

(continued from the front)

But time is moving quickly, and each passing year brings each of us closer to the day when our personal time on this earth will be over. More important, each day brings us closer to that day of reckoning when God will hold all mankind accountable for the way they have lived their lives—and bring time, as this world knows it, to an abrupt end.

With the passing of time, I've come to realize that the real basis of life does not consist in how many jobs we complete, how many promotions we earn, how much money we save, or how many things we possess. What gives life meaning is our spiritual identity. We are created in God's image. He has prepared an eternal home for us. Getting there—and hopefully taking others with us—is what life is all about. Serving God here is tied to our getting there. Teaching others this truth is part of serving God here. The devil has been very good at getting people to focus on this life and away from God.

As the Lord's church, if we're not careful, we too can get caught up in the material side of life. Our facilities are important, but they are only a means to an end—providing a comfortable and convenient setting in which to worship God, study His word, and teach others the gospel. We need to focus on getting souls in the seats. We need to reach out to them in effective, purposeful ways. We need to focus on our own need to be at services and on the importance of our children being in Bible classes. We need to pray for, and seriously talk to, our brothers and sisters in Christ who either no longer attend or who attend sporadically.

Here we are at the beginning of another new year. Time is passing. We have work to do. Souls are at stake. Our souls may be at stake. There is precious little time left. Let us use this year wisely. Let us squeeze out of it as much good as we can for the cause of Christ. Let us use our time in such a way that we can feel good about how we used it. Let us use this year—and every year—first and foremost, to God's glory.

Gary L. Hutchins



**PORT CHARLOTTE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
20484 Midway Boulevard  
Port Charlotte, Florida 33952  
(941) 629-7454

Vol. 33 No. 52

December 28, 2025

## A New Year, a New Beginning

As a young child, a year seemed like an almost interminable period of time. The school year, especially, felt as though it would never end. Through my teen years, time continued to drag. At eighteen or nineteen, it seemed as though I would never reach twenty-one, a full-fledged legal adult. That struck me as something of a contradiction, since by the time I turned twenty-one, I had already been married for two and a half years, had been working and operating in an adult world for three years, and had been in military service for more than two years. But once I became legal, the years seemed to pass more quickly.

These days, the expression "time flies" feels like an understatement. Some of that perception may be due to the constant emphasis our culture places on speed. We're always seeking ways to do things faster. However, as we cut down production time, we simply fill the time we save with more tasks. As we accomplish more, we're constantly looking for ways to do even more—a never-ending cycle that winds itself around our necks like an ever-tightening noose.

**Elders**

Ron Akers  
Phil Degelia  
Tim Simmons

**Deacons**

Mike Fox  
(Building and Grounds)  
Jeff Kiel  
(Building and Grounds)  
Dean Rosser  
(Safety)  
Roland Snipes  
(Benevolence)  
Keith Tolbert  
(Education)

**Minister**

Bryan Winn

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