

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR TIME

Psalm 90:12

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: For most people there's just not enough hours in a day to get done all that seems to need to be done and many things have to be postponed until the next day and so on. "Where does time go?" "The day is done and it seems as if I just got started." "Burning the midnight oil" to try to finish this or that. Everyone is familiar with not having enough time to accomplish this or that so what's the problem? Christians, of all people, need to be in control of their time but even pastors never get everything done that is on their schedules. How can determine what is priority and what can wait? God's Word has a lot to say about how God's Children should manage their time.

I. GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING ONE'S TIME FOUND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. *Psalm 90:12*

- Numbering one's days would include evaluating the use and management of one's time such as evaluating where and how one spends his/her days and if one is too busy to spend time in God's Word then there is a big problem.
- Some stay too busy because they want to appear important to others, therefore they overload their schedules.
- Some stay busy as a cover up for being lazy so they run around doing a lot of "busy" work to avoid doing the more important or difficult things they really need to be doing.
- Some stay busy because they are greedy and want things, never having enough of this or that and no matter what one has, he/she always wants more.
- Some stay busy because they are more concerned about pleasing others than they are pleasing God.
- Numbering one's days also means evaluating the quality of one's time spent doing what he/she does.
- One needs to consider his/her motives and goals in how he/she spends his/her time.

2. *Psalm 39:4-5; 62:1-12*

- People have the tendency to look to their comforts, pleasures, pursuits, accomplishments, and wealth to find meaning, significance, satisfaction and security in life.
- One's life is fleeting, like a breath on a cold morning that quickly vanishes.
- One can amass a lot of wealth, but when he/she dies, it stays and he/she must leave it behind.
- Being good stewards of one's time does not mean that he/she cannot enjoy the many good things God gives one in his life, but one should not fix his/her hope on the comforts, pleasure, positions or wealth, but on God alone.

3. *Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

- Everything in one's life has its proper time, with some occurring only once while others occur often. What is important is to recognize that God has ordained times for the various things in life and one is to take the time to do what God wants him/her to do.

4. *Ecclesiastes 3:9-11*

- Those things which fit into God's appointed time are good and bad, destructive and constructive and often one is perplexed by such things, yet one can say with the Psalmist, "...*but I trust in thee, O lord, I say, 'Thou art my God,' My times are in thy hands...*" *Psalm 31:14-15*

5. *Ecclesiastes 9:12-13*

- One is to live his/her life as unto the Lord and make the most of the opportunities God gives, but also understanding that things in life are not always predictable.

6. The Christian should enjoy life and the time on earth God gives him/her but apart from knowing and loving God, nothing on earth will have any eternal value and that purpose and meaning to life cannot be found in material or temporal things for God alone can give that and therefore He must be one's priority in life.

II. GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING ONE'S TIME FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. *Romans 13:11-14*

- There is the need for knowing time events according to the truth of God's Word and what it reveals to one concerning the times.
- The coming of Jesus Christ brought in a new time which is a time of salvation, of opportunity to find God and experience His salvation through Jesus' work.
 - The suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus is not just a fact of past history, for it ushered the world into the present time of salvation and by God's mercy, today is a day when people of every tongue, tribe, and nation can find salvation through Jesus Christ.
 - It is a time when "night is almost gone and the day is near" for Jesus to return and He will then usher in the fullness of times and reign personally on earth.
- Faith brings salvation and forgiveness of sin but also brings a special responsibility in relation to time for there is the need for God's Children to grasp this time of opportunity to spread the Gospel story to all ends of the earth, before Jesus returns.

2. *Ephesians 5:15-17*

- Christians need to walk a "guarded" walk for the days of today in this world are evil as they are full of ideas, values and uses that are destructive and contrary to the purposes of God and they are evil also because of the many delusions and temptations designed to draw God's Children away from Him and His will.
- "Making the most of one's time" is actually "redeeming" one's time, to rescue the time God has given on earth from the many evil uses promoted by Satan.
- Once living as children of disobedience in darkness, Christians are now children of light and of God and must seek to prove what is pleasing to the Lord, therefore making wise use of one's time.

3. *Galatians 6:9-10*

- Christians are encouraged to live a life of benevolent good to others, especially to his/her brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus.
- There is coming a time that will be characterized as a time of harvest, of reaping one's reward for his/her faithful service.
- One's sowing will not go unrewarded as a time of "harvest" will follow and one is to do good while he/she has the opportunity, as long as he/she lives on this earth.

4. *Colossians 4:5*

- Doing good to all people and having an effective witness is stressed by God as a way of life for His Children to live.
- Christians are responsible for his/her conduct, behavior, taking advantage of the various opportunities given by the Lord to witness, etc., and are responsible for their conduct as it occurs in one's speech and it must be appropriate to be used for witnessing for the Lord.

5. *1 Peter 1:17; 2:11*

- One must focus his/her attention on one attitude and manner of lifestyle that should characterize the fact that he/she is just a passer-by, a sojourner in this life, on this earth.
- Christians have a living Savior and a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and they also look forward to an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for them.
- Christians are the Children of God and are therefore to live holy lives and as "exiles" living as being set apart for the Lord in all manner of their lives, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession and a people with a special purpose.
- The song of the Christian is:
"This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through,
My treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the blue.
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door,
And I can't feel at home in this world any more...."

III. GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING ONE'S TIME FROM JESUS' EXAMPLE

1. Jesus was tremendously busy and often exhausted at the end of the day, yet His life was never feverish or rushed, He always seemed to have time to love and minister to people (woman at the well).
2. Jesus cared deeply about people and their hurts, full of compassion, yet He didn't heal or minister to everyone - why not? *Mark 1:32-39*
3. Jesus was never driven simply by the needs or by His own compassion or what He thought important.
 - Jesus put first things first, taking time to get alone with God, His heavenly Father and did His Father's will.
 - His disciples saw needs, but Jesus saw needs through His Father's will.
 - His disciples were perhaps driven by desire for results, but not Jesus, for often Jesus would walk away from needs and go pray or go on to another town.
 - Jesus did what God, His Heavenly Father called Him to do and that was what was most important.
4. God had given Jesus enough time to do what He had called Him to do and that was what mattered.
5. It doesn't matter who one is or how gifted he/she is or how able or strong, he/she will never be able to meet every need nor accomplish all that one sees that needs to be done, BUT, one can find time and ability to do what God is calling him/her to do.

CONCLUSION:

1. Managing one's time God gives is not so much guarding the time given to be more productive, not to become busier but the better use of the time one has is God's way.
 - Christians must realize exactly who they really are - children of God and citizens of heaven, not of this earth.
 - Christians must realize where they are, living in an age of darkness and their need is to walk carefully to rescue from the evil one, the time God has given and use it as God wants.
 - Christians must realize what they are here for - ambassadors of Christ on a world-wide mission of making disciples of all nations, starting where they are.
2. Christians, let God be the manager of your time and the results will be rewarded when you stand before the Lord Jesus one day. *2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 4:4*