

Time Management



Using God's Gift Wisely

by Dr. Guy Hipp

What would you do if I gave you 86,400 pennies that you had to spend every day and could not carry it forward? Wow! What a question! To think that I could spend \$864.00 every day, and I couldn't carry any of it forward to the next day.

What if we change the 86,400 pennies to the 86,400 seconds that each of us has to spend every day? You cannot carry them forward. Each of us has the same amount of time, and it must be spent each day. This illustration by Chuck Swindoll expresses the importance of how we spend our time. What does God's Word say about the use of time?

1. Scripture teaches us that time is a gift to us from God. Some use their time with great purpose, and some squander the time given them each day. One must recognize that at birth and until death, God has

given each of us the same amount of time each day to accomplish what we consider to be important.

2. We are to redeem the time. Ephesians 5:15-16 says this: *"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."* The devil would much rather the Christian use his time accomplishing nothing or very little—using his time to deal with trivial matters as opposed to the important matters of life.

Jesus used the idea of redeeming time many times in the Gospels by saying "in the fullness of time" or "the time is at hand." By these words, Jesus made note that there were some times more important than others. As with Jesus Christ, so it is with each of us. The idea of redeeming the time means that there are times in every day that we must use to the fullest.

Paul also admonishes us to walk circumspectly, and then he adds "not as fools, but as wise." The wise person uses his time to the greatest advantage. Paul challenges the believer to walk circumspectly, which means he is using his time wisely because he wants to honor God in the use of his time each day. Time is an opportunity given to us by God to discover and carry out His purposes.

3. Scripture teaches that time is an opportunity for ministry and witness. The Christian uses his time in a different manner than the person who does not recognize time as a gift from God. He looks for ways to minister to his family and to influence others for Christ.

4. Time can be used to bring greater responsibility and freedom in our lives. Time is a gift, and if we are able to use it wisely, then we are able to accomplish more

in our lives. We have more time to spend with family. We are able to influence others because of the prudent use of time.

If you learn to manage your time, you will find new freedom, new opportunities, and a sense of well-being for yourself.

As the old saying goes, "Aim at nothing, and you certainly will hit it." One helpful idea for beginning to manage your time is to make a list of the ten things you want to accomplish each day.

A second practical suggestion is to plan long range. Look beyond just what you want to accomplish today. When planning long range ask yourself, "What do I want to accomplish in the next six months? in the next year?" Always keep these long range goals before you as

you plan your daily and weekly activities.

A third hint in using the gift of time is to purchase an inexpensive system to help you in managing your time. Many office supply companies carry a number of time management systems such as "Week at a Glance." These systems as an investment in managing time, or, as scripture says, "redeeming the time."

5. Trust the Lord to direct all that you do. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; never rely on your own understandings; remember the Lord in everything you do, and He will direct your paths." Begin redeeming the time by committing your life and your ways to God.

6. Plan your daily work. Plan what you want to get accomplished each day; both from a personal stand

point and a family stand point.

7. Ask the Lord to bless the plans you make.

8. Depend on the Lord to direct your actions.

9. Discipline yourself to carry out your plans.

10. Leave all the results to God.

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