

Time & How You Should Use It

II Peter 3:1-9

Intro:

There are 8,760 hours in a year. Work & sleep require about 5,000 hours. Allow 1,000 hours for dressing & eating. You have more than 2,000 hours left. Take half of that for recreation & you still have more hours a year than most college students use for classes & study.

It takes 70 hours & 40 minutes to read the Bible through at pulpit rate.

An Atlanta mortician has adopted the drive-in window approach for busy mourners. He is having 5 windows installed in an extension of his funeral home. Each window is 6 feet long & will contain a body in its coffin. The mortician says, "So many people want to come by & see the remains of a relative or friend, but they just don't have the time. This way they can drive by & just keep on going"!

Pastor Alfred Wished opened his Easter Sunday sermon at the Arlington Avenue Presbyterian Church with these words, "Did you ever stop to think how much time it takes to get all of you looking so nice for today? With the shopping & all, I'd conservatively estimate that it took each of you 4 hours to get ready. Since there are about 500 of you here, that comes to 2000 hours. Now, if you divide that up into 40 hour workweeks & allow 2 weeks for vacation, it breaks down into a full year of preparation for Easter Sunday. So - that's where you've been since last year!"

Eph 5:15-16 - Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

What about time & how are you expected to use it?

I. God Always Uses Time Perfectly

A. The Lord came at the perfect time.

Mk 1:15 - "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

I Tim 2:5-6 - For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Gal 4:4-5 - But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

B. The gospel was presented at the perfect time. **Tit 1:3 - at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior . . .**

C. The Lord is coming again at just the perfect time. **Eph 1:9.10 - And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.**

II. How You Might Use Your Time Unwisely

A. By pretending that you have control over what happens to you. You don't have control - God does!

You boast about the future. **Prov 27:1 - Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.**

You plan for tomorrow's self indulgence. **Is 56:12 - "Come," each one cries, "let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better."**

You spend your time preparing only for your own pleasure. **ILL: Parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:16-21).**

B. By not using your time with God's priorities in mind.

1. Worldly entanglements get in the way. **ILL: Lot has to be dragged out of Sodom.** Gen 19:16 - When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.
2. Family cares get in the way.
Matt 8:21.22 - Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."
Lk 9:61-62 - Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family." Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."
3. Personal convenience gets in the way. Act 24:25 - As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you."

III. How You Might Use Your Time Wisely

A. By realizing the brevity of life.

1. It's like a shadow.

Job 8:9 - for we were born only yesterday and know nothing, and our days on earth are but a shadow.

Job 14:2 - He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure.

Ps 102:11 - My days are like the evening shadow; I wither away like grass.

2. It's like a breath. Ps 39:5 - You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath.

3. It's like a vanishing vapor. Jam 4:14 - Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

B. By being a consistent example before the world. Col 4:5 - Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

C. By seeking God while He may be found.

Ps 32:6 - Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him.

II Cor 6:2 - For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you."

How do you spend your time?

Is it spent with an awareness of the Lord's presence?

Do you focus on His priorities, or your own?

**Beginning this morning,
let's really get serious about how you spend your time!**