



Redeeming the Time

"Making the most of your time because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

Ephesians 5:16-19

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FOREWORD

COMMITMENT TO JESUS CHRIST AND OUR TIME

For years I have watched many people make various commitments to Christ our Lord in all types of meetings and personal conferences - but within a few weeks there was no visible change in their life style. Since there must be a change of life style with any commitment to Christ, I began to look for reasons why.

There was no question as to their sincerity and earnestness. Over and over again they promised God and themselves that things would be different - and time and time again they failed. Now, many of them have settled down to the status quo, with a firm conviction that this is just the way it is in life here.

Where was the devil tripping them up? What subtle trap did he use to keep them from following through on their commitment? There were many things I discovered that he used, but the one that seems the most simple to overlook is in the matter of time usage. By time usage, we mean making the TIME to do what one needs to do in order to accomplish, to maintain, and promote a growing relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When people commit themselves to Christ, they do so out of a life style that is filled with habit patterns and time usage that fills up all of life. These things have often become a part of them. After the commitment, they go back to regular routine of life in the same setting with the same demands and the same routine patterns that have been set up over the years.

For many people, the routines of life have become a rut - and they have no time in which to outwork the inward decision they have made. As everyone knows, the commitment to Christ is the beginning, not the end of a change of life - but this never takes place because there is no time set aside.



So, every commitment to Christ our Lord that is genuine will result in a time schedule change, which is the only way to have a life style change. If our priorities are changed (this is what commitment is all about) our life will change in order to be consistent.

This little book deals with Time scheduling, that will implement the outworking of our commitment. It will teach us how to Redeem this precious irretrievable thing called Time. This is a "How To" booklet designed for the sincere disciple who wants his life to count for the uttermost. You will find that it enables you to have a dedicated, meaningful, disciplined life – which is what Discipleship is.

THE SCRIPTURES

God's Word is of primary importance to the Christian. The following scriptures should be carefully and prayerfully read before proceeding any further. One should ask the Holy Spirit to use the Word of God to convict and convince them of the importance of time. The Holy Spirit will produce in us a Godly sorrow that will bring about a change in the way we live.

Time and life are equated. We cannot give our lives to God and Christ our Lord without giving our time. To make a commitment to God and to use our time as we will, is absolutely impossible, even as it is impossible to call Jesus Christ Lord (in a meaningful way) and then disobey Him.

THE BREVITY OF LIFE-TIME

For all our days have declined in Thy fury, we have finished our years like a sigh. As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years, yet their pride is but labor and sorrow: for soon it is gone and we fly away.

Who understands the power of Thine anger, and Thy fury, according to the fear that is due Thee? So teach us to number our days that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.

Lord, make me to know my end, and what is the extent of my days, let me know how transient I am. Behold, Thou hast made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Thy sight, surely every man at his best is a mere breath. Surely every man walks about as a phantom; surely they make an uproar for nothing; he amasses riches, and does not know who will gather them.



Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them". The conclusion, when all has been heard, is, fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. Because God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. Psalms 90:9-12; 39:4-6

A BAD INVESTMENT OF LIFE

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

And He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, "What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?"

And he said, "This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. "

And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come: take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?"

So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Matthew 6:19; I Timothy 6:6-11; Luke 12:15-21



A GOOD INVESTMENT OF LIFE

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal.

Matthew 6:20

For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid; which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward.

I Corinthians 3:11-14

Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite you in, naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? "

And the King will answer and say to them, Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.

Matthew 25:34-40

And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward.

Matthew 10:42

Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

Matthew 19:21



But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.
Luke 6:35

Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
Luke 12:33-34

Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.

Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed. You will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.
II Corinthians, 9:6-8, 11

Also read Matthew 10:40; 10:41-42; Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4; I Thessalonians 2:19-20; I Timothy 4:8; James 1:12;

WARNINGS AGAINST NEGLECT

(Procrastination - putting off)

I passed by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense; and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles, its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, then your poverty will come as a robber, and your want like an armed man.

Proverbs 24:30-34

A slothful man does not roast his prey, but the precious possession of a man is diligence.

Proverbs 12:27

The sluggard does not plow after the autumn, so he begs during the harvest and has nothing.

Proverbs 20:4

Go to the ant, o sluggard, observe her ways and be wise, which, having no chief, officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer, and gathers her provision in the harvest. How long will you lie down, o sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a



little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest — and your poverty will come in like a vagabond, and your need like an armed man. Proverbs 6:6-11

ADMONITION TO DILIGENCE

Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. Proverbs 4:23

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, Christian love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you, for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.

II Peter 1:5-10

Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. Proverbs 10: 4

The hand of the diligent will rule, but the slack hand will be put to forced labor. A slothful man does not roast his prey, but the precious possession of a man is diligence. Proverbs 12:24,27

The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is made fat. Proverbs 13:4

GENERAL SCRIPTURAL EXHORTATIONS

Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal.

They said therefore to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."



We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; for night is coming, when no man can work. John 6:27-29; 9:4

Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. II Corinthians 4:16-18

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. II Corinthians 5:1

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. Galatians 6:7-19

Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You." Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children, and farms, along with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life." Mark 10:28-30

Also read II Corinthians 5:5-9; Hebrews 11:24-26; James 5:7-8; James 4:13-15

ETERNITY

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to be assured about His calling and choosing you, for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. II Peter 1:10-11

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. II Corinthians 5:10



I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
II Timothy 4:7-8

CONCLUSION

Now, if the Holy Spirit has convicted you that you need to make the maximum use of time, your time for the glory of God, pray that He will reveal to you what He would have you see in these practical suggestions.

PURPOSE

1. The meaning and importance of purpose.
2. The purpose of this pamphlet.
3. God's purpose in creating us.

1. The meaning and importance of purpose.

The dictionary defines purpose as "something set up as an object or end to be attained: intention". One does not need a lengthy explanation of the simple fact that the most important thing about anything is its purpose. Why it is? The why of anything defines its reason(s) for being - determines its usage and its function. There are usually primary and secondary purposes. The primary purpose of an automobile is transportation – the secondary purpose might include beauty, comfort, etc. The primary purpose of a pen is to write – the secondary purpose might be beauty.

2. The purpose of this pamphlet.

The primary purpose of this pamphlet is to aid persons who are committed to God's purpose for them, to fulfill that purpose more fully through the redemption of time.

There are many secondary purposes that will not even be mentioned, because they will be a natural by-product of the fulfillment of the primary purpose.



There will be temporary benefits for people not committed to God's purpose, because principles work, no matter who works them. However, any person who is not committed to God's purpose is ultimately going to fail – for failure can only be reckoned in terms of failing to fulfill the purpose for which we were created and made.

3. God's purpose in creating us.

This will be dealt with briefly here, for it is the subject of another pamphlet. Why did God make man? What did He have in mind before creation? What was His intent that our primary function should be?

It is incomprehensible to think that God would make man without a purpose. It is unbelievable that God would give to man a book without stating and re-stating this purpose through commands and examples. God has done exactly this in many, many ways.

God made us to glorify Him, to please Him, to love Him.

Let us look at these by referring to scripture and these stories in scripture.

(1) Genesis 1:26-27 states clearly the creation of man and says that man was created in the image/likeness of God – stating that we should be a reflection of Him. Jack Taylor says we should be:

- 1) Extensions of His life
- 2) Expressions of His character
- 3) Exhibits of His dominion

(2) Jesus Christ was an example of what man would have been had he not sinned, therefore we can look to Him and see the out- working of this 1n the life of an individual.

Let's look at His stated purpose.

John 4:24 – God is spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.



John 5:30 – I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 5:19 – Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them. "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son does in like manner."

John 8:29 – And He who sent Me is with Me; he has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

John 12:49 – For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak.

John 17:4 – I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou has given me to do.

Let's look at His words and teachings.

Mark 12:28-30 – And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'"

This of course is through the entire Old Testament in one way or another but specifically stated in Deuteronomy 6:5.

Matthew 5: 48 – Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

John 6:27 – Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal.

John 17:3 – And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent.

John 14 :6-11 – Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known



My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him".

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us".

Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works".

(3) Seen in the teachings of the Gospels.

Romans 8:28-30 – And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the images of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and when He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, then He also glorified.

Revelation 4:11 – Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.

Ephesians 1:4 – Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

(4) Seen in the experience of people.

Augustine: "You made us for Yourself, and we never rest until we rest in Thee".

Creed: Why did God make us? Answer – "For His own glory".

God made us for His glory, His pleasure, His love. When through sin we became lost to His purpose, then He provided a salvation to save for His purpose. Everything included in God's salvation is to enable us to fulfill His purpose. If I am made for His pleasure (not mine), how can I bring Him pleasure? By functioning (this takes time) as He would have me to function.



This pamphlet is written to help us in the usage of time, so that we may function more effectively to His pleasure. It is not good enough to know this – to want it and to say it – it is only meaningful to Him when we DO IT, and we will never do it outside of time, for time is life and life is time, here, and we must do it now.

If I am going to please God, quite obviously His priorities must be my priorities – so we are going to discuss priorities next.

PRIORITIES

1. The meaning of priorities.
2. The must of priorities.
3. God ordered priorities.

1. The meaning of priorities.

A priority is the quality or state, of being prior (taking precedence as in importance). The act, the fact, or the right of preceding another. Our priorities are those things that we put first in our lives because we deem them important.

Every person has priorities – you can know what your priorities are by the simple fact that they are those things that you do regardless – regardless of whether or not you 'feel like it', it is convenient, the weather, the circumstances, on vacation or not, etc. For instance, we eat no matter what – we like to eat, we find and make time to eat. Your immediate response is 'well a person has to eat to live', and my answer is, that is exactly what a priority is – 'something you have to do to live', and so you do it regularly, gladly, no matter what.

Right here is the mistake most people make with God and religion. They are not necessities for life, but rather they are electives of life (can do if and when we wish). Priorities are always determined by what a person deems necessary to LIFE and to LIVING.

The true Christian, realizing that God made us pleasure, finds His pleasure an absolute necessity, not an elective, and so sets out to fulfill His pleasure. This, of course, is what makes a martyr. There is something more important than living – doing the will of God. So, when choice has to be made, they choose death over life.



The big question is, what is the will of God?

Ephesians 5:16-17 – Making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of God is.

What we have to determine, then, is what is the will of God?

It ought to be fairly obvious that God did not make us to exist for ourselves, for our own pleasures. Therefore, existing is not the purpose of our creation – and so, eating or drinking and going to work and having a good time might be secondary purposes. They are not primary purposes of our creation. Jesus Christ did not regard living as an essential, for He died at the age of 33. No person who thinks that living (staying alive) is what life is all about will ever find life a pleasure to God.

Going back to this purpose for which we were made, it becomes quite obvious that God made us for Himself and that we must put Him first, so our #1 priority is God.

GOD, THE #1 PRIORITY

What does this mean? Is this part of an affirmation of faith to be said gladly, or is this an actual reality that can be worked out in life, and this takes time.

From the best example we know, the life of Jesus Christ, this can be worked out in life, and does take time.

So, we give God time (how will be discussed later) to

- 1) Love Him, praise Him, thank Him, fellowship with Him.
- 2) Find out how to live so we can, with the life He has given us, please Him in all areas of life.

- through the study of His Word

- through prayer (talking to Him and letting Him talk to us).

No better way can we glorify God than to function as He made us to function for the purpose He made us to function. This means that I must glorify God in body, soul, and spirit – for this is how He made us, and I can do this by functioning as He made me to, i.e., to fellowship with Him and to have dominion as He declared that I should. I



cannot be what God wants me to be without Him. I was created not only for Him, but also to be run by Him and His power.

Most people have found that the way to do this is to give God time – time alone. Call this what you will – devotions, quiet time, it makes no difference. There is no reality of God until I interact with Him personally, and not through another person. The only way I can do this is to spend time with Him, which accomplishes the following:

- 1) Fellowship which leads to
- 2) knowledge of Him, which leads to
- 3) love, adoration, praise, which leads to
- 4) faith, and discovering His will and pleasure, which leads to
- 5) obedience, which leads to
- 6) His pleasures.

This sequence is an over-growing circle that grows and grows and grows.

We will give this place a priority time in our lives.

FAMILY, THE #2 PRIORITY

Most people who do this find a second priority arising – the priority of family. There is no place where what God shows us is better worked out and manifested than in the family. A person's relationship with God is seen by what they are at home. There seems to be much scriptural evidence for this.

- 1) The creation accents a where man is given woman and to reproduce – placing the family as God's first institution.
- 2) The emphasis of Jesus Christ on His family as spelled out in the Gospels.
- 3) Ephesians 5:18 that tells us to be filled with the Holy Spirit after it tells about praising God, deals with family relationships.



One thing is for sure – that which does not work out in the family and its life is not real. What a man is at home when he is in the area in which he is most relaxed, is what he is.

Following this, there is the priority of work.

WORK, THE #3 PRIORITY

We are commanded to work – we are commanded to work well. It is part of the way we please God.

Exodus 20:8-11 – Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all you work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

This is the fourth commandment and deals with the relationship of work – one day for fellowship with God, six days for work.

Other scriptures spell out the importance of this.

Ephesians 6:5-9 – Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eye service, as man pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

With good will render service, as. to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Let's discuss just one other priority – the church.



THE CHURCH, THE #4 PRIORITY

The church represents the fellowship we have with other Christians. The church as the body of Christ, represents that group through which Christ does his work in the world. The church exists for three ministries.

- 1) Upward to God – worship and praise
- 2) Inward to each other – ministry – we need each other because of differing gifts and callings and because it is not good to be alone.
- 3) Outward towards others – witnesses to the world, i.e., neighbors and people to work with.

If these things are priorities that please God and that enable us to fulfill His purpose, we must find time for them. But, before we actually enter the practical time of doing this, we should look at great principles that we must adopt.

PRINCIPLES

A principle is a basic, comprehensive, fundamental, underlying truth that never changes, irregardless of the time, place, or situation. Out of principles come practices that will vary and change according to -circumstances that surround one at a given time. To honor one's father and mother is a principle. The practice of this principle will change with one's age. As a child, to honor is equated with obedience. In later life, to honor one's father might mean taking care of him.

Principles are always the foundation on which any lasting permanent life is built. There are certain principles about time that we must accept if we are going to use it effectively and fully for the glory of God.

These are not necessarily in order of importance, but they are all necessary.

I. PRIORITIES MUST BE ARRIVED AT AND BE COMMITTED TO – Matthew 6: 33

If the usage of times is not built on priorities that have been established by firm conviction, there will be no motivating force to keep our commitment of time.



For example, if you are not committed to putting your family before your friends, the time committed to your family will be easily upset by the time demanded by your friends. The winds of situations that change so easily, the storm of pressure caused by them with other priorities and commitments, and the stray flow of lives that cross ours, will move us off course unless we are committed to our God given priorities.

II. CONTINUAL CHANGES ARE INEVITABLE – Matthew 9:14-17.

In the life without God changes are inevitable. When God is made Lord of the life, changes are more inevitable than ever. We must accept, expect, and desire the changes that come in to our life, and we must understand that these changes will bring about changes in the way we "redeem the time".

Let's look at some things that will cause change.

1) The factor of age

- less energy and more sleep is needed as we grow older
- out of school, into work, out of work, into retirement
- no children, then children, no children as they leave home

2) The factor of circumstances beyond our control

- a new job and new working hours
- a wife having to go to "work for one reason or another
- a sickness.
- weather, winter and summer
- money circumstances

3) The factor of salvation and sanctification, the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

- the Christian life is a changing, growing life with new demands, new revelations, new insights, and new understandings.

It is inevitable that walking with God will bring about change, so be prepared for it – look forward to it.



III. DEATH ALWAYS PRECEDES RESURRECTION – JOHN 12:24

The very hardest part of change is the giving up of the old in order to make room for the new.

As you walk with God, and as life changes, you are going to have to accept the fact that you will have to die to many, many things in order to get the new that God has planned for you.

You will die not only to bad things, but to good things; and not only to good things, but to things that God has given in order to receive better things.

Our attachment to all things ought to be very light so that it will not be too hard to part with them. Every revelation from God demands a commitment. Every commitment demands a change of life style. Every change of life style demands that something must go in order that the better may come.

There is one great truth that always helps make death easier, and that is this, "That for every God ordered death (parting from something we love), there will be a God accomplished resurrection". And the resurrection will be so beautiful that we will wonder why we ever held on to the old life. Of course, the difficult problem is in the time span that there is between death and resurrection.

Every acorn must die before an oak tree can come into being. Every little limb must drop off and die that new limbs will come. Accept this fact, that change demands death (separation) and plan on it in one form or another for the rest of your life.

This is without doubt the hardest part of change – the giving up of something we loved held so dear. Take your eyes off that and by faith know God has something better for you.

IV. YOU MUST LIVE BY THE WILL, NOT BY EMOTIONS – II Cor. 7: 9-11

Since emotions are the by-product of previous actions and attitudes, every time we set about to change, there is going to be a rebellion of the emotions. If you live by them, you will never be a redeemer of time. You must learn to live in the will of God. When we refer to living in the will, we mean that we are going to do what we have planned to do no matter how we feel, and no matter what our emotions tell us. We will have to live by self-control, that is "instant obedience to the initial prompting of the



When you first start, emotions are going to raise a ruckus, and really kick up a stink – but proceed without them. You even negate them and sooner or later they will join you and you will find yourself enjoying the new course of action and time schedule that God has ordered for you.

I have believed that I needed to exercise my body in order to keep it in shape as the temple of God. My emotions have never lilted running, they are in a constant state of rebellion, and have provided my reason for not doing what I knew I should.

However, I am committed to glorifying God in my body, and do this by exercising. My time for doing this was lunch time, but countless situations and circumstances have prevented me from a degree of regularity. So, I do it when I first get up every morning. That means I have to get up earlier – my emotions rebelled at this. I started in the winter – my emotions rebelled at this too, but 'will' and I are doing it and are beginning to reap the wonderful benefits of a healthy body, i.e., I have at least two more hours of energetic life every day, and you know, sometimes emotions join us. (Not very often, at this juncture.)

You must accept the fact that you will have to live in the will and put a strict reign on your emotions till they come into line with your new life style.

V. **THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SECULAR AND SACRED.**
EVERY TIME IS SACRED TO THE CHRISTIAN – I Corinthians 10:31.

The demands of two worlds will literally pull you apart, as both scream for your time. This can easily be resolved by accepting the fact that to the Christian, all things are sacred.

Washing dishes is as sacred as teaching a Sunday School Class. Mrs. Billy Graham used to have a sign over her sink – "Worship service conducted here three times daily".

We live in a physical world, with a physical body, and physical necessities. These are not unholy, but God ordained. See life as one gloriously sacred adventure, and do all for the glory of God – eating, drinking, teaching, praying; without this great principle, you will be pulled apart by the lies of satan and brought into the bondage of guilt.



VI. THERE IS ENOUGH TIME TO DO ALL GOD WANTS ME TO DO.

God has given us 24 hours in a day, 168 hours in a week, and He will never give us more to do than we have time for. He knows we need adequate sleep, He knows all He has asked. us to do, and He has done it in the context of time that He has given us. You must work on this principle - there is enough time. This means you are not doing what you ought not to do, but that you are doing just what you ought to do – and that is all.

VII. GOD'S WILL IS ALWAYS BEST AND EASILY AVAILABLE FOR THE PERSON WHO IS COMMITTED TO DOING IT. – Romans 12:1,2; James 1:5.

A commitment to the principle that not only is God's will the very best thing we could ever do, but –

Romans 12:1, 2 – I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

But, God wants us to know His will more than we want to know it, and will share this with us as we meet His conditions. It is essential if we are going to redeem the time, because of the evil nature of the days.

PLAN

You will never master life unless you master time. You will never master time unless you redeem it by planning it. We can talk about the need to do so, and desire to do so, but until we

Plan our work

Work our plan

it will be all vain dreams.



As we get ready with a simple way to plan the REDEMPTION OF TIME, here are a few simple obvious truths we often overlook.

1. We know exactly how much time we have. Our time income – 24 hours daily – 168 hours weekly – has been set and determined for the rest of our life. Time income has been predestined, but time expenditure is up to me.
2. We have as much time as anybody else in the world. The President of the largest corporation and the ruler of the most powerful country have as much time as anybody and everybody.
3. We cannot borrow or hoard time as we do money. We can only spend it when it comes. What I do not spend, I lose forever. It is irrecoverable.
4. Time is forced on me minute by minute, hour by hour, whether I want it and whether I am ready for it. The best way to use it wisely is to wisely plan it.

Ephesians 5:15-18 – Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.

5. There is enough time to do all I should do. I never have to say there is not enough time to do all I should do, for I am implying that God is unreasonable, for He has given me more to do than I should do.

The president of the college I attended used to say, "If you will do what you should do, you will not have time to do what you should not do". The best deterrent from evil is just to do right with our time.



TIME BUDGET

In order to facilitate the planning of time, we are going to use the budget method, which is a balance of outgo and income.

Much like money, we will find our time will go so much farther (i.e., redeemed) if we will carefully look at it.

To help with this, we will divide time usage into three basic categories with sub-categories.

I. Personal and physical needs.

This will include the following:

- a) Sleep
- b) Eating
- c) Dressing
- d) Chores necessary for the functioning of an orderly life, i.e., cutting grass, changing tires, etc.

II. Work

a) The job itself

- a student will regard school as work
- a homemaker, the function of homemaking
- the retiree, what is necessary to be done (the most misused of all)

Note: Nothing is more destructive, or non-Christian, or detrimental to discipleship than laziness – the failure to have a job (i.e., work). We must not view a job in the terms of dollars and cents remuneration, but as those God-given responsibilities that are necessary to maintain life in this world so that we can live to His glory and praise. Retirees might have to spend only a little time here. This will enable them to give more elsewhere. Of course, they need more sleep, rest, etc.

- b) Travel time to and from work
- c) Meal time at work

III. Personal choice time



This includes all the time that I can make a decision about, and which I can determine its expenditure.

In the redemption of time- we will place our emphasis here to start with, and move backward to the other two areas.

A POSSIBLE AVERAGE WEEK

I.	Personal needs:		
	sleep	56	
	eat and dress	16	
	other	4	
			76 hours
II.	Work:		
	job	40	
	travel	7 ½	
	lunch	2 ½	
			50 Hours
III.	Personal choice time:		
		42 hours	
		<hr/>	
		168 hours	

YOUR AVERAGE WEEK

Here we will ask you to write down how you spend your average week.

I.	Personal needs:	
	sleep	_____
	eat and dress	_____
	other	_____

II.	Work:	
	job	_____
	travel	_____
	lunch	_____

III.	Personal choice time:	
	(subtract the total of I and II from 168)	_____

Did you have a hard time with this? If you did, it is a good indication that you need a time budget – for what we cannot account for, we usually waste.



HOW WE ARE SPENDING PERSONAL CHOICE TIME

Be honest and right down to the closest 15 minutes, i.e., 1 1/4, 1/2, 2 3/4 hours.

A. Time spent on spiritual needs:

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

1) Private devotions (i.e., that time we spend alone with God in Bible study and prayer – the time we give Him our full attention by doing nothing else.)

Daily _____ x 7 = _____ Weekly

2) Family devotions (i.e., the time that the family spends worshipping God together.)

Daily _____ x 7 = _____ Weekly

3) Church attendance - the actual time spent in church services, Sunday School, or where you do not have a responsibility to lead and for which you had to do no preparation. Include your travel time.

_____ Weekly

4) Service - all the time you spend in religious service - the time traveling, preparing, doing. (This is service done to others in direct spiritual work.)

_____ Weekly

5) Other - define here what and how long.

_____ Weekly



B. Time spent on social/recreation needs.

- 1) Reading newspapers _____Daily _____Weekly
2) Watching television _____Daily _____Weekly
3) Secular magazines _____Daily _____Weekly
4) Others (hobby, etc.)
_____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly

C. All other time spent.

(Itemize as closely as possible.)

- _____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly
_____Daily _____Weekly

NOW GET A TOTAL

- A. Weekly time on spiritual things _____
B. Weekly time on social/recreation needs _____
C. All other time spent _____

This, of course, will correspond to category 3 and its total, and is just a breakdown of this.



PLANNING THE TIME IN CATEGORY 3

IMPORTANCE OF THIS TIME

1. This is the time I have to choose what I will do. To a very real degree there is not a choice in categories 1 and 2 (we will discuss ways to enrich this time).

2. I can show God that I will put Him first by doing with this time what He wants me to.

3. It is in this time that I will demonstrate to God, my family, and the world, what I consider to be the imperatives, and what I consider to be the electives of life. "I practice daily what I believe, all the rest is just religious talk."

It is here that my priorities will take on flesh and blood – become incarnate in life. If this is not true, then I am only fooling myself.

PLANNING THIS TIME

Two basic things each individual must determine as he earnestly seeks God's will

(1) What **MUST** I include in this time.

(2) How **MUCH** time must I give **NOW** to this.

NOTE: The emphasis is on **MUST** and **NOW**, for the following reason: The must represents the essentials and imperatives in my life. The now indicates that at this stage of my Christian life, God is asking me to give this much time. The emphasis is on now because of the fact that growth will demand changes, and there will be changes and readjustments in one's life.

THE SPIRIT-FILLED ALWAYS PLAN

When God gets hold of a life and begins to make changes in time usage, here are times that are always included, and in this order.

- (1) Time for God
- (2) Time for Family
- (3) Time for Church (fellowship and service)
- (4) Time for Self



HOW MUCH TIME

- (1) Time with God alone.

How much time does God want me to give Him daily in this matter of closet partner and personal Bible study? (i.e., not to preach or teach, study)

- (2) Time with family.

- a) With my partner – weekly

“For prayer (I Peter 3:7) _____

For fellowship (Ephesians 5:25) _____

Other _____

- b) With my children

*For prayer and teaching _____

For play _____

For other _____

- c) With parents

(This is done through letter writing or through visits.)

- (3) Time for church.

- a) Worship and learning

Include here all time you spend as a participant in worship, study, and prayer. (Fellowship, church services, include travel time)

- b) Service - all the time you spend serving and preparing to serve and traveling in order to serve.



(4) Time for self

Include here some time for recreation in whatever form or forms you like most. It might just be goofing off, or it could be reading, golf, tennis, etc. Everybody needs a little of this time. _____

NOW MAKING TIME

Planning time is not hard, it is the making of time that is difficult. Let us think about this for a few minutes.

1) When I make time for something, I am saying it is important – it is essential – it is necessary. We always do this.

2) If I do not make time (set aside a definite specific time) it will be left to chance and things left to chance do not get done usually, or if they do, they do not get done well and on time.

3) Making time is a matter of discipline – Holy Spirit instructed, and self saying yes to it by making time for what we say God wants us to do.

4) Making time means, as we have said earlier, cutting something of lesser importance out. This is the hardest at the start.

LET'S MAKE TIME

In order to practice this, you will need your weekly budget sheets.

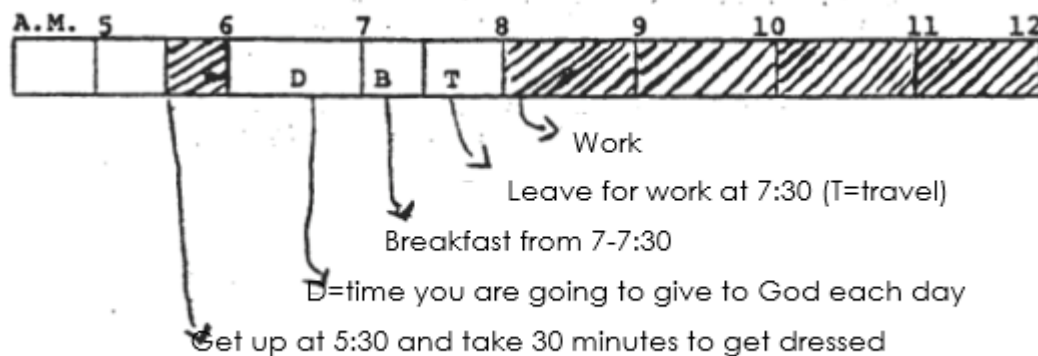
#1. Mark in the time that is inflexible. You have to do them at particular times, i.e., work and travel to and from work is not flexible in most people's life – sleep is to a degree, so do not mark it in.

Now, let's move to our priorities. If God is going to come first, we need to make this come true by arranging time which will be given to God exclusively – time when we seek His face, time when we seek His will through His Word and prayer time spent alone with Him, to praise Him, to let Him instruct and teach us and to lay our burdens on Him in prayer. The vast majority of God's people have found that the best time to do this is early in the morning, so that we can walk out into the day with a knowledge of His will and a consciousness of His presence.



#2. Mark in the time you are going to give to God and when you are going to give it.

Here is an example:



In my own particular life, my present morning schedule goes like this:

- 5:00 – Arise and run (exercise)
- 5:15 - 7:15 – Devotions alone with God
- 7:15 - 7:30 – Breakfast when I eat it
- 7:30 - 8:00 – Family Devotion
- 8:00 - 8:30 – Get dressed for work and be there by 8:30

Each person will be different in this because each person's schedule and present activities differ. Some people might be able to include devotions by simply substituting time spent reading newspaper or watching TV (which is an excellent move for a person working to be a disciple of Christ).

(Note: It is good for most people to have the above schedule for six days a week, and to break stride on the 7th day, usually Saturday or Sunday, for those who work a regular work schedule. I take off Saturday and sleep as late as I want to.)

#3. Next, put in your sleep time.

- a) Figure the amount of sleep you need to have a healthy body and a good day. Read Psalm 127:1,2.



- b) Put this time in from your getting up time. For example: if you need seven hours sleep, and if you get up at 5:30, you will need to go to bed at 10:30 p.m. - put this in.

NOTE: I can hear many of you saying, this will never work. I have too many interruptions. Well, if you are going to let your interruptions run your life, this is not for you, and it is time to quit right now. I am the pastor of a large church of 2,000 members. I have children ages 5, 13, 20, 22, and 23; and I know it works, for I am sharing with you out of life, not out of theory.

By this time working people and those attending school will have at least sixteen - eighteen hours a day of the five work days filled in.

For homemakers and retirees, this next step.

#4. Fill in now the times when you will do the duties required to keep your responsibilities up. For those with children at school, do it while they are away.

You will get far more done and get it done faster if you do the following:

- a) Plan times for all things – washing, grocery buying, vacuuming, etc.
- b) Correlates as many of these as possible so that you can do them together and at one stretch. Time is wasted every time you take a break. You have to get all your equipment and start again.

Example: When you are vacuuming, do it all, and you could be washing and drying clothes at the same time. Pick times to buy groceries when there are the least people in the store.

NOTE: It is imperative that we have the right attitude towards the phone. We pay for it, it is our servant, so we can tell it what to do. We can take it off the hook, or just choose not to answer it when we are doing something really important. A person who will not control the phone will be controlled by it and they will waste much time as others help them to do it. If there is a genuine emergency, people will find a way to get to you. It has never happened to me in these years of pastoring. Besides, suppose you were outside or away from the phone. How could you answer it?



Most homemakers will cut their time of actual housekeeping in half if they will follow time saving suggestions listed in this book in a later chapter.

#5. Fill in now the time you attend church and all meetings that do not have a flexible time schedule. Include travel time.

#6. Next, fill in the time for the family.

- a) Devotional time (best right after a meal because then the family eats together).
- b) Time with partner
- c) Times with children
- d) Time with parents
- e) Time with family as a whole

Remember, we. Sat times for all things that are important. Also, it is very good for people to know what is coming up, so they can be given the joy of anticipation. Example: We will all go to Disney World on the first Saturday of next month.

This does not mean you can never do things spontaneously, but it does mean it is important enough for you to set aside a time for this, honoring them by this.

#7 Next set aside times for:

- a) Your spiritual ministry and preparation to minister (i.e., getting ready by study and prayer). For example, you might devote one night a week for visitation and another for study (7-9:30).
- b) Your extra curricula duties like taking care of chores that can be done at any time (cutting grass and car upkeep)
- c) Time for self – when you will recreate yourself through some form of recreation that you enjoy.
- d) Any other thing that you have.



NOTE: To be an effective disciple of Jesus Christ, you will have to cut off many things you have been doing before. If you do the things that you say you give priority to, there will not be time to give to less important things.

NOTE: It will take some time to adjust this budget the first time through. You will have to rework and work it over, but it will be worth the time you spend, for it will be the means of redeeming many hours for the glory of God

PRACTICES

1. Learn to say "no" (and mean it). Never say yes until you are sure God wants you to do it. Say "no" to self, say "no" to friends, say "no" to fellow Christians at the church who want to press you into all kinds of good work. If you do not learn to say "no", you will never keep priorities.

2. Beware of emergencies and urgency. Some people live running from one little crisis to another. Most crisis will solve themselves without you, and they are not nearly as important as they seem to be. When there is a genuine crisis to which you should give your attention, the Holy Spirit will make it clear.

3. Remember the value of one. Everything in life is made up of ones. One little thing (i.e., a letter written) may seem small at the moment, but it is ones that make up 1,000's and millions...Most successful people were successful by doing one's consistently.

4. Do not procrastinate. Use this little formula – NOW.

NOW = do it now. Procrastination is the enemy of the Christian and the tool of the devil.

ONE = do it one at a time. You can only do one thing at a time. If it is time to give your family, give them attention. Do not try to wash dishes at the same time.

WELL = do it well. If it is for God, do it well. (I Corinthians 10: 31) Do not let yourself develop the habit of doing everything just to get by. Develop the habit of doing everything A-1. Be first class for the glory of God.



5. Let habits work for you. Good habits work for you in the same way that bad habits work against you. Disciplines will soon develop into habits. So set aside definite times to do certain definite things.

6. Learn better ways to do what you are doing. There are usually better and quicker ways that we can learn to do the things that we are doing. These will not only save time but will help us do a better job. This is true whether it is in devotionals or in cleaning the house. Look out for these and seek them out from books and people who seem to be more efficient.

7. Accept unavoidable interruptions as God given opportunities. There are interruptions over which we can have no control. Accept these as God given opportunities and ask God to show you how to make the most of them. To fight them and resist and resent them will sap your energy, physically and emotionally. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in the best use of them, and/or to teach you what lesson He wants to teach you.

8. Learn how to do things together that can be done together. You might be able to pray or listen to tapes while you are driving the car, or sweeping the house, etc. Some things can be done like this that will be beneficial and not harmful. Learn the difference.

9. Use the small 5 minute breaks in life. Sometimes we find ourselves with small 5 minute breaks. You will find you can accomplish vast things during this time if you will do it. Do not despise these small time breaks. They are added opportunities to make a phone call, write a card, or many, many of the small things that mean so much to others and ourselves.

10. Learn to distinguish between the essentials and the electives. The essentials have to do with our goal, our purpose, our aim – with God's will. The person who majors on electives will find life scattered and eventually meaningless. "This one thing I do", Paul said – indicating he majored on the major.

11. Your time budget is a slave, not a master. Let it work for you – do not work for it. Let it serve you and help you, guide you – but do not let it control you, dominate you. Let the Holy Spirit do this. While it is true you arrived at this time budget with His guidance, remember you were asking for a basic guideline, not prison bars. You will, of course, follow this if you believe it is of God, but there is the leading of God in specific situations that will increase its efficiency.



12. Make a list of things you wish to do in a given time period and do them one at a time. Take a 3 x 5 card and list the six things you wish to accomplish at a given time. Do them one at a time and do not stop until you get them done.