



Depth Perception™

Commentary from Design For Ministry™
Los Angeles • Milwaukee • Philadelphia

Rethinking Time 20 January 2007

The ancient Greek words for time included:

Chronos: time as it passes; tracking time as in *chronology*; an emphasis on the moment where one is.

Kairos: the unique turning point in history, an auspicious moment that connects past and future.

When thinking deeply on the subject of time, a critical insight is that one's ability to live in the moment (not being worried by past regret or future concern) helps one recognize moments of *Kairos*. Another insight is that *Kairos* for a Christian focuses on the advent of Jesus Christ, beginning with his birth at Bethlehem and concluding at the Second Coming.

That is where a third word for time comes in:

Telos: the end; culmination, conclusion.

Telos does not convey terminality as much as it does the conclusion of everything that leads to a new and eternal beginning. It is of no surprise, then, that Christian writers would use this word to describe the end of all things, since the Second Coming is said to be a gateway to all things being made new. *Telos* becomes the goal to celebrate, not a regrettable or abrupt end.

Armed with these ancient concepts of time we can attempt a description of a Christian perspective on time: *Live in the moment (Chronos) so that you can recognize and participate in the working of God (Kairos), as we look forward to the end (Telos).*

This understanding of time flies in the face of cultures all around the world. It influences ministry in ways that potential grantors or major donors might reject. It also focuses a person's or organization's ministry so tightly that grantors and donors looking for substantial efforts will find you.

-mark l vincent



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