



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON TIME

NOTES

Introduction

We have discussed the brevity of life and the importance of exchanging our lives for the fulfilling of Christ's Great Commission.

The problem is that most of us are already too busy and don't have enough time to do what we are already doing. We constantly feel we need more time but there isn't any more. Each of us is entrusted with only 24 hours per day, and there is NO WAY to extend the number of hours, no matter how hard we try.

The real difficulty is not the *lack of time*, but *what we do with the time we have*. Since we can never accumulate, stockpile, replace or turn back time, we must learn to control it as it passes. If we fail to manage our time, nothing else in our lives can and will be managed.

The Bible has a great deal to say about time. There is a time and season for everything under heaven.

To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted.

Ecclesiastes 3:1,2

We must know our priorities and apply our resources to the best opportunities.

Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should.

Psalms 90:12 (LB)

Live life then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite all the evils of these days.

Ephesians 5:15,16 (JBP)

Another reason for right living is this: you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for the

coming of the Lord is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is far gone, the day of his return will soon be here. So quit the evil deeds of darkness and put on the armor of right living, as we who live in the daylight should! Be decent and true in everything you do so that all can approve your behavior. Don't spend your time in wild parties and getting drunk or in adultery and lust, or fighting, or jealousy. But ask the Lord Jesus Christ to help you live as you should, and don't make plans to enjoy evil.

Romans 13:11-14 (LB)

The Conflict

In God's plan there is **NO CONFLICT** between the objectives God has given to us and the **TIME** He has given us to accomplish them.

It Lies With Us

We have the following:

- *The objective given to us by God in Christ's Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20),*
- *Limited time to accomplish the task (Romans 13:11),*
- *The knowledge that our rewards are based on our ability to accomplish the task (2 Corinthians 5:10),*
- *A lack of understanding as to the best method of accomplishing the task, and*
- *A lack of discipline to discern and major on the truly important things.*

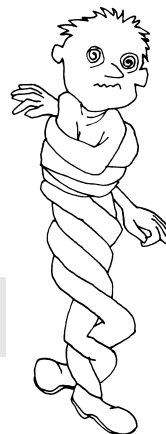
How to Resolve It

We must examine our vertical and horizontal relationships to God.

Our Vertical Relationship to God

If I run my own life, I assume the responsibility to work it all out myself. I may be putting things into my schedule that God wants out or taking out things that are very important to Him.

Result: One Giant Mess!



- If I make Jesus Lord of my life and allow Him to plan my time as He sees fit, He assumes the responsibility to work it all out—and He makes no mistakes.

Moreover, we know that to those who love God, who are called according to His Plan, everything that happens fits into a pattern for good.

Romans 8:28 (JBP)

- Jesus is now living out His life in my body.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

- My body is to be a living sacrifice lived unto God.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:1

Our Horizontal Relationship to God

- I am to be **Winning** and **Discipling** the world, training everyone I meet and teaching everyone I can.

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 1:28

- Go and make disciples of all nations.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:19,20

- I am to be a **Stranger** and a **Pilgrim** in the world—and not investing my life for things of earth.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were as-

sured of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:13

- As a good soldier of Jesus Christ I am not to entangle myself with the affairs of this life.

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:3,4

- I am to abstain from lusts which war against the soul.

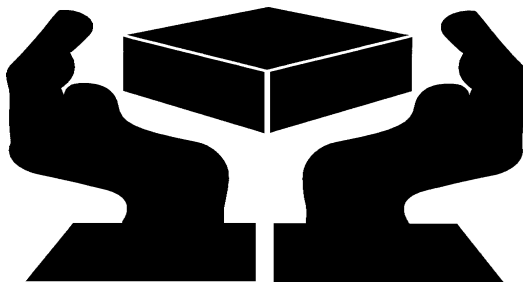
Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul...

1 Peter 2:11

- I am not to let the world squeeze me into its mold.

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.

Romans 12:2 (JBP)



- I am not to love the world or the things in the world.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

1 John 2:15,16

- Pure and undefiled religion means I am to keep myself unstained by the world.

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

James 1:27

When I try to have the best of both worlds, I lose both!

Tools for Accomplishing Christ's Objective

Time

Time is the “Great Equalizer of the Race” (24 hours in every day). In Psalm 90:12, we are urged to “*consider each day of value.*” And an unknown author has described our time allotment in the following way:

If you had a bank that credited your account each morning with \$86,000—that carried over no balance from day to day—and allowed you to keep no cash in your account...and every evening cancelled whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day—what would you do? Draw out every cent, of course! Well, you do have such a bank—its name is ‘time.’ Every morning it credits you with 86,000 seconds...every night it rules off as lost whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purposes. It carries over no balance...It allows no overdrafts. Each day it opens a new account for you. If you fail to use the day’s deposit, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against tomorrow. You must live in the present—on today’s deposit.

Paul urges us to be good stewards of this resource.

Live life, then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning and purpose of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days.

Ephesians 5:15,16 (JBP)

If you and I make the most of our time, it will be because we have learned the value of a day and how to spend it wisely.

“This is the beginning of a new day, God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for good. What I do today is very important, because

I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving something in its place I have traded for it. I want it to be gain, not loss; good, not evil; success, not failure, in order that I shall not forget the price I paid for it.”

2.4—Hour Principle

In the Old Testament, God gave to his people laws which they were to obey concerning the resources entrusted to their stewardship. In the New Testament we no longer live under the law but these laws now become guiding principles to direct us into God’s will.

In Deuteronomy, chapter 14, we are taught the purpose of the tithe.

The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives.

Deuteronomy 14:23 (LB)

In tithing we are taught to return a portion of all that God blesses and prospers in our lives. In Deuteronomy the examples of grain, new-wine, olive oil and herds are given. If we don’t have any of these specific commodities, does that mean we don’t have to give? The answer to that question is NO. We quickly realize that God used these examples of resources to teach us the principle of the tithe. We are to return a tithe back to the Lord of **everything** that He prospers and blesses in our lives.

As followers and “obeyers” of Jesus Christ, we must also realize that our time is a resource made by God and belongs to Him. Most people struggle with this practical question, “How much of my time should be given to God on a daily basis?”

If we will learn to do with our time what we have been so carefully taught to do with our other resources, the 2.4 Hour Principle will come into focus. Just as we are to set aside a portion of our material assets for the building of God’s Kingdom, we are also to set aside a portion of our time for the building of the Kingdom.

During this “vapor” God gives us specific instructions for the use of each day. God commanded that six days of each week be given to work or labor and that one day be totally set apart for Him. If we invest the tithe of each work day for eternal things, we will set apart 2.4 hours per day or 14.4 hours per week. Add to that figure the 16 waking hours of the seventh or Lord’s Day, and you have a total of 30.4 hours per week for the building of God’s Kingdom. God has built this time into our daily schedules so that no one will have the excuse that I don’t have time for these eternal things. ***God has given us the time.***

6 days x 2.4 hours = 14.4 hours
7th day - Sabbath = 16.0 hours
30.4 hours per week

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This is the time that God has placed in our week to build His Kingdom.

If we want to achieve a proper balance in our lives regarding the time set aside for the Lord, then one-half of the time should be spent developing our vertical relationship with God, including public worship, private studies and devotions. The other half should go for our horizontal outreach to others through our ministry of winning and discipling.

It always concerns me when people tell me that they don't have time for the eternal things which we are so clearly called and commanded to do. God gave us the time! We may never have learned how to manage our time, or we may be simply mismanaging it, but God gave us the time for the building of His Kingdom.

Someday we will be held accountable for the stewardship of this time in light of the fulfilling of our eternal responsibilities. At the Judgment Seat of Christ all of this will come into focus, and the very words, "I didn't have the time," will freeze in our throats.

How much time are you giving to God?

Talents and Finances

- God gave me **talents** or abilities not only to provide for myself but to be used in building His Kingdom.



But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.

1 Corinthians 12:7

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20

- God gave me **finances** for building His Kingdom by requiring that each of us return a tithe of God's provision to Him.

And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstlings of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

Deuteronomy 14:23

- Following is a warning of the danger of trying to rob God.

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.”

Malachi 3:8,9

- Are you seeking the Kingdom of God first?

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 6:33

Are you doing what God requires of you? Are you building your kingdom or God's?

All the Promises of God

The Bible is full of God's promises to His children. The promises were given to assist us in our walk with Christ and the ministry God has called us to.

Matthew 28:18 tells us that “All Authority” is Christ's, and therefore, He is able to fulfill all these promises.

Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

Matthew 28:18

Opportunities

God sets multitudes of opportunities before us so that we can be involved in building His Kingdom. We must simply *capitalize* on these opportunities. But, we must make sure that the opportunities don't produce activity without productivity. We need to carefully seek God concerning His will so that we give ourselves to the opportunities He wants us to engage in. Satan will place opportunities that use up our time but produce very little for the Kingdom of God.

God wants us to invest some of our **TIME**, **TALENTS** and **TREASURES** (finances) to take advantage of the *opportunities*.

An unknown author put it this way:

Isn't it strange that kings and queens
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings
And common folks like you and me
Each is a builder for ETERNITY
Each is given a Book of Rules
a Block of Stone
a Set of Tools
And each must make ere life has flown
A STUMBLING BLOCK or a STEPPING STONE.



Each Day Is a Short Life

An important principle to grasp with respect to time is—

Life's Total Value is Equal to the Sum of Each Day Multiplied by the Number of Days of One's Life.

If we were to take last Friday and multiply it by the number of days of your life, would you be willing to let this be the sum total of your contribution to God?

You may say, "Not last Friday! That was a bad day!"

O.K.! How about last Wednesday or a week ago Wednesday?

Suppose you could take one day next week and plan it so it could be multiplied by the number of days of your life. What kind of things would you ensure to be in that day? Certainly you want to make sure there is sufficient time for the eternal things of God we have talked about. What would you put into that day?

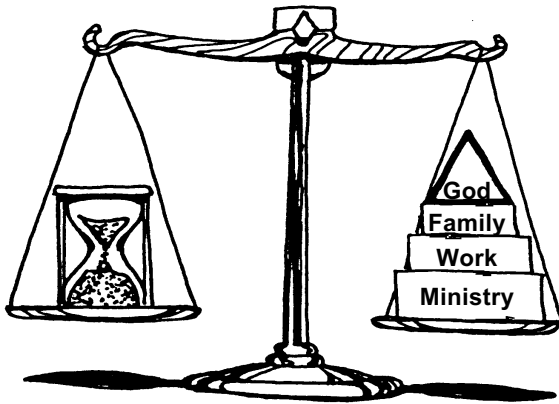
How much would you allot for your

- Quiet Time
- Witnessing
- Prayer
- Discipling
- Bible Study
- Tithing of Resources...?

NOTES

A Proper Balance

We must have a Proper Balance in our lives regarding time.



Program

Your Daily Routine should make allowance for your—

- Walk with God
- Family
- Work
- Study
- Play
- Ministry

Poor Testimony

It is a poor testimony to work yourself to death.

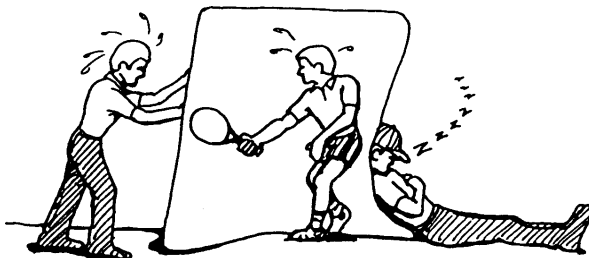
Robert Murray McCheyenne died at the age of 30. Before his death, he made this profound observation about his life and lack of balance:

God gave me a message to deliver and a horse to ride.
I beat the horse to death and now I can no longer
deliver the message.

Efficiency

A steel mill once hired an efficiency expert to increase their ability to move steel. The expert had the men work 12 minutes and rest 3—then work for 12 minutes more. The company went from moving 10 tons to 30 tons a day.

Sometimes we are more effective if we stop to rest, take a nap, a day off or a vacation.



We should work hard, play hard and rest well!