

The Time Machine Part II

Intro: Last week we started a two part study on time by looking at what God's word had to say about it and some biblical insight that showed us that time is short.

But it is not enough to simply know about time. God wants us to learn to use it more wisely and that happens as we work ourselves through teachings that are hopefully practical and that is what I want to do today.

Our theme song concerning time, *Only This Moment is Mine* is so very true. I want to go on with what I started last time and move us along to some practical suggestions or helps for us to use to improve both our lives and ministries.

I. How we waste time.

Now we all waste some time, some maybe more than others but we are all guilty in one way or other. So this is not a finger pointing thing but lets all learn together and move on to victory. Lets notice some ways we waste time. see at least three ways we waste it;

A. First it is wasted in anticipation

Youth spend a lot of time anticipating their teen years, and Teens spend a lot of time anticipating their 21st birthday Girls spend a lot of time anticipating their weddings and on and on it goes. While boys spend a lot of time anticipating new cars and other guy things like chasing the girls without letting them catch them. Families anticipate ways to get all the things they want and then, they spend a lot of mental time trying to anticipate how they are going to pay for those things

The working man struggles through the work day anticipating the day they can retire only to get there and find out that they don't have time to do all the things they have or want to do. Retirees anticipate those golden years only to find them sadly, a bit less than golden. So a lot of time is wasted in anticipation of the future. But lets hear the word of the Lord

Matthew 6:34 From The Message Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.

From Philippians we read in 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. So extensive anticipation is not the best way to use our time constructively is it?

B. We spend too much time is in procrastination:

Procrastination wastes time because we feel we have plenty of time so we put things off, and put them off until, all of a sudden, we find time is gone and we find that the thing we put off now needs to be done yesterday and SURPRISE, now we don't have time to get it done.

Remember, leaving everything to the last minute is the surest way to make enemies of the other fifty nine. Taking an hour off is easy - the hard part is putting it back. Again lets hear God's word in James 4:17 *Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.*

C. A third way is to constantly live in the world of regrets

John Greenleaf Whittier, wrote: "For of all the sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these: 'It might have been.'" That's what regret is all about. The world is full of people who regret having thoughtlessly chosen a wrong path.

But which of us has not made some bad decisions in life? But also which of us wastes a lot of time wishing that we had not made those bad decisions? And is it possible that if we do not stop wasting time regretting, we will one day look back and say I regret that I didn't stop wasting my time regretting my wrong decisions. I regret it because in the process I wasted many opportunities to make different ones in the future.

The Apostle Paul spoke to that issue when he said in Philippians 3:13,14 *No, dear friends, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.*

How much more of you precious time are you going to waste wallowing in the pig sty of your regrets about yesterday?

II. A proper use of our time

A. Work is a biblical use of our time

II Thessalonians 3:10 says *For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat.* So God expects us to do physical work but there is also spiritual work that needs to be done.

John 9:4 brings that fact to light for us as we read *"We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work."*

How many of us have factored in time for our physical work, but we have short changed God and our self in the spiritual aspect of work? There is a lot of spiritual work that is still to be done while we have time

Then we need rest as well if we are to work either physically or spiritually in an effective way. Mark 6:30-32 shows us the concept of rest as we read *And the apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves.*

A prune is a plum that did not take care of itself. So physical and spiritual work, as well as rest, are necessary components of the proper use of our time.

III. Difficult questions, painful answers

Let me preface this section with this. I don't want anyone here going out saying, well Pastor Archie is a kill joy. I am just asking the questions and it is God who will do the convicting, if it is necessary, because I don't know what your freedoms in Christ are, but He does.

A. TV. Is TV all bad? NO IT IS NOT!! But when TV takes a vast majority of our time, as I have seen in so many lives, is it all good?

Is it good when a person knows all the actors in prime time and all of the sitcoms, but they don't even know where others in the body live. The folks who they will be spending eternity with? Or they don't know their bibles in a deeper way? Or if they have time to flip channels but can't seem to make it to at least some of the functions of the church, then is TV always the best investment of our time? Even if we don't make TV an idol, too often it makes us idle.

B. Sports, for example, are not all bad but when sports control a persons time to the point that have no or little time for things other than those sports then are they all right, or do people need to make some adjustments.

When sports takes so much time that young folks can't get their homework done in time so that they can help their parents around the home like they should, then are sports making a proper use of time?

And when sports puts more mileage on the parents vehicle that going to church does then, are they all right or is there a problem? Again, as good as sports are, are sports that rob you of other things in life really the best use of your time?

C. Physical work is all right and even biblical but when physical work takes so much time that people can't do some of the things the Lord wants and needs done within the body, then is physical work all right even if it is biblical?

Again the question: Although work is good, is continuous work at our physical jobs really the best use of your time? And lest you think I am not going to address this aspect let me now do so

D. Church is also not bad and it is even biblical as we read in Hebrews 10:24,25 where we read and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

But if church takes all of your time, to the detriment of your family, and your family is going backward, then is church all good when it comes to time investment? When you can't even enjoy life because of guilt for not doing enough or anger because others are not doing their fair share then is church all good?

And if church activities, as good as they might be, if they take you away from being out in the midst of a dying world and building relationships, so we can tell them about Christ then is the church all good or is it always the best use of your time?

Now again I have not asked these questions in order to put a guilt trip on someone because they are involved in any of these situations. Instead, I would just like you to think about these good and even biblical things we can be involved in and ask if maybe we have sacrificed some of the best for things that are good, but not always the best.

IV. Some suggestions in how to redeem the time as commanded in Ephesians 5:16 *making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*

The NLT says *Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days.*

The Message reads *Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!*

Note: It is one thing to condemn or criticize something, but that is not constructive unless you also offer something to think about that might help a person in their area of need. So I offer the following as possible ways that may help you get victory over your time control situation.

A. Prioritize honestly

Ask yourselves, Honestly, what are my priorities for my life? Are my spiritual priorities very high or am I content to just ride along the easiest way I can? Each of us has to make that decision for ourselves? What are your life priorities?

B. Evaluate and choose wisely

We need to choose what we are going to do in a more balanced way. Too often we simply react to which ever wheel squeaks the loudest don't we?

C. We need to work efficiently.

I have a friend who would go to town to get a nut for a project only to get back home and have to turn around and go back to get a wrench to tighten it up because he did not plan well and get it while he was there. I love him deeply but efficiency is not his cup of tea.

We need to learn to plan a lot more before we start but we also need to be sure we don't spend so much time planning that we don't get around to pulling the trigger and getting it done.

Either way is not to make the best use of our time. It takes a balance. Speaking of balance I want to especially address the church. I have spoken considerably about what seems to be the four biggest time thieves we must deal with.

I trust that my speaking has not been in a condemning way because that was never my purpose but I would rather have all of us be required to do some of our own soul searching on the issue.

However I do feel a strong need to address the church aspect of time consumption. For years the church has been just as guilty of demanding a persons time as much as work, sports, or TV

For years the church has said that if you aren't here for SS AM PM and Wed eve. You are not spiritual. Is that right to make people feel that way? I would say no. But then what should we be doing to help rather than just condemn?

So here is what I am proposing for all of our good, both individually and also for our church and also our community.

I believe that the church should have a wide variety of activities going on at a wide variety of different times during the week, with different needs in mind for each. The reason for this is so that we can be used of the Lord to help meet the needs of people. *Almost like a spiritual cafeteria. Lapeer Church Cafeteria.*

The point of a cafeteria is that it has a variety of foods because not all people like or need the same food and nutrition, Not all people are at the same place in their growth, Not all people can eat at the same time but THE POINT IS, all people do need to be eating spiritual food on a consistent basis and if we do not attempt to meet that need in a productive way just because we won't change, then we fail

TV says you will follow my schedule, if you want to see me, as does work or sports and for that reason many cannot take part unless it is on the terms laid out by the coaches and foremen. But if we can utilize everyone in the church, each contributing a little bit, which is biblical by the way, then we can set up opportunities that can build and help people make better use of their time in a non demanding way.

The day of the church schedule only being SS AM PM and WED eve. is changing. I am not proposing that we change our message but we need to be better stewards of our time and think outside the box in trying to provide better opportunities for those around us who are in need. Our church building should be open all week with something different going on that is designed to meet the needs of those who can be there at that time.

D. Live in the reality of Scripture

I say this because it speaks to us in its own power and it will help each of us in the decisions we are going to be making about our use of the time we have. Hear the words of the Revelation 22:8-21

8 I, John, am the one who saw and heard all these things. And when I saw and heard these things, I fell down to worship the angel who showed them to me.

9 But again he said, "No, don't worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who obey what is written in this scroll. Worship God!"

10 Then he instructed me, "Do not seal up the prophetic words you have written, for the time is near.

11 Let the one who is doing wrong continue to do wrong; the one who is vile, continue to be vile; the one who is good, continue to do good; and the one who is holy, continue in holiness."

12 "See, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to repay all according to their deeds.

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

- 14 *Blessed are those who wash their robes so they can enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life.*
- 15 *Outside the city are the dogs--the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idol worshipers, and all who love to live a lie.*
- 16 *"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this message for the churches. I am both the source of David and the heir to his throne. I am the bright morning star."*
- 17 *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let each one who hears them say, "Come." Let the thirsty ones come--anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge.*
- 18 *And I solemnly declare to everyone who hears the prophetic words of this book: If anyone adds anything to what is written here, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book.*
- 19 *And if anyone removes any of the words of this prophetic book, God will remove that person's share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book.*
- 20 *He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!*
- 21 *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.*

How about you my friend, Are you ready for that day when Jesus Comes again to take his children home? In the meantime you may be reading this and you have never taken time to get your spiritual life in order. If you realize this and you have decided you would like to be ready for heaven you might want read these next few lines, take them to heart and take action on them while you can. It will be the best use of your time you could ever do.

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)

Well lets listen just one more time to the message in this song title concerning this important issue of time and may your coming days be full of victories, but may they also be profitable for you, for those around you, and may they be pleasing to the Lord. Don't forget, *Only This Moment is Mine*