

Time Well Spent

Scripture:

Psalm 90:12 "So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Introduction:

A doctor called one of his patients into his office to deliver some very important news. "I have received the results of your tests and I have some bad news and some good news", said the doctor. The patient was quiet for a moment, sensing the severity of the announcement. "Let me have the good news first, doc", said the patient. The doctor took a deep breath and said, "You only have 24 hours to live." "Oh my goodness", shouted the patient, "If that's the good news what could the bad news possibly be?" The doctor replied, "I was supposed to tell you yesterday."

- A. Why do we call it "spending"? We give it in exchange for something. The real question is, "What do we get in return."
- B. Time's clock is striking the hour.
Jesus will soon descend.
Clothed in the garments of power.
The reign of sin to end.
Then will the anthem be ringing
Like to a mighty flood.
Then round the throne we'll be singing
Glory and praise to God.
- C. Time spent in a 70 year life.
If one lives to be 70 years of age and is the average person, he spends:
--20 years sleeping.
--20 years working.
--6 years eating.
--7 years playing.
--5 years dressing.
--1 Year on the telephone.
--2 ½ years smoking.
--3 years waiting for someone.
--5 month's tying shoes.
--2 ½ years for other things.
- D. Another survey
For those of you who've asked that question, a recent poll by Priority Management, Inc., has the answer. In a lifetime, the average American will spend:
--Six months sitting at stoplights
--Eight months opening junk mail
--One year looking for misplaced objects
--Two years unsuccessfully returning phone calls
--Five years waiting in line.
-- Reported in U.S. News & World Report, 1/20/89.
- E. A third survey
American adults watch television five times more than they read. Studies from the University of Maryland and the California Air Resource Board reveal that 18- to 64-year-olds spend, on average, their minutes each day:
--Sleeping...461
--Working...211
--Watching TV...121
--Doing Housework...101
--Traveling...78
--Eating...69
--Socializing...48
--Recreation...31

- Caring for children...28
- Dressing...28
- Washing, grooming...25
- Reading...24
- Conversing...24
- Thinking or relaxing...9
- Significantly, perhaps, worship and devotional activities did not appear in the studies.

I. Time is not as long as it seems to us. We are in a temporal zone. God is in an eternal zone.

- A. David upon receiving an offering for God's house.
I Chronicles 29:14-15 *"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, And of Your own we have given you. ¹⁵For we are aliens and pilgrims before You, as were all our fathers; Our days on earth are as a shadow,..."*
- B. Job's observation.
 Job 9:25-26 *"Now my days are swifter than a runner; they flee away, they see no good. ²⁶They pass by like swift ships, like an eagle swooping on its prey."*
- C. The days of our lives are very short.
Psalm 39:5 *"Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor. Selah"*
- D. God is in control of our time on earth.
James 4:13-15 *"Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; ¹⁴whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."*

II. We must consider how much time we really have.

- Psalm 90:12 *"So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."*
- A. God will teach us how to use the time we have so we can spend it in exchange for things that bring eternal profit.
- B. We're not naturally inclined to be wise spiritually.

III. God wants us to use the strength of our youth in the pursuit of God.

- Ecclesiastes 12:1 *"Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them":*
- A. There is no pleasure in them if we have gained nothing of eternal value in exchange for the proper use of our time.
- B. Whatever your age, you're younger than you will be tomorrow.

IV. How we need to be spending our time to get the greatest dividend.

- A. Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
1. The Swahili language of the Bantu people of East Africa has a unique way of translating Ps. 31:15 which reads: "My times are in thy hand". They translate it, "My when's and how's are in thy hand."
 2. Chloe, one of the seven sages, when asked what was the hardest thing for a man to do, replied, "To employ his time wisely."
- B. What is the wisest way to spend our time?
1. Belief and Trust in Christ.
John 6:28-29 *"Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*

2. Prayer and Communion with God. No sooner was Daniel told that he could not pray than he went to his window and began to pray. No matter what the world says to you, you can not go wrong in praying.
3. Working for God. (Parable of the talents - Matt. 25:14-30) The Scriptures tell us of 5 specific crowns that will be given to faithful workers.
 - a. incorruptible crown -- for a consistent Christian testimony (fighting a good fight)
 - b. crown of righteousness -- those who love the second coming of Christ and live their lives in faithful expectation of that moment.
 - c. crown of life -- those who endure testings; also called the martyrs crown.
 - d. crown of rejoicing -- soul winners
 - e. crown of glory -- the good shepherd's crown for every Pastor who is faithful in feeding the flock of God.

V. It's time to be serious about our relationship with the Lord.

Ephesians 5:15-16 *"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil."*

- A. Redeeming: buying the right things with the time that you spend.
- B. We have two options.
 1. To live as fools making the wrong purchases with our time.
 2. Making wise investments with our time.