
Perfected in the Word Ministry

“It’s Time For A Move!”

Spirit of Truth Cathedral

Sunday Worship ~ Communion Sunday

February 5, 2017



Preliminary Remarks:

Saints and children of the body of Christ, what shall we say to the political events of our time? How shall we respond to the surmounting political changes that are sure to effect and affect both society and the lives of our loved ones? Should we rise up and fight, like the extremist groups of the past ... the *Black Panther Party* of the late 60's {which were black nationalists, anti-fascists (against radical authoritarian nationalism), anti-imperialists (against countries which extend its power by territorial acquisition), revolutionary socialists, and anti-racists} ... or the Jewish religious *zealots* of Jesus' (e.g., Simon called Zelotes – Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) time who militantly opposed the Roman domination of Palestine ... or other religious and social groups opposing the rule of governments and their imposed authority {*Army of God* – anti-abortionists; *Aryan Nations* – white nationalists; *Alpha 66 and Omega 7* – Cuban extremists; *Animal Liberation Front* – animal rights activists; *The Covenant, The Sword, and the Arm of the Lord* – radical Christian Identity organization; *Jewish Defense League* – antisemitism religious extremists; *Ku Klux Klan* – anti-Black, anti-Catholic, anti-Communist, anti-semitic, white-supremacist (similar to *neo-Nazis* and *white power skinheads*); *Phineas Priesthood* – Christian Identity movement opposing interracial sex, mixing of races, homosexuality, abortion, anti-Semitism; *Weather Underground Organization* or *Weatherman* – American militant radical left-wing organization purposed to overthrow the US government}?

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Is there a word from the Lord concerning these things? The prophet Daniel records these words: “He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.” [Daniel 2:21] The psalmist David states: “For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.” [Psalm 75:6,7]

All of these extremists and their extreme points of view and optimism toward the rule of law are diametrically opposed to the order and will of the Almighty God! Our Lord and Saviour (Jesus Christ) has these words to address the extremity of men’s desire to enact his own flavor of wrath and judgment upon his fellow mankind: “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.” [Matthew 7:1-5]

The word from the Lord on this Sunday is “**move**” – not toward persecution, or revolution, or extremism; but toward His perfect will for our life ... absent the obstructionist view of life’s drama and societal influences ... but towards the life to come ... eternal life in the resurrection of the saints! The message for today’s church is entitled: “**It’s Time For A Move!**”

Perfecting in the Word Ministry

Text:

Acts 17:16-28 [New International Version]

- 16 While Paul was waiting for them in **Athens**, he was greatly distressed to see that the **city was full of idols**.
- 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and **God-fearing Greeks**, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.
- 18 A group of **Epicurean** and **Stoic philosophers** began to **debate** [dispute] with him. Some of them asked, “What is this **babbler** trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be **advocating foreign gods**.” They said this because Paul was preaching the **good news about Jesus and the resurrection**.
- 19 Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the **Areopagus**, where they said to him, “May we know what this **new teaching** is that you are presenting?”
- 20 You are bringing some **strange ideas** to our ears, and we want to know what they mean.”
- 21 (All the **Athenians** and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but **talking about and listening to the latest ideas**.)
- 22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the **Areopagus** and said: “Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are **very religious**.
- 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your **objects of worship**, I even found an **altar** with this inscription: **TO AN UNKNOWN GOD**. So you are **ignorant of the very thing you worship**—and this is what I am going to **proclaim** to you.
- 24 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and **does not live in temples** built by human hands.
- 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.
- 26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and **he determined the times** set for them and **the exact places where they should live**.
- 27 God did this so that men would **① seek him** and perhaps **② reach out for him** and **③ find him**, though he is not far from each one of us.
- 28 ‘For in him **① we live** and **② move** and **③ have our being**.’ As some of your own **poets** have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”

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Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 [King James Version]

- ¹ To every thing there is a **season**, and a **time** to every **purpose** under the heaven:
- ² A **time** to be born, and a **time** to die; a **time** to plant, and a **time** to pluck up that which is planted;
- ³ A **time** to kill, and a **time** to heal; a **time** to break down, and a **time** to build up;
- ⁴ A **time** to weep, and a **time** to laugh; a **time** to mourn, and a **time** to dance;
- ⁵ A **time** to cast away stones, and a **time** to gather stones together; a **time** to embrace, and a **time** to refrain from embracing;
- ⁶ A **time** to get, and a **time** to lose; a **time** to keep, and a **time** to cast away;
- ⁷ A **time** to rend, and a **time** to sew; a **time** to keep silence, and a **time** to speak;
- ⁸ A **time** to love, and a **time** to hate; a **time** of war, and a **time** of peace.

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Introduction:

During apostle Paul's second missionary journey, he encountered that great epicenter of Roman culture in the historic city of Athens ... the center for the arts, learning and philosophy! After previously evangelizing the nobility in the town of Berea – bringing a message of hope (inculcated throughout the gospel of Jesus Christ) to the wealthy, intellectual, agnostic and atheist – he was now facing religious challenge from the idolatrous worship of the polytheistic Athenian philosophers of that era. In a land where men erected Pantheons to house carved statues, symbolizing the nature and essence of their gods and goddesses, there was no concerted effort to rationalize the possibility of the existence of a singular deity.

The Chronicler recorded that on the day that the ark of the Lord was returned to Jerusalem, David committed to Asaph and his associates a *Psalm of Thanks* to the Lord for all His wonderful acts to the children of Israel. In the second part of this psalm, David pens these words: “For all the gods of the nations are *idols*: but the LORD made the heavens!”

[1Chronicles 16:26; Psalm 96:5]

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Definition:

The Greek word for “**move**” is **kinéō** (kin-eh'-o), which in the transitive tense (direct object) means “**to stir**” or “**set in motion.**” Paul encouraged his young disciple Timothy to: “... **stir up the gift of God**, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline.” [2Timothy 1:6,7]

Merriam-Webster list multiple intransitive definitions for “**move**” : to go or pass to another place or in a certain direction with a continuous motion; to change one’s residence or location; to change position or posture (**stir**); to take action; to carry on one’s life or activities in a specified environment; to take action; to proceed toward a certain state or condition; to show marked activity; to cause to advance; to put into activity or rouse up from inactivity; to stir the emotions, feelings, or passions.

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Topic Points:

- 1. Epicurean Philosophers** (Epicureanism) [Acts 17:18]
 - i. Philosophy of the nature of the mind and soul (atomism).
 - ii. Epicureanism is a system of philosophy based upon the teachings of the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus, founded around 307 BC.
 - iii. Epicurus was an atomic materialist, following in the steps of Democritus.
 - iv. His materialism led him to a general attack on superstition and divine intervention.
 - v. Epicurus believed that what he called “pleasure” was the greatest good, but that the way to attain such pleasure was to live modestly, to gain knowledge of the workings of the world, and to limit one’s desires. This would lead one to attain a state of tranquility (*ataraxia*) and freedom from fear as well as an absence of bodily pain (*aponia*). The combination of these two states constitutes happiness in its highest form.
- 2. Stoic Philosophers** (Stoicism) [Acts 17:18]
 - i. Philosophy of personal ethics (logical views).
 - ii. Stoicism is a school of Hellenistic philosophy that flourished throughout the Roman and Greek world until the 3rd century AD.
 - iii. Stoicism is predominately a philosophy of personal ethics which is informed by its system of logic and its views on the natural world.
 - iv. According to its teachings, as social beings, the path to happiness for humans is found in accepting that which we have been given in life, by not allowing ourselves to be controlled by our desire for pleasure or our fear of pain, by using our minds to understand the world around us and to do our part in nature’s plan, and by working together and treating others in a fair and just manner.
- 3. Foreign Doctrine/Teaching of Resurrection** [Acts 17:18,30,31]
 - i. Paul’s preaching (new teaching) was considered “babbling” and strange ideas by the philosophers.
 - ii. Proof of the resurrection of the dead.
- 4. Areopagus Council** [Acts 17:19-21]
 - i. Supreme Tribunal of Athens, Greece.
- 5. Religious Beliefs and Worship** [Acts 17:22,23]
 - i. Objects of worship, religions, rituals, altars.
 - ii. Polytheism: worship or belief in multiple deities.
- 6. To An Unknown God** [Acts 17:23]
 - i. Monotheism: the God of all creation (one God).

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7. **Determined Times** [Acts 17:26]
 - i. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (a season and a time).
8. **God-Ordained Relationship** [Acts 17:27]
 - i. Seek Him. [Matthew 6:33]
 - ii. Reach Out for Him.
 - iii. Find Him.
9. **God-Ordained Purpose** [Acts 17:8]
 - i. In Him we Live.
 - ii. In Him we **Move**.
 - iii. In Him we Have our Being.



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Altar Call: “Walk On By Faith”

Songwriter: James Cleveland

Psalmist: Mahalia Jackson

Verse #1:

We cannot see in the future;
We cannot see through dark clouds;
We cannot see all our heart aches.
Walk on by faith each day –
By faith each step of the way.

Verse #2:

We cannot see through tear drops;
It's hard to smile through trials;
We cannot see all of our pitfalls.
Walk on by faith each day –
By faith each step of the way.

Chorus:

On Monday, by faith;
On Tuesday, by faith;
Let Jesus be your guide;
He's able to carry your load;
He can see way down the road.
Walk on by faith each day –
By faith each step of the way.

It's Time For A Move! 'For in him ① **we live** and ② **move** and ③ **have our being.**'

- **Move** closer to God ...
- **Move** towards His will for your life ...
- **Move** towards excellence: in service, in worship, in praise, in obedience, in commitment, in faith ...
- **Move** pass obstacles ...
- **Move** past your circumstances ...
- **Move** past prior hurts and pains ...
- **Move** past your grief and sorrow ...
- **Move** pass your feelings and preconceptions ...
- **Move** pass your finite knowledge into God's supreme knowledge ...
- **Move** onward in this spiritual battle, as a good Christian soldier ...
- **Move** onwards towards an elevated realm of His presence ...
- **Move** onward toward higher heights and deeper depths in the Lord ...
- **Move** in the spirit of thanksgiving for the goodness of Jesus, and all he has done in your life ...
- **Move** towards perpetual joy ... “for the joy of the Lord is your strength!” ...
- **Move** on past the dark clouds ... looking for a brighter day ...
- **Move** on pass your tears and fears ...
- **Move** past your sufferings and persecutions ...
- **Move** towards your particular place, where God is directing your path ...
- It's time for a **move** of God through the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit!