2) years. What did God do? He created an environment of learning that lead to life change.

God brought a community group, the Thrive class that we offer, a seminar, women and men's classes, children and student classes and the Porch for 20/30-year-old adults on Tuesday night.

The Living Lord will use an environment to change people forever. I believe God creates environments for change all the time when we have the maturity to be aware that God might want to get our attention about something.

The text says that for two years people heard the Word of the Lord. There must have been life change because a church began in Ephesus. Paul wrote a letter to the church in Ephesus called the Ephesian letter.

Churches begin all over the world with the proclamation of the Word of the Lord. What's that? An environment that God will use at just the right time for someone's life to be changed forever.

Take “this card out.” It is our church vision frame.

Here’s a premise: Like a greenhouse produces healthy plants, a healthy church produces healthy followers of Jesus. How? Through the nourishment of Scripture but also through the timing of God’s environments.

No one can be forced to grow, but we are committed to creating environments of growth from birth to the oldest partners in our church community.

Within our strategy is our vision for a God-ordained environment for maturity for those who accept this. SHOW **OUR STRATEGY** (SLIDE HERE)

This is not for all churches, but it is for our church community. We really want to see people intersect with the timing of God played out:

1. Next year, would you consider **POURING** your life into others? Pray for the right person, plan the right schedule, pursue Christlikeness together.
2. Next year, would you consider asking the Living Lord to use an environment at CVC to **DISCOVER** your direction, purpose, and influence?

Jesus, I find myself being drawn to You. I want You to be my Savior and Lord. I confess that my sin has separated me from You. Forgive me and cleanse me from sin. I ask You to live through me each day as I humble myself before You. Amen.