**PRINCIPLES FOR TIME MANAGEMENT**

Sunday School Lesson 3

*Bible Principles for Daily Living*

Ephesians 5:16

6/26/2022

**Introduction:** Last week, we looked at Bible principles for being a disciple. In our first lesson, we examined some Bible principles for daily living. One of the primary principles of that first lesson was that our lives are limited, so we should make the most of each day. The challenge for many Christians is that they struggle to have the proper time management needed in order to make the most of the day that God has given to them. Thus, it is needful that we take some time today to consider Bible principles for time management. Ephesians 5:16 instructs us to redeem the time because the days are evil. To redeem the time means to purchase it back. The Lord wants us to take ownership of the time that we have. He wants us to properly manage that which He has given to us. As we observed previously, we know that life is short. Satan also knows that our time on this earth is limited. I believe that he takes great delight in seeing Christians who do not manage their time well. On the other hand, we honor the Lord by having good time management. It shows an appreciation for one of the most precious commodities that we have. A man through diligence can earn back lost money or other earthly possessions. What person among us is able to gain back lost time? King Solomon came to understand just how important time was. His instruction was that young people should not waste time when it comes to serving the Lord (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Let’s consider the following Biblical principles:

1. **OUR TIME MUST BE SPENT DOING THINGS DECENTLY AND IN ORDER.**
2. **Notice that doing all things decently helps us to avoid wasting time (1 Corinthians 14:40).** In 1 Corinthians 14:40, we find the only place in the Bible where the word *decent* is used. In studying the meaning of the word, it is a synonym of both fit and proper. It means to behave in a fitting, suitable, or proper manner without ostentation. Everything on which we spend our time should be done properly. Have you ever spent time doing something in an improper manner? We all have likely been in this situation if we are being honest. Doing something improperly is a waste of time because we know what happens next. We have to go back and do it again the right way. That work project ends up taking twice as long to complete as it should have. I believe this is why the Lord instructs us to do things decently. He does not want us to waste our time doing things that are improper and have to be redone. In 1 Corinthians 14, the church was using spiritual gifts in the wrong manner. The result was that they were not seeing the fruit that they could have seen. They were wasting their time. Paul instructed them to do things the right way to make better use of their time. Likewise, we should do all things decently.
3. **Notice that doing all things in order is the best way to manage our time (1 Corinthians 14:40; 11:34; Acts 21:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-11; Psalm 119:133; 37:23; 1 Chron. 15:13; 2 Kings 20:1).** The opposite of doing things in order would be to do things disorderly or simply without any order. Do we have an order by which we do things? A wise and prudent man will follow the order of things. A simple man is aimless. He has no direction to his time and purposes. Do we understand how much time we waste when we have no order of our day? As believers, let us first understand that we are to have the Lord order our steps. We are not to be so self-regulated in our schedule that we miss what the Lord is leading and directing us to do. On the other hand, we are not to be so irresponsible with our time that we leave it up to our feelings and emotions. We know that God has an order for all of His creation. He did not create things with randomness and disorder. If all of creation functions in order, then it is only reasonable that we, as a part of God’s creation, also function in a proper order.
4. **OUR TIME MUST BE SPENT WITH APPROPRIATE SEASONS OF REST.**

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1. **Notice that the Lord set the example for us by resting, even though He had no need of rest (Genesis 2:2; Matthew 11:28-30; Psalm 4:8; 38:3; Hebrews 4:9-11; Mark 2:27-28).** God did not rest because He needed rest. He rested to teach us the principle of taking a day of rest. He blessed the seventh day and set that day aside. Every day is His day, but the seventh day was specifically set aside to be the Lord’s day of rest for mankind. We learn throughout the New Testament that the Sabbath was not supposed to be a form of punishment. It was for man’s enjoyment and benefit. While we are not bound to the Sabbath day in this present day, does the principle of resting still apply to us today? I believe that it does. I believe that the Lord wants for us to have times of rest. While we might be inclined to think of rest as counterproductive to good time management, the truth is that we need rest to function properly during the rest of the day. Obviously, we are not to be as the slothful man when it comes to our rest (Prov. 26:14), but rest is clearly something that God wants for us to have. In fact, a lack of rest is associated throughout the Bible with those who are engaged in sinfulness and wickedness.
2. **Notice that resting is especially important to us as we spend our time serving the Lord and fighting the Devil (Mark 6:31; Psalm 94:13; Revelation 6:11; 14:13; Acts 9:31; Galatians 6:9; Ecc. 5:12).** The disciples were so busy doing the work of God that they barely even had time to eat. Jesus wanted them to get away and take some rest. We all have limited strength and health in this temporal body. It is good for us to take some time of private rest. Rest is good for the health of a marriage. Rest is good for the health of a home. Rest is good for the health of an individual Christian. We are engaged in a spiritual warfare. Fighting against the Devil every day is exhausting. While we do not take a break from being a Christ, we do absolutely need times of rest. The amount of rest and the method of rest are best left up to the individual person. Some people find rest in fishing. Some people find rest in a hobby or sport. Some people find rest in quiet time in a book. The most obvious method of rest is actual physical rest in sleep. In order for everything to be done decently and in order, we must learn how and when we need rest.
3. **OUR TIME MUST BE SPENT ON THE TASK THAT IS AT HAND.**
4. **Notice that we are to put all of our might into whatever we are doing (Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:23-24; Proverbs 10:4-5; 22:29; Esther 4:14; Nehemiah 2:18).** If we are going to be good managers of our time, then we must put all of our might into whatever present task that we have. If we have followed good order, rest, and prioritizing, then the natural result should be the ability to give our all to the task that is at hand. Every task that we have is important because it is what God has put in front of us to do. We may think that there are important and unimportant things, but anything that God has given us to do is important. We are to be faithful in the little things. How much time do we waste on the little things because we do not treat them with the urgency and energy that we give to those things which we deem to be of greater significance? We should give the same quality of time and effort to all that we say and do. Sometimes, we do not manage our time in church very well. While we may be here physically, we do not give it the same attention that we give to other things in our lives.
5. **Notice that the Bible warns us about trying to serve multiple masters at the same time (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13; 10:41; James 1:8).** The reason why we often struggle with our time management is that we are trying to serve multiple taskmasters at the same time. In our human thinking, we think that we need to be doing even more tasks at one time to be better in our time management. Yet, it is difficult to give both tasks the full attention that they need. The danger is in doublemindedness. A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways. Obviously, there are occasional times where a task may not require much or any thinking to be accomplished, and we are successfully able to perform multiple tasks at one time. We must be mindful of the tasks that we are performing and consider whether we are being counterproductive with our time by trying to do too many things at once. Are we managing our time with our families well? If we are always doing other things at the same time, we may not be giving them the quality time that they need from us as leaders in the home. Let’s do each task well!
6. **OUR TIME MUST BE SPENT WITH REGARD TO WHAT THINGS ARE OUR PRIORITIES.**
7. **Notice that the Lord focused the time of His earthly ministry on performing the primary objective given to Him from the Father (Luke 2:49; John 5:17-36; Matthew 15:24; John 4:4).** As always, Jesus sets the example for us when it comes to principles of time management. The Lord had only a limited time appointed on this earth to carry out His ministry and then offer Himself on the cross of Calvary. By our standards of length of life, His time on this earth during His earthly ministry would be considered very short. The Lord did not waste any of this time. He prioritized His efforts on accomplishing those things that He set out to do through the will of the Father. He did not let all of His time get spent arguing with the Pharisees and other religious leaders. He made time to teach His disciples. He made time to separate Himself and spend time with the Father. Joseph and Mary were concerned when they could not find Jesus. When they found Him, He reminded them what His priority was.
8. **Notice that there are many things in this world that call for our attention and time (Mark 4:19; Luke 21:34; 8:14; 1 Timothy 6:9; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 7:33-39).** During the Lord’s earthly ministry, there were undoubtedly many things that were vying for His attention and time. Likewise, we have many things today that want our time. It is easy to give up our time to unfruitful and unprofitable work. This is why it is so important to have priorities for our time. As believers, we know that the first priority that we have is to seek the kingdom of God. That has to be number one for us. From there, we have a responsibility to our families. The truth is that everyone spends their time on something. Godly management of time is dictating that the time be spent on the right things. We know that we will have to give an account to the Lord for the time that we were given in this life. Let us be guarded about those things in this world that will take our time and cause it to be wasted.