**It Is That Time Of Year Again**

Mike Davis / Mike’s Musings

 Have you turned the heat on at your house yet? Have you seen any frost on the windshield? Are your flowers about gone from their once hearty bloom? Has the mowing of your yard changed from once a week to once a month? Have you returned your winter wardrobe to the closet and stored your summer clothes? Are you eating chilly instead of grilling hamburgers? Yes, it is that time of year again! Frankly, I do not really mind Autumn. While most call it “Fall,” that archaic term suits me: it is not as foreboding and grants an air of gentleness concerning the otherwise ominous site of gloomy skies, empty trees, deserted fields of grain and darkness more than light within a twenty-four-hour period. Calling it “Autumn” seems more comforting to me!

 Yes, it is a seasonal time. For sports fans, it is the close of NASCAR and the beginning of Basketball. (Alright, for some of you, the close of Football.) Persimmon pudding is in vogue, even apple cider and pumpkin pie. Many make plans for family gatherings, the sharing of lengthy stories around warm wood fires whereon children (and a few adults) roast their hotdogs and burn their smores! Family members tend to embrace each other a bit tighter during the coming months. It is that time of year again!

 Even the calendars are getting thinner as there are fewer days in the year, fewer weeks before the year’s end and nearness to the harsh weather of winter. (Mike lives in Indiana - kds) We begin to realize the closure of several things in our lives, and at times, the closure of life itself in those we cherish. God promised the seasons after the flood of Genesis 6 when He said, ***“While the earth remaineth, seedtime, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”*** (**Genesis 8:2**) The psalmist agreed (**Psalm 74:17**). Yet one of the saddest statements mentioning the seasons is the following, ***“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”*** (**Jeremiah 8:20**)

 All of us recognize these realities in nature, yet too many fail to see them spiritually! Our physical lives are not eternal, but our souls are! (**Ecclesiastes 12:1-7**) We have worked throughout our lives to improve ourselves physically, financially, mentally, socially and in other material ways. Still, have we taken the time to improve the only element of our existence that is eternal? Have we taken the time to notice our harvest of life is ending if not already ended, that the summer of our abilities has passed, and by now, we should be asking with comforting results, ***“Is the seed in the barn?”*** (cf. **Haggai 2:19**) If it is not, then we are not ready for the change of seasons, let alone the coming of judgment!

 Some souls are completely “satisfied” with their spiritual condition, thinking they have obeyed the gospel, God’s plan of salvation, but when examined by the Scriptures for proof, they have not complied with God’s design at all! Others at one time did comply, but for reasons they cannot explain (and more often excuses, anyway) they departed from the faith they once proclaimed in truth and returned the weak and beggarly elements of a sin-cursed earth (cf. **Galatians 4:9**). Of these souls, none are prepared for judgment as, spiritually speaking, “Their harvest isn’t what God desires!”

 Just as each season of the year has its special place in the life of plants and animals, there is a righteous progression for the soul of man. There is a time to plant, a time to water, and in God’s time, a time to harvest. (**1 Corinthians 3:6-7**) Just as with the literal planting of a seed, no one does it in “road gear.” The careful, desiring planter is meticulous in the distribution of seed, and just so with watering, cultivating and protecting the seed until full grown. Still, it is GOD that grants that increase. When the soul reaches the point of knowing to good, then he must do it (**James 4:17**). Such a soul progresses from a tender seed of knowledge to believing (**John 8:24**), to a desire to confess that belief (**Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:10**), to repenting of his sins (**Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30**), to being immersed into Christ for the remission of his sins (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Colossians 2:12**; et al). From there, the soul which is now converted to Christ Jesus sees the need to be fruitful in every good work (**Colossians 1:10**), adding to his faith the works (**2 Peter 2:1-10**) that assure his soul of eternal life. Then, when the harvest is truly past, and the summer truly ended, the seed will be in the barn (compare **Matthew 6:19-24**) and the soul is saved! (**Revelation 2:10; 14:13**)

 Every soul needs to make their calling and election sure: i.e., their salvation guaranteed! (**2 Peter 1:1-10**) Some suggest it is impossible to do so, but the inspired John would vehemently disagree! He wrote, ***“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”*** (**1 John 5:13**) It requires doing things GOD’S way rather than accepting the ideals of man’s philosophy. Every soul must realize GOD judges us through Christ Jesus (**Acts 17:31**), and therefore failure in producing a harvest that pleases HIM, results in an eternally lost soul!

 It is that time of year again when nature itself shows us an approaching closure to this year, and much more! Therefore, it is time to examine your soul as I examine mine, and PROVE we agree with God!