

## KNOWING ONE'S DUTY VS. KNOWING GOD'S TIMING

**“He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.’”—Acts 1:7 (ESV)**

In a post-resurrection conversation with Jesus, his disciples asked if he was about to “restore the kingdom to Israel.” His response in this passage informs them that they do not need such information to fulfill God’s call on their lives. Rather, Jesus explains that they will soon receive power from the Holy Spirit and will need to turn their attention to serving as his “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” In other words, they need to be mindful of, and attend to, their divinely-appointed duties and let God handle the rest.

One of my favorite historical examples of this type of vocational clarity occurred on May 19, 1780. On what became known as “New England’s Dark Day,” near complete darkness inexplicably enveloped the region from noon until the following day. In Connecticut, the Governor’s Council was in session and the startling lack of light caused many council members to request adjournment so that they could be with their families during what they assumed was the imminent Final Judgment.

A devout councilman, Abraham Davenport, became famous for his response to his nervous colleagues when he stated the following: “I am against adjournment. The day of judgment is either approaching, or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for an adjournment; if it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles may be brought.” And so they were, and the session continued.

My brothers and sisters, the consuming darkness of the world of 2024 is as unsettling as that experienced by our New England ancestors. It tempts us to “adjourn” into our private spaces and speculate on how long our Lord will tarry. But let us remember, we each are called to serve in “the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” and within our society. May we, indeed, press on in our own divinely-appointed tasks and “be found doing [our] dut[ies].”

***Prayer:*** “Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days. Amen” LSB 850

Kirk Farney