

Time

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- If you think about it, in some ways, the world is run by the clock
 - Consider your job or your school – you must be present during your allotted time, or you are subject to whatever punishment has been put in place
 - Consider any appointments you may have – doctor visits, dentist visits, etc.
 - If you miss your appointment, you are subject to whatever disciplinary action they have
 - Even consider dating – if you schedule a date with someone and you’re late or don’t show up at all, you’re likely not going to get another chance
 - Spiritually speaking, there is no difference
 - 2 Corinthians 6:2 – *“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”*
 - You can sense the urgency in Paul’s words here to the Corinthians
 - Time is fleeting – and you only have the time while you’re alive on this earth to make the decision to serve God or reject Him
 - In the grand scheme of things, that is a very little amount of time to make an ever so critical decision
- Paul’s sense of urgency in 2 Corinthians 6 and the fact that time is fleeting is further reinforced by the fact that Scripture indicates that we are in the last days
 - Acts 2:16-17 – *“But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;’”*
 - God said that He would send the Spirit on all flesh in the last days
 - God sent His Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4
 - If they were in the last days then, we certainly are today
 - They likely didn’t fully understand, but Abraham could rest assured that the Lord was not going to come back because the old law hadn’t been delivered yet
 - And the prophets of the Old Testament could rest assured that the Lord was not going to come back in their lifetimes because Christ had not executed God’s plan of redemption yet
 - But that’s not true anymore – Christ has brought us the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25)
 - His death, burial, and resurrection is the gospel that saves us and that has already been accomplished (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)
 - We are not guaranteed tomorrow in any sense – we either could die or the Lord could come back, we just don’t know
 - Job 19:25 – *“For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;”*
 - Amen – our Redeemer does live
 - He has risen from the grave – triumphing over death, paving the way for us to do the same through obedience to the gospel

- But this further indicates that we are in the last days
- Hezekiah was near death in 2 Kings 20
 - He was told by God through Isaiah in 2 Kings 20:1 that he needed to set his house in order because he was going to die
 - This is advice that Hezekiah heeded, he repented, God healed him, and promised him 15 additional years of life on this earth
 - God remained true to His word as He always does
 - He healed Hezekiah's illness
 - He delivered Hezekiah and Judah from the hands of Assyria
 - And Hezekiah got his additional 15 years
 - 15 years may not seem long to you and I depending on what stage of life you are in
 - I assure you though that to someone who is dying – 15 years seems like an eternity even though it's really not
 - I will personalize this thought – I am 30 years old
 - If I live a good life, perhaps I live to 75 or 80
 - Giving me 45-50 years left
 - That may seem like a long time, but as we all know that in the grand scheme of things, that is absolutely nothing
 - We all remember Ken's demonstration years ago – the paper clip on a rope that spans the width of this auditorium
 - Time is fleeting
- And if you consider the grand scheme of things, our time is only well spent on righteous things
 - Colossians 3:2 – *"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."*
 - On our trips to our strongman competitions, my friend and I started listening to murder mystery podcasts to and from to occupy our time
 - And the narrator of the podcast we listened to made a statement similar to the following
 - *"Everyone's life has a beginning, middle, and end – but most of us never truly know what stage we're in."*
 - As Christian's, our purpose in life is simple
 - Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 – *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil."*
 - Ephesians 2:10 – *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*
 - That's it – fear God, keep His commandments, do good for your fellowman, present yourself as a living sacrifice (Romans 12)
 - Hezekiah got his house in order – what will you do with your time on earth?
- I got these statistics from someone else and I don't know what his source was, so take these for what they are worth – but whether or not they're 100% accurate or not anymore, these will prove a point
 - At some point whenever this study was conducted, it considered a 70 year lifespan
 - Of those 70 years, 20 years are spent sleeping

- 6 years eating, 8 years in leisure, 5 years dressing, 8 years on the telephone, 4 years waiting on various things, 2.5 years sick, and only 1.5 years in assembly with the church
 - The meetings of the church is not the work to be done as a Christian, the work truly starts when you go out into the world
 - If you aren't living that, you may need to reconsider whatever it is you're doing once you leave the assembly
- As humans in 2025, we are very busy people – no different from those that have gone on before us though
 - I'm 30 years old and single – and on most days, I barely have time to eat
 - But we are good at finding time to watch TV, watch movies, read whatever books you find appealing, engage in our personal hobbies
 - So we cannot use busyness as an excuse for not fearing God and keeping His commandments
 - If you've been obedient to the gospel and have become a baptized, believing Christian, then you have presented yourself as a living sacrifice before God (Romans 12:1-2)
 - Your life is no longer yours – it belongs to Christ (Colossians 3:4)
 - Do your actions in this life confess the name of Christ or reject Him? (Matthew 10:32-33)
- **1 John 5:3**
 - Matthew 11:30 – "*For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*"
 - Serving God in this life is not burdensome
 - Matthew 11 indicates that Christ has already done the heavy lifting
 - He is our reconciliation to God (Romans 5)
 - We must simply be yoked with Him
 - Keeping God's commandments shows God and others that we love Him
 - Busyness or whatever else is in your way of serving God is no excuse – it is simply a stumbling block
 - If you think it is difficult to serve God for whatever the reason, try hanging on a cross
 - If we claim that we are too busy to serve God, then it would appear that we are simply disorganized or our priorities are misplaced
 - Matthew 6:33 – "*But seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*"
 - Let's live that
 - We are instructed to be faithful
 - 1 Corinthians 4:2 – "*Moreover it is **required** in stewards that one be found faithful.*"
 - God has made us stewards of the earth and every physical thing in it – including our time
 - Let's be found faithful stewards of the time God has given us
- Consider the 1 talent man in Matthew 25 (**vs 14-15, 18, 24-30**)
 - This man was given the same opportunity as the other 2 were
 - He only received 1 talent vs 5 and 2, but he was still entrusted as a steward to make the best use of it
 - Quite frankly, he did not

- He hid this talent and was condemned for it
- Let this not be us
- 1 Corinthians 12:11 – *“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”*
- We all have God given talents – let us not hide them as the 1 talent man did in Matthew 25 for the sake of busyness or anything else
- We are not judged on the talents God has given us, rather whether or not we are good stewards of those talents
- Consider the questionnaire that goes around from time to time asking what you'd be willing to do during the worship service
 - To the men that receive these questionnaires, I would encourage you to check all the boxes
 - I was encouraged to do so when I was younger, and I will encourage you all to do so now
 - It doesn't matter if you can't sing very well for instance – nobody is going to judge you based on that
 - Same goes for preaching, leading public prayers, etc.
 - To the women, there are certainly roles in the church for you as well – I would encourage you to get involved also
- I would like to consider 3 things that we can strive to do that would be well worth our time
- **#1 – spend time growing in faith**
 - **Hebrews 5:12-14**
 - The Hebrew Christians here are reproved for not growing as they should
 - They should be teachers by this time in their Christian lives, but rather they are in a position to where they still need to be taught
 - Let this not be said of you and I
 - We must exercise our senses using the word of God that we may discern good and evil
 - Remember, as Christians, your life is no longer yours (Romans 12:1-2 & Colossians 3:4)
 - We are instructed to take up our cross and follow Him daily (Luke 9:23)
 - Perhaps you are a Christian that has grown in faith and knowledge – wonderful
 - Demonstrate your faith and knowledge
 - We all know that actions speak louder than words
 - The amount of knowledge you have means nothing if you don't live it
 - If you do not share the gospel with others, that may be a good indication that it truly doesn't mean anything to you (James 1:22)
- **#2 – spend time growing in zeal**
 - **Philippians 3:3-11**
 - We are Christians
 - We should have the utmost zeal for God and His work as Paul did
 - You can read the second half of the book of Acts and find out how much zeal Paul had
 - He was also a zealous Jew though before his conversion

- He was circumcised the 8th day, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, a Hebrew of Hebrews (he was amongst the best of the best in terms of zeal)
- Blameless in the law, so much so that he deemed it right to persecute those of the Way
- Paul seems to have had a personal vendetta against Christians before his conversion – he was certainly misguided as he admits, but one cannot question his zeal for what he thought was right
- But once he gained all these things and he realized the error of his ways, he considered all of this loss for the gain that was Christ
- Paul zealously fought for the soul of himself and countless others
- He knew he was not going to convert everyone – but he made himself a servant to all in hopes that he may convert some (1 Corinthians 9)
 - To the Jew, he became a Jew
 - To those under the law, he became as one under the law
 - To those without law, he became as one without law
 - To the weak he became weak
 - All for the gospel's sake
 - He had the zeal to save souls
- We should spend time growing our zeal so that the same may be said of us
- Desire to spread the gospel because people are lost in sin if they die in any state without the gospel

- **#3 – spend time growing in the knowledge of the truth**
 - **John 17:17**
 - God's word is truth
 - God's word is not subjective to man's interpretation (2 Peter 1:21) – so therefore, if God's word = truth, then truth is not subjective either
 - Nadab and Abihu found this out the hard way in Leviticus 10 and they now serve as a reminder to us that God means what He says
 - When He wants something done a certain way, then you need to adhere to His commands to the letter
 - Even something as simple as what type of fire they used in their offering to the Lord
 - They used profane fire – fire that God did not instruct them to use and they were killed for it
 - Does this example not serve as proof to us and the world that God cares about what is done in His worship service
 - Every minor detail – what we sing, how we sing, do we use instruments, do we pray to God the Father in Jesus name, or do we pray to Mary
 - God cares and these are details that we must get correct
 - 2 Timothy 2:15 – *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
 - To be the diligent soul seekers we are called to be in Matthew 28, we must study God's word regularly to find the truths within it

- We as members of the one true church must not be found in a situation in which our Biblical knowledge is second best compared to those of the denominational world who are not members of the one true church
 - Do not compromise the word – God has shown us that He is not going to approve of doing so
 - Be diligent in your studies as the Bereans were in Acts 17
- These are 3 ways that we would be wise to spend our time doing
- We know that God wants our best – He wants our first
 - This is true of our giving (Genesis 4)
 - But this is also true of our time
 - As we started by discussing, our time is ever fleeting – what will you do with yours?
- God gave us His best – His only begotten Son (John 3:16)
 - It is only logical that we give Him our best as a result
 - We are God's people (1 Peter 2:9) – chosen, royal, holy, special
 - Let us live our lives in such a way that demonstrates this
 - Our natural man died at the time we decided to be baptized – our lives are no longer our own, but are His
 - Therefore, let us set our affections on things above (Colossians 3)
 - Ecclesiastes 9:10 – *“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.”*
 - There's no work to be done in the grave
 - The time to do the Lord's work is now – do not let earthly distractions get in your way
 - Today is the day of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:2)
- As Sodom and Gomorrah were about to be destroyed and the men who delivered them from the city urged Lot and his family to leave, Lot lingered (Genesis 19:16)
 - He hesitated – but God provided a hand to get them out
 - Why do you wait, dear brother?
 - Why do you linger today – God has provided a hand for us to get out as well
 - We must simply take it
- The gospel plan of salvation is the same yesterday, today, and forever
- **Step 1: Hearing the gospel – Romans 10:13-17**
 - Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many – 1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16
- **Step 2: Believing the gospel – Mark 16:16**
- **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord – Romans 10:8-10**
- **Step 4: Repentance of sins – Luke 13:3**
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
- **Step 5: Baptism into Christ – Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38**
 - Baptism: immerse or submerge
- **Step 6: Live faithfully – Revelation 2:10**
- Invitation