

**Advance: Our Church in the Next Century**  
***The Church's Opportunity-Recognizing Our Opportunity***

***"To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:"***  
***Ecclesiastes 3:1 NKJV***

**Introduction:** Today we begin the final three weeks of this series

**Advance: Our Church in the Next Century**

1. The Church's Challenge (a world upside down)
2. The Church's Call (Declare His praises to a lost world)
3. The Church's Future
4. Next Three Weeks: The Church's Opportunity

Two weeks from today, 9/23, we will break ground for our new SMC and remodel

- Before we go there I will ask you to make a commitment, a pledge to invest in the next century
- My hope is that you will hear these three messages and also attend one of the Advance Presentations

**Advance Fund Goal: \$750,000**

- Pay for SMC project (new and remodel)
- New sanctuary chairs
- Parking Lot sealing
- Startup funds for Dunkirk plant
- Seed money for missions projects component of Advance fund

Giving by God's people, for the Work of the Kingdom has always been necessary

## The Building of the Tabernacle by Moses

*The Lord said to Moses, 2 “Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give.. 8 “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. “Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, and they spoke to Moses, saying, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the LORD commanded us to do.” So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.” And the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done—indeed too much. Then all the gifted artisans among them who worked on the tabernacle made ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim they made them.” Exodus 36:2-8 NKJV*

## The Building of the Temple by Solomon

### David to the People

*“Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver: three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; the gold for things of gold and the silver for things of silver, and for all kinds of work to be done by the hands of craftsmen. Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?” Then the leaders of the fathers’ houses, leaders of the tribes of Israel, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the officers over the king’s work, offered willingly. They gave for the work of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.” I Chronicles 29:3-9 NKJV*

### Paul said regarding the work of the church

*“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” I Corinthians 16:1-2 NKJV*

***“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.” II Corinthians 9:6-7 NKJV***

What we will be asking:

- Asking for a commitment beyond your tithe and missions giving.
- Asking for a 3-year commitment (One time gifts are also helpful).
- Asking for a generous and sacrificial commitment but not beyond your means.
- Asking for full participation. We can reach this goal with that.

NOTE: If you cannot...we will not chase you down (we will report where you are quarterly)

Why are we even asking this of you?

Because of our Enormous Opportunity!

### **I. The Opportunity That is Before Us.**

Words of Solomon: ***“To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:” Ecclesiastes 3:1 NKJV***

- A. Hebrew word for season is “zeman”=a set time or appointed time
- B. In the Greek Septuagint of the Old Testament the word is Kairos, one of two Greek terms for time (we only have one word)
  - 1. Chronos (where’s we get chronology) depicts a succession of moments (what time is it...changes each second)
  - 2. Kairos means a definite, appointed time: A fixed time.
  - 3. There is a definite fixed time for everything.
- C. We call these opportunities (they can be missed)—critical and decisive moments
- D. Some may even call them “God moments.”
- E. There is a time...an opportunity (a kairos) for everything

### **II. The Opportunity (Kairos) for GT to Advance is Now!**

- A. 32 acres on southeast corner of Muncie is no accident (Nila in the 60’s)
- B. Lift station and property is no accident
- C. The growth these last 19 years is no accident
- D. Pieces for Dunkirk (part of our vision) have come together, almost miraculously
- E. 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is the perfect time to re-affirm our commitment to our vision
- F. Ability to reach this side of Muncie
- G. Drug culture and the deterioration of the youth in our community

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- H. Vision to develop biblical sound believers in the most biblically illiterate time o four nations history
- I. Training institution to prepare leaders for plants and revitalizations that are necessary

***Galatians 6:10—“Therefore as we have opportunity (Kairos), let us do good to all...”***

### **III. There are Consequences to Missing God Opportunities**

#### **A. The story of Esther**

1. The Jews were servants to the Persian Kingdom (Medo-Persian)-King Ahasuerus
2. Queen Vashti refused the King’s request to show off her beauty to his friends
3. He was angry and she was deposed
4. Became lonely and sought after a Queen (year long pageant)
5. Esther—Jew (not revealed her nationality to anyone) was chosen
6. She had an uncle who raised her—Mordecai
7. Mordecai overheard a plot to assassinate the king and told Esther who told the king (confirmed, killed on gallows and written in the king’s notes)
8. Promotion of Haman above all of the princes (all bowed at the gate except Mordecai, would not bow to anyone but Yahweh)
9. Anger of Haman directed at all the Jews—got the King to sign an edict that all the Jews would be killed on a specific day—news went out to all the Jews and they mourned
10. Mordecai went to his niece Esther and asked her to do something
11. 30 days since she had seen the King and couldn’t go unless she was invited
12. Mordecai pled with her:

***“And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: “Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king’s palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Esther 4:13-14 NKJV***

13. She agreed to go, asked all the Jews to pray for her and confessed, “I will go to the King and if I perish, I perish.”
14. She went, he offered to grant her request, and she asked the King and Haman to come to a banquet (they came and he offered up to half the kingdom and she asked for another banquet)
15. Haman brags to wife about his invite but still not happy until Mordecai bows—wife suggests that he build a gallows and suggest that Mordecai be hung
16. That night Ahasuerus has insomnia (reads the books and sees that he has never rewarded Mordecai)
17. Next morning Haman comes in happy—what should I do for someone whom the king delights to honor? (Haman thought it was him)
18. Robe, crown, and horse of the king and a noble prince parade him through town

19. Go do it for Mordecai—he did, went home with his head hanging but got to go to the banquet
20. At the banquet. What is your request? A bounty on my people. Let them go free.
21. Who did it asked the King. Haman. King angered and left the room. Haman begged on the bed of Esther and the king walked in. Even more angered. Haman killed on gallows.
22. Jews were spared. Feast of Purim to this day!
23. Recognized the opportunity and acted. The nation was saved.

## B. Lessons

1. There will be risk involved when you step into your opportunity.
2. Fear will challenge you when you step into your opportunity.
3. Opportunity requires us to ask ourselves, “why am I here?”
  - a. Not just to live life or to watch things happen
  - b. Here to help make things happen
  - c. God got me here
4. We must recognize the stakes of the opportunity.
5. We must bathe the action step in prayer.
6. We should expect the supernatural when we obey.

## IV. The Most Important and Defining Moment

- A. Not this sermon
- B. Not pledge day
- C. Not the groundbreaking or when the building is all paid for
- D. May be at your kitchen table when you and your spouse ask God together what He wants you to do. What an opportunity to prove the Lord’s faithfulness as you take this step of faith and obedience

**Conclusion: “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven.”**

**Ecclesiastes 3:1 NKJV**

- A. Kairos moment is specific
- B. It may not come again like this
- C. We must RECOGNIZE the opportunity

## Ob Portu

*In the days before modern harbors, a ship had to wait for the flood tide before it could make it to port. The term for this situation in Latin was ob portu, that is, a ship standing over off a port, waiting for the moment when it could ride the turn of the tide to harbor. The English word opportunity is derived from this original meaning. The captain and the crew were ready and waiting for that one moment for they knew that if they missed it, they would have to wait for another tide to come in. Shakespeare turned this background of the exact meaning of opportunity into one of his most famous passages. It's from Julius Caesar, Act 4, Scene 3:*

*There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life Is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat; And we must take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures.—Bits & Pieces, March 2, 1995, pp. 16-17*

## Sirhan Sirhan

*We missed him. Our chance to change things came and passed and we did not know it was there. A dark-skinned little boy sat through Sunday School classes for three years at a great Baptist Church (First Church, San Antonio) but someone missed him. His name was Sirhan Sirhan, and at age 24 he shot and killed Senator Robert Kennedy. In a welter of words and the shudder of grief throughout our nation, the persistent thought keeps recurring...someone missed him.—Dr. Jimmy Allen, former pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas in Pulpit Helps, May, 1991*

In his autobiography, *Just as I Am*, Billy Graham tells about a conversation he had with John F. Kennedy shortly after his election: “On the way back to the Kennedy house, the president-elect stopped the car and turned to me. ‘Do you believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?’ he asked. ‘I most certainly do.’ ‘Well, does my church believe it?’ ‘They have it in their creeds’ ‘They don’t preach it,’ he said. ‘They don’t tell us much about it. I’d like to know what you think.’ I explained what the Bible said about Christ coming the first time, dying on the Cross, rising from the dead, and then promising that he would come back again. ‘Only then,’ I said, ‘are we going to have permanent world peace.’ ‘Very interesting,’ he said, looking away. ‘We’ll have to talk more about that someday.’ And he drove on.”

*Several years later, the two met again, at the 1963 National Prayer Breakfast.*

*“I had the flu,” Graham remembers. “After I gave my short talk, and he gave his, we walked out of the hotel to his car together, as was always our custom. At the curb, he turned to me. ‘Billy, could you ride back to the White House with me? I’d like to see you for a minute.’ ‘Mr. President, I’ve got a fever,’ I protested. ‘Not only am I weak, but I don’t want to give you this thing. Couldn’t we wait and talk some other time?’ It was a cold, snowy day, and I was freezing as I stood there without my overcoat. ‘Of course,’ he said graciously.”*

*But the two would never meet again. Later that year, Kennedy was shot dead. Graham comments, “His hesitation at the car door, and his request, haunt me still. What was on his mind? Should I have gone with him? It was an irrecoverable moment.”—Just as I Am, Billy Graham*