

Time after Time-80% Christian- the gift of time

This manuscript is a Summary, for a full expression of this sermon please download the audio file.

Key Point- "Time after Time"-80% Christian- the gift of time- We should be aiming to reduce how we spend our time on frivolity, non essentials, or selfish goals, not to increase it. We are then available to reveal the Kingdom of God to others

There are many inequities in the world, but one thing we all have in common is the same amount of time each day. God has allotted twenty-four hours to each one of us.

There is a passage in Mark that speaks powerfully to this very issue of being preoccupied with activity or *how much we have and can accomplish*. We are told in [Mark 6](#) that the disciples, having returned from a very busy time of ministry, gathered around the Lord Jesus and began to inform Him about all that they had done and taught (vs. 30). In the Greek text it is obvious that the disciples were quite preoccupied with their performance, with what they had done. This is seen in the repetition of the Greek word *hosos*, “everything.” Literally, the text reads, “Then the apostles gathered around Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught.” But then in verse 31 we read these very interesting and thought provoking words, “He said to them, “Come with me privately to an isolated place and rest a while” (for many were coming and going, and there was no time to eat).” This was not just a problem of time, but of the responsibility to deal with the use of time in a way that would enhance the time they had.

It is a tool of the Devil to allow ourselves to become so “busy” with the aspects of life, that the reason for this life, God, becomes a second player.

One of Satan’s greatest lies is simply this “A slower day is coming”

The Problem of the Tyranny of Time

Rather than a friend, we have turned time into a tyrant. And we have allowed this tyrant to invade and dominate our lives.

This makes us, tired, irritable, angry, depressed, stressed. It detracts us from the import part of life, namely that of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is a place of being, where we allow ourselves, individually and collectively to experience the person and actions of God.

Experience, to immerses oneself in the Christ, to allow Him to inform us, to speak to us, to exist with Him.

Illustration

In the early 1900s, Ivy Lee, a management consultant, had an appointment with Charles Schwab, who was then president of Bethlehem Steel. Schwab told him he would be glad to listen to him, if he could show him a way to get more things done. And if it works, he was willing to pay him whatever he asked within reason.

Lee answered, "If that is what you want, I will show you a method that will increase your personal management efficiency, and that of anyone else who applies it, by at least fifty percent." He handed Schwab a blank piece of paper and said, "Write down the most important things you have to do tomorrow." Schwab did as requested; it took about five minutes.

Lee then said, "Now, number them in the order of their true importance." This took a little longer because Schwab wanted to be sure of what he was doing. Finally Lee instructed, "The first thing tomorrow morning, start working on item Number 1, and stay with it until it is completed. Then take item Number 2 the same way. Then Number 3, and so on. Don't worry if you don't complete everything on the schedule. At least you will have completed the most important projects before getting to the less important ones. Do this every working day. After you have convinced yourself of the value of this system, have your men try it. Try it as long as you like, and then send me your check for whatever you think the idea is worth."

In a few weeks, Charles Schwab sent Ivy Lee a check for \$25,000 (the equivalent of \$250,000 today). Schwab reportedly stated that this lesson was the most profitable one he learned in his business career. It was later said that this was the plan largely responsible for turning a little steel company into one of the largest steel producers in the world. It also helped make Charles Schwab a multi-millionnaire.

Such a simple but profound concept. But notice, that a procrastinator can not follow Lee's advice. If you want to use your time wisely, you will need to repent of procrastination.

Intentionality.

The end of Matthew 6:33 reveals an amazing thing about God's priorities. If we put what God says is important first, the other things we need and want will be added to us as well!

"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you

everything you need."

But if we put money and things as equal to or higher priority than God's Kingdom, in the long run we will have neither.

We can't take charge of our time without clearly defining our priorities. We must schedule what matters most first, or it will be pushed out by the hundreds of urgent and persistent things that come at us each week.

III- rocks into the big vase, big rocks first.

We need to fill a vase with the big rocks first, then the smaller less important things can fit around them, if you fill the base with the less important things, then the big things never fit in.

III- Filling the vegetation Bin!

What is important gets done!

John Piper- "So we labor in the word and in prayer not just to figure out lists of deeds that are more or less acceptable, but we labor to get a mind that thinks and feels about things the way Christ does.

The way I do it—and it's the only biblical way I know, though I'm not as good at it as I'd like to be—is to experience what Romans 12:2 says: "Do not be conformed"—today, this afternoon, in your priorities and choices—"to this age, but be transformed in the renewing of your mind, so that you can prove what is the will of God."

Whiteboard exercise- Where do we spend our time

Who do you let inform you in life- Wise Solomon warned: "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul" (Proverbs 22:24–25). The people with whom we spend time affect us. Whether we believe it or not, we come to resemble them.

However we need to inform others, so we make a distinct choice to reside with others, this is part of incarnation ministry.

The Bible tells us to use our time wisely and with great care. "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).

What entertains us, changes us

Jesus corrected the Pharisees many times for their hypocrisy—attempting to

appear good on the outside while their hearts were corrupt.

He said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also” (Matthew 23:25-26).

We learn from this strong statement that what happens in our minds counts more with God than the way we appear on the outside.

Jesus also explained that desiring something illicit in our minds is a transgression of God’s law even if we don’t act on the thought: “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).

So it is vital to keep our minds and hearts clean and pure. This means a Christian should avoid any kind of entertainment that would cause him or her to desire to violate God’s law and way of life.

Actions- Write down what we do with our time (how much we may spend on a particular item)

Second, try to identify what your biggest time wasters are. According to various polls done on the Internet, these are among the top ones:

1. TV
2. video and computer games
3. Facebook
4. E-mails
5. Reading Novels
6. Texting

Now, remember, the goal is to spend our time loving God and loving people. If you are doing those things in order to love God and people, it’s not wasted time. If you are doing them simply to entertain yourself so that you won’t be bored, then they probably are. For example, if you are emailing or Facebooking in order to love someone by encouraging them in the Lord, that is definitely not wasted time. But if you are spending hours just checking on everyone’s status, that would qualify as wasted time.

What is rewarded(celebrated) gets done!

Examples- Things worth celebrating. How do we frame our experiences during the week through the Eyes of Jesus.

Things to consider

Plan time for God. This includes time for praying to God

Plan time for family and friends. Relationships take a commitment of time together.

For example, God commands parents to spend time teaching their children
(Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:7).

Plan time for work. The Fourth Commandment tells us that work should take place during the first six days of the week so that we will be ready to obey the command to not work on the seventh day (Exodus 20:8-11).

Plan time for health: eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep and exercise.

Plan time for household chores and maintenance. (Don't be like the guy in Proverbs 24:30-34!)

Plan time for learning. The Bible extols the importance of continued lifelong learning: "A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel" (Proverbs 1:5).

Plan time for rest and recreation. Jesus took His disciples away from the crowds at times to try to reduce the stress and be rejuvenated (Mark 6:31).

1. Cultivating your relationship with the Lord (Scripture reading, memorizing, meditation, prayer, fasting, singing). This is *the* most important thing you can do with your time, bar none! There is nothing more important than spending time with God, and hearing from Him. And I'm not talking about reading 1 page of Our Daily Bread. I'm talking about spending a good amount of time with Jesus, soaking up His Word, and praying about the things you have read.
2. Reading good solid Christian literature that will instruct and edify you. When you choose a good book to read, consider reading authors that are at least 200 years old. You will find a whole different depth of Christian maturity and character among the older authors. Some of my favorites are the Puritans, Jonathan Edwards, and Charles Spurgeon.
3. Meeting with another believer for mutual discipleship (DNA) and encouragement. If you are a new believer, find a more mature believer to meet with to help you grow. At the same time, find someone younger in the Lord than you, and pour your life into them.
4. Going out to intentionally share the gospel with lost people.

5. Email or send a card or note to someone who is going through a hard time or struggling with sin and encourage them with Scripture.
6. Come up with a plan to get to know your neighbors so that you can introduce them to Jesus Christ. You might consider pancake breakfasts, block parties, or taking some homemade bread or cookies over to a neighbor.
7. Meet with another believer or 2 for prayer once a week.
8. Volunteer to help in a Christian ministry such as jail or prison ministry or a crisis pregnancy center, or a homeless shelter or distributing food for the poor.
9. Make up bags of non-perishable food items and socks, and bibles and tracts and give it to the homeless and poor when driving around town.
10. Identify a need in the church, and seek to meet that need (uploading sermons to our web site and preparing slides for Sunday; preparing lessons to teach children on Sunday)
11. Prepare a meal for someone who is sick or just got out of the hospital.

These websites were used in preparing this sermon. Most material in this sermon was from these websites

<https://bible.org/seriespage/31-stewardship-time>

<http://www.thebridgeonline.net/sermons/the-christians-use-of-time/>

<http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/how-should-i-spend-my-time>

<https://bible.org/seriespage/31-stewardship-time>