No Other Plan

Romans 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

The Six Day War

- Nearly 70 years ago
  - the world began to prematurely write
    - the obituary of the fledgling little nation of Israel.
  - The armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan
    - were all poised at her borders
      - and they were prepared
      - to eradicate the Jewish nation.
    - They had made their intentions known,
      - had broadcast loud and clear
      - that they intended to destroy Israel,
        - and none of the world powers
        - were willing to stick their necks
        - out in defense of the Jewish state,
          - not even the United States.
    - The descendants of Abraham were, once again, alone against impossible odds.

- On the eve of the war,
  - the Egyptian forces that occupied the Sinai peninsula
    - were composed of seven battle-tested divisions.
  - Those seven divisions were made up of 100,000 warriors,
    - professional soldiers who were trained for combat
      - and tested in the fires of previous conflicts.
  - At least 1,000 tanks
    - and three lines of defensive artillery positions
      - were deployed in support of Egypt’s seven divisions.

- Israel, at the time, had no standing army.
  - However, in response to the threat of hostilities
    - she called up her military reserves.
  - Around 45,000 men and women answered that call.
    - They were formed into three Israeli divisions
      - with about 650 tanks to support them.
  - It is notable that these were not soldiers,
    - they were just normal people
      - bakers,
      - butchers,
      - teachers,
• bankers,
• mechanics
• ordinary people from all walks of life.
  o But, as their nation stood at the brink of annihilation,
    ▪ they answered the call
    ▪ to come to her defense.

• Israel was in a very difficult position.
  o She was forced to fight for her very right to exist;
    ▪ yet her army and air force were undermanned
      • and most of her planes and tanks
        o were WWII cast offs,
      • surplus military equipment
        o that was anything but state of the art.
  o Meanwhile her adversaries were professional warriors
    ▪ armed with the best military hardware
      • that money could buy.

• This is why the world had already written Israel off
  o before the fighting even began,
    ▪ because they were facing impossible odds.

• However, there was a certain mindset among the Jews
  o that cannot be quantitatively factored
    ▪ into any of the military analysis
    ▪ of the disposition of troops and assets.

• That mindset became the deciding factor of the six-day war.
  o It was embodied in a single Hebrew phrase
    ▪ that became the de facto motto of the Israeli military
      • and the Israeli people as a whole.

• The phrase was “En Brera”
  o and it means “No alternative.”
    ▪ Essentially it represented the fact
      • that Israel was fighting for her national existence.
    ▪ There were no reserve troops,
      • there was no back up plan,
      • there would be no support from anywhere else.
    ▪ The full weight of their national survival
      • rested on their own shoulders.

• Every man and woman who went into combat on June 5th 1967
  o did so with the understanding
    ▪ that there was no alternative to victory.
  o They were Israel’s last and greatest hope.
    ▪ “En Brera” meant
      • that they could not settle
No Other Plan

• “En Brera” meant
  • that when they met impossible odds,
    o they had to fight anyway
    o because they were all there was.
• “En Brera” meant
  • that when they faced insurmountable obstacles,
    o they had to keep going
    o because the hope of Israel
    o was riding on their shoulders.

• It was an attitude that was embodied
  o in a famous speech given by General Tal
    • on the eve of the battle.
  o Basically he called all of his officers together
    • and this is what he told them:
• He said, our plan is good.
  o He said, I’m confident
    • that you are capable of executing the plan,
      • down to the finest details.
  o But one thing I know,
    • as a veteran of combat,
      • is that when the shooting starts tomorrow,
        o the plans are going out the window.
    • Nothing will happen according to those plans.
• He said, the lines of advance are going to be wrong,
  o the guy next to you is going to get killed,
    • you are going to try to call HQ
      • but you won’t be able to get through,
        o everything is going to seem to break down.

• In that moment, General Tal said,
  o I need you to remember one thing about the plans.
    • There is one critical element
      • that cannot be forgotten
      • in the heat of the moment.
    • When everything else changes,
      • remember the concept behind the plans.
        o That concept is simple.
          • Every man attacks.
          • Every tank attacks.
          • Every unit will advance,
            • as fast as it can,
            • towards its final objective.
        o Pay no attention to your flanks.
No Other Plan

- Give no thought to resupply.
- If you attack with ten tanks
  - and nine of them are destroyed,
    - keep advancing with the tenth.
- Whatever you do, don’t stop!
  - Don’t lose momentum!

- Other countries, General Tal said,
  - can afford to lose the initial battle
    - and still carry the day.
  - We can’t.
  - You are all that we have.
  - The fate of our nation rests on your shoulders.

- If you are defeated tomorrow,
  - our nation will be forever lost.
    - You are our only plan!
      - En Brera.
      - No alternative.

- The battle tomorrow will be life and death.
  - Every man will attack,
    - giving no thought to casualties.
  - There will be no retreat.
    - There will be no halt;
      - there will be no hesitation.
        - Only forward momentum.
        - En Brera!
        - We can’t afford to lose!

- The rest is history.
  - Israel prevailed against impossible odds.
    - And, while there is no doubt
      - that they owe the miraculous victory
      - to the blessings of God,
    - there is also little doubt
      - that the “En Brera” mindset
        - is what carried them through
          - the fiercest of the fighting
        - and compelled them to victory
          - even when defeat seemed imminent.

- They settled the issue before the fight ever began,
  - there can be no surrender,
    - there can be no defeat
      - because we are the only plan.

This is God’s Only Plan
• I want you to understand something this afternoon:
  o **This church is God’s only plan for reaching this city.**
    ▪ This is it!
    ▪ There is no other plan.
    ▪ There is no alternative.
  o God has no other means
    ▪ to the reach the world,
      ▪ except through his church.
  o He has no other plan
    ▪ to minister to the lost and the hurting,
      ▪ except through us.
  o He has no other way
    ▪ to mend the broken hearted,
    ▪ to bring healing to those who are sick
      ▪ in spirit and in body,
    ▪ to bring hope to those that are hopeless,
      ▪ except through us.
  o God has no other plan
    ▪ to demonstrate His power and authority,
      ▪ except thru the church.

• At the risk of being repetitious,
  o I want you to understand
    ▪ that God has chosen to reach a lost world,
      ▪ through his church.
      o This is it!
      o This is all there is.

• The church isn’t perfect,
  o it isn’t composed of religious professionals,
    ▪ it isn’t made up of men and women
      ▪ who were trained specifically
        o for this purpose.
  o Much like the small Israeli army
    o that took the field of battle in the six-day war,
      ▪ the church is composed of volunteers,
    o it is composed of ordinary men and women
      ▪ factory workers,
      ▪ car salesmen,
      ▪ computer technicians,
      ▪ truck drivers,
      ▪ healthcare professionals
    o normal men and women
      ▪ who have a few things in common,
        ▪ we have been washed in the blood of the lamb,
        ▪ we have been forgiven,
• our sins have been washed away
• and God has filled us with the Holy Ghost.

• These are the ties that bind us together
  o that make us into the church!
    ▪ We all have our faults,
    ▪ we all have our flaws,
    ▪ not one of us is perfect,
  • but we are the church
    o and God has fully invested himself in the church
      ▪ for the purpose of saving the world!
  o This is the Body of Christ in this world.
    ▪ This is the means by which God has chosen
      • to manifest his mercy and his grace.
        o The hope of the entire world
          ▪ rests upon the shoulders of the church!

• Nothing is closer to the heart of God than saving the lost.
  o It is the centerpiece of the Bible.
    ▪ God became a man,
      • he robed himself in flesh
        o and He walked upon this earth
          ▪ for a singular purpose:
  o He came to seek and to save that which was lost.
    ▪ That purpose is what drove him to the cross.
      • That purpose is what compelled him
        o to lay down his life,
        o to shed his blood,
          ▪ so that others might live.
  o It was the supreme mission of heaven.
    ▪ He died so that you and I might live.

• We know that,
  o we fully comprehend that,
    ▪ but what you may not fully comprehend, today,
      • is that when it was all done,
      • when the cross was finished,
      • when the tomb was emptied,
      • when Christ finished his work on this earth,
        ▪ he left it all in the hands
          • of small group of men and women
            o called the church!

• The most amazing work of God ever
  o was not the creation of the universe,
    ▪ the sun the stars and the planets,
  o the most amazing work of God
was accomplished at the cross.

- The cross is the single greatest demonstration
  - of the supreme power and glory of God.
    - At the cross, God so loved the world
      - that he gave his only begotten son.
    - At the cross, God so loved the lost
      - that he made a way
        - to shed his own blood for them.
    - At the cross, God made himself
      - a little lower than the angels
        - that he might suffer death
        - for every man.
    - At the cross, he defeated sin
      - as he led captivity captive.

- **But when it was finished,**
  - when it was all said and done,
    - he left it all in the hands of the church!

- I cannot tell you, today, how incredibly important the church really is.
  - Words would fail to express
    - the magnitude of the confidence and purpose
      - that God has invested in the church.
  - This conglomeration of people,
    - this mixture of humanity,
      - this eclectic group of individuals
        - that make up the church,
          - this is the hope of the entire world!
    - Christ in you is the hope of Glory.
      - The presence and power of God,
        - in this church corporately
        - and in each of you individually,
          - is the only hope that a lost world has.

- Think about it for a moment,
  - God went to incredible lengths
    - to secure the salvation of the lost.
  - He went so far as to robe himself in flesh.
    - He didn’t trust that mission to anyone or anything else.
      - He addressed the sin problem himself.

- **However, when it comes to the propagation**
  - of the message of the cross,
- **when it comes to reaching the world**
  - with the message of salvation,
    - God has fully invested
      - his confidence in the church!
• **Listen church, I want you to hear this:**
  o **We are God’s only plan!**
    ▪ There is no alternative.
    ▪ There is no plan B.
    ▪ There is no other option.
  o We are the church,
    ▪ we are the people of God,
      ▪ and we are God’s plan for this city,
        ▪ for this community,
        ▪ for this hour.
    ▪ If God saves anyone here,
      ▪ he will do it thru us.
    ▪ If God ministers to the hurting and the wounded,
      ▪ he will do it thru us.
    ▪ If God sets the captives free
      ▪ and breaks the bonds of addiction,
        ▪ he will do it thru us.
    ▪ God will not come down into our community
      ▪ and call men to repentance.
        ▪ He will send us.
    ▪ God will not reach out a hand to the broken hearted.
      ▪ He will send us.
    ▪ God will not stretch forth his hand
      ▪ to heal anyone in our community.
        ▪ He will send us
          ▪ to stretch forth our hand.
  o You have to grasp the importance of this:
    ▪ God has placed himself in our hands!
      ▪ God has placed the efficacy
        ▪ of his single greatest work,
          ▪ in your hands.
  o We are the church.
    ▪ We are God’s chosen vessel
      ▪ and it is up to us to deliver Him
        ▪ to a lost world!
    ▪ We are the ambassadors of Jesus Christ.
      ▪ We are the heralds of the cross of Calvary.
        ▪ We are called out of this world,
          ▪ to take this message to this world.
        ▪ We are called to declare hope to the hopeless,
          ▪ to bring peace to those in chaos,
          ▪ to bring healing to the hurting,
            ▪ and to bring them each to the cross!
• I want, somehow, this afternoon,
  o to impress upon you the urgency and the importance
    § of your calling as a church.
• A lost world is counting on us
  o to deliver the saving message of Jesus Christ to them.
    § A world of lost people is dying around us,
      • condemned to a devil’s hell
        o and we are their only hope,
        o we have the only answer.
  o If we don’t tell them, no one will.
    § If we don’t reach them nobody will.
  o God has placed himself in our hands,
    § God has commissioned the church
      • with his greatest work
        o and he has no other plan.
• Spiritually speaking,
  o the hope of our community,
    § the eternal future of every man and woman here,
      • rests on our shoulders.
  o If we don’t reach them,
    § if we don’t bring them to the cross,
      • if we don’t share with them
        o the incredible grace of God,
          § no one will!

En Brera
• During those fateful six days in June of 1967,
  o the Israeli army would be faced
    § with insurmountable opposition
      • over and over again.
• Each time that it seemed
  o as if the advance would falter,
    § individual soldiers would remind themselves
      • that the hope of their nation
        o rested upon their shoulders.
  o If I fail,
    § they would say,
      • Israel fails.
  o If I am defeated,
    § my nation will be defeated.
      • En Brera.
        o There is no alternative.
• I truly believe that we are entering a new season.
  o I truly believe that God is doing a work
Notes by Pastor Tony McCall

The Pentecostals of Lake City

- of renewal and restoration in the church
  - for the purpose of refocusing us
    - on our primary mission
      - of reaching the lost.
  - Because of that,
    - I am convinced that it is high time
      - for the church to awake,
        - to be stirred by the same kind of conviction
          - that compelled Israel into battle.

- It is high time for us to recognize,
  - this is not just something we do,
    - this is not just a portion of our lives,
      - this is everything!
  - Church isn't just something that you are a part of,
    - the church is WHO you are!
  - It isn't just something you do on Sunday and Wednesday;
    - it is WHAT you were made for!

- God formed you in your mother's womb for this purpose.
  - He didn't make you to be a banker.
    - He didn't make you to drive a forklift.
  - He didn't invest life into you
    - just so you could draw a paycheck,
      - build a home,
      - have a family
      - and save up a retirement.
    - There is more to your life than this!
  - God formed you with purpose
    - and the greatest purpose in your life
      - is the ministry of the cross.
  - God made you to be the church!
    - Long before he ever called you out of a life of sin,
      - he had a divine purpose for your life.
    - Long before he ever filled you with his spirit,
      - he formed you for a greater purpose.

- And I believe that God is bringing this church
  - to a place of renewal and revival.
    - We are, indeed, entering a new season
      - and God is about to refresh and revitalize this church
        - to accomplish his purpose.
  - This will be a season of revival.
    - But that revival rests on our shoulders.
      - En Brera.
    - There is no alternative.
      - We are the church!
Awake

- In our text, Paul confronts the church in Rome
  - with the fact that they have been lulled to sleep.
    - There are some who were once seized
      - by the power of the cross
        - but are now held in the grip
        - of weariness and exhaustion.
    - There are some who once were driven
      - by a passion
        - but now they are drifting through life
          - without any real purpose.
    - There are some who were called by God
      - out of darkness and into his marvelous light
        - who have begun, ever so slowly
          - to drift back to the life they had abandoned.
  - In our text, Paul pleads with them
    - to awaken out of sleep,
      - to stir themselves,
        - to recognize again
          - the purpose for which they were called.
  - The unfortunate truth is that we are all human
    - and we are all vulnerable to the trap
      - of being lulled to sleep
        - by the relentless repetition of life.
    - We never intend to get to the place
      - where we are sleepwalking through life.
    - We never intend to get to the place
      - where the call of God on our lives
        - has yielded to the daily demands
          - of living, working and supporting a family.
    - We never intend to come to the place
      - where forward momentum slows to a grind,
        - where personal spiritual growth
          - gives way to sluggish apathy.
  - But it happens
    - and it happens so slowly
      - that we aren’t even aware
        - that it is happening.
  - Old attitudes
    - begin to become a part
      - of our personality again.
    - Old hurts
• begin to hinder our walk with God.
  o Bitterness that we thought was buried
    • raises its ugly head
      • and begins to govern our lives again.
  o And, if we are not careful,
    • we slowly but surely
      • begin to lose forward motion
        o and the great cause of Christ,
          • which has been entrusted to the church,
            • suffers because the church
              • has lost its momentum.

• What do you do in those times?
  o What do you do when the church is lulled to sleep?
    • Paul’s answer is simple,
      • you wake it up!
• You can almost hear the alarm in his voice,
  o it is high time to awake out of sleep.
    • It is high time to recognize
      • the purpose for which you live.
    • It is high time to be revived
      • and renewed in God
        o because the hour is at hand,
        • the night is nearly gone,
          o and the day is about to break.
      • Before too long,
        o its gonna be too late
        o to reach our world with the gospel.
  o There is sense of urgency in the voice of the apostle Paul.
    • There is a sense of immediacy,
      • the night is spent,
      • the dawn is coming,
        o wake up before it is too late!

• I believe that it is time
  o for the church to awaken itself from a slumber
    • and recognize the hour in which we live
      • and the purpose for which we were made.
        o We are the church.

Close
• General Tal told those Israeli officers on that historic day,
  o there is going to come a moment
    • when the circumstances of the battle will overwhelm you.
  o In that moment, when success or failure rests on your decision,
    • remember this:
No Other Plan

• En Brera.
  o No alternative.
  o The hope of your nation is resting on your shoulders.

• It is the end of an old season
  o and it is the beginning of a new season.
    ▪ The old season was marked
      • by struggles,
      • weariness
      • and exhaustion
    ▪ and there are some under the sound of my voice
      • that have almost been overwhelmed
        o by the circumstances of the battle.

• I want you to realize today
  o just how much is riding on you.
    ▪ Success or failure depends
      • on what you do right now.
  o You can either embrace the hope of a new season
    ▪ and turn your heart towards heaven
      • and beseech the Lord for a personal revival
    ▪ or you can settle back into the rut
      • that you’ve been stuck in for so long.

• But before you make that choice,
  o let me remind you of one thing:
    ▪ En Brera.
      • No alternative.
      • The hope of a lost world is resting on your shoulders!

<STAND>
• Will you answer the call?
  o Will you embrace, anew,
    ▪ God’s plan and purpose for your life?
  o Will you make the sacrifices that are necessary?
    ▪ Are you willing to surrender yourself,
      • your will
      • and your plans
        o to the cause of Christ?
  o Are you ready to surrender
    ▪ your whole person to the cause of Christ?

• Jesus said that no man
  o who puts his hand to the plow and looks back
    ▪ is worthy of the kingdom.

• God is calling this church to complete consecration,
to an undivided focus
  ▪ on the plan and purpose of God.

- God wants to give us a revival in Lake City,
  o in Bowman,
  o in Needham,
  o in Dixie,
  o in Black Oak,
  o in Caraway,
  o in Lunsford
  o and even some that will come from Jonesboro,
    ▪ the question is simple,
      • are you willing to commit yourself to the cause?
  o Are you willing to take the old man back to the cross
    ▪ and crucify him again?

Is the church ready to be the church?!?

Will you find yourself a place in an altar today and pray until God ignites a fresh revival in your life?