

For Such a Time as This

- Jeremy S. Jones

One of my favorite authors is J.R.R. Tolkien, he wrote the books, which now have become the famous movies, "The Lord of the Rings" and "the Hobbit." He wrote many other stories, as well, all centered around his beloved Middle Earth, the place where these stories take place. The reason, I like Tolkien's stories are because they draw you in and give you a history that you almost find believable. Although Tolkien loved his Middle Earth, his heart was centered on Christ. He knew that without Christ he was nothing. In fact, it has been said, he started every morning with Communion, in order that he could start off the day with Christ as his focus. It is in this devotion to Christ and my admiration for his stories that I find a connection with what's going on around us.

In one of the tales a band of unlikely heroes have come together to take a journey that would, if they succeed, save the entire Middle Earth. And if they failed, all would be lost. While on this journey the main hero (Frodo), who doesn't really like adventures, but rather is quiet comfortable staying at home with what he knows, is talking to the wisest of the group (Gandalf). It is during this conversation that he makes this statement

"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo.

"So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

— J.R.R. Tolkien, [*The Fellowship of the Ring*](#)

And I think that is where we, as Christians, stand in the light of this Cronoavirus, "I wish none of this had happened." Yet, here we are. And here is the amazing part, in spite of it all we have hope. Christ came with the message of the "Already and the Not Yet." If we look at the Scripture (**John 5:24 – 29 and Matthew 24:1 – 5**) we see Jesus telling his audience two important things.

The first is this, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live (John 5:25)"* In other words, we who have heard the voice of the Son, have believed that He is the Christ and because of that we now live. We have been forgiven, made free and death holds no sway over us. We don't have

to fear death, for Christ defeated it on the cross. A popular rapper in the late 90's put it this way, "we can laugh pass the black hearse." This is the "Already!!"

The second is this *"Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment (John 5:28 – 29)"* Meaning their will come a time "the Not Yet" when our physical bodies will be laid into the ground. But, because of the life we "already" have in Christ, our physical bodies will rise again and spend eternity with Jesus.

So, you see we have the hope that we are free from sin and death. And because we are free from death, our physical bodies will one day rise, a new (**1 Corinthians 15:35- 58**), from the ground. This is our hope, our good news. Our only, question then is this, "What do with the time that is given us?"

There are 4 things we can do:

- 1) Give God the glory that we are (not we will be, but we ARE) redeem, forgiven and made new
- 2) We act in a wise manner, "a manner worthy of our calling (**Ephesians 4:1**)
- 3) We keep ourselves and our families healthy and safe as much as we can
- 4) We share the hope of the Gospel with everyone

As you walk out the next couple of days, weeks and months remember just as the characters in Tolkien's stories looked back at the moments they shared, moments they wished they did not have to go through, we too will look back and see the glorious hand of God. And we will praise Him that He brought us through. For now, let us praise Him that He is walking with us through it, that we have a new life in Him and that one day we will get to spend eternity with Him.