

Come Before Winter 2 Timothy 4:6-9, 21a (KJV)

⁹ Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.

²¹ Do thy diligence to come before winter.

Introduction:

- (1) Our text (2 Timothy 4:21) is lifted from among **the last words** written by the Apostle Paul that are recorded in our Bible.
- (2) Why “before winter”?
 - Practical Reason—
Mediterranean Sea often became non-navigable in midst of winter
 - Personal Reason—
Premonition by Paul: he was going to die (cf. 4:6)
- (3) Autumn is a perfect parable of the **beauty** and **brevity** of “life’s passing opportunities.”
- (4) Thus the appeal of *Come Before Winter* underscores “the urgency of NOW.”
The short, urgent word NOW is found 277 times in our Bible.
- (5) Some things must be done NOW—tomorrow may be “too late”:

I. In Relation to CHRIST

“And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee” (Psalm 39:7).

“Now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2b).

A. Receiving Christ

You can come to Christ in time to save your soul—but TOO LATE to:

1. Save Your Family
2. Show Your Love

The only SURE time you can be saved is right NOW.

The earlier in life you can become a Christian, always the better it is. (Illustrated by congregation)

B. Sharing Christ

“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest”
(John 4:35).

1. People May DIE (no “second chance”) cf. Stefan Nohammer at SMBC
2. People May LIVE (without Christ)

II. In Relation to OURSELVES

A. A Question: Do you like the person you are becoming?

B. A Principle:

You are in the process of becoming forever
in character what you are right now—
UNLESS you make a conscious decision to change.

1. Our character is essentially our value system.
2. We can change our character (with God’s help), but not just any time we take a notion.
 - There is a time we **could** change if we **would**.

- There is a time we **would** change if we **could**.

III. In Relation to OTHERS

“What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:14).

A. Using our **Resources**

1. Immediate resources
2. Ultimate resources

Currently **57%** of adults in the USA who die do so intestate.

B. Mending **Broken Relationships**

C. Expressing **Love/Gratitude** (Spoken or Written)

(Testimony of No Name, No City, No State—and No Son!)

Conclusion:

- (1) The specific objective of this sermon on “the passing of life’s opportunities” is to compel us to **ACT**—and to do so **NOW**—before it is too late; avoid the “peril of procrastination.”
- (2) The smallest **DEED** is always better than the biggest **INTENTION**.