

Redeem the Evil Days

Have you ever wondered how our time will be remembered?

You start to ask this question a lot if you've read a lot of history. The passage of time can either paint a positive or negative picture of how you and your fellow humans spent your time and your lives.

Will people remember the time we were alive as a time of freedom, justice, progress, and beauty? Or will they view our time with regret and shame, seeing how we failed to prevent evil or do good?

The world is a good place. But this good world is still littered with corruption, untruths, hatred, contempt, and all kinds of pain. People are still enslaved. Governments and soldiers still kill and maim. People still starve, good work remains undone, and children still have to sit through school.

We might say that our "days are evil". But we wouldn't be the first.

This is a phrase from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians* which recently caught my eye. But there's another one tied close by:

*See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

"Redeeming the time."

I typically dislike the King James Version, but I love this wording. These are some words of hope. As is typical, Paul had ways of saying things which resonate beyond his religious audience.

So often we think of our "era" as something far beyond our control. But in the end, an era (from a historian's point of view) is only the human actions and reactions that make it up.

We can by our lives *redeem* the evil days in which we live. We can change this time - at least as far as we are concerned - from a time of evil to a time of goodness. And we can redeem the time and "the days" by redeeming each day with the littlest of action: small kindnesses, small moments of integrity, small recognition of human dignity, small tellings of the truth.

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