



NEW LIFE

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

Vol. 12 No. 15

LORD'S DAY 13 APRIL 2008

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR GOOD TIME MANAGEMENT

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

Introduction

There is a saying – Time and tide waits for no man. **The importance of good stewardship of time cannot be over-emphasised** (Eph 5:15-16; Col 4:5). We have time, talent and treasure (or resources) for our earthly usage, to be responsible to God one day. Believers have a grave duty to account for the employment of time that we spend our days on earth at the judgment seat of Christ one day (2 Cor 5:10).

A Poser

Consider this. What would you say if a rich relative bank in \$86,400 a day into your bank account on one condition that you have to use it up all in a day or else he will take it back? You cannot hoard it or keep it till the next day but it must be consumed daily. This is exactly the amount of seconds we have each day from the Lord! There is a certain discipline that is required of every believer. Temperance is a facet of the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22, 23) and we need to learn and practice self control as well. Good planning and organisation of the day is requisite for a meaningful and fruitful Christian life.

It's About Time

If you aim at nothing you are bound to hit it. There is a need for proper directions in our family life and the ministry as well. The need to apportion time for God is a vital part of abundant and victorious living. Do not put off what you can do today. Procrastination is the thief of time and we have been robbed often. The days that we have at hand are numbered and we need to treasure and redeem time. There is a time for everything (Ecc 3:1-9). Consider the following:

- Time for reading/study of the Word/to be with the Lord
- Time for prayer and worship/fellowship

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- Time for family and friends
- Time for rest and physical restoration
- Time for work and labour (or studies)
- Time for leisure or exercise
- Time for worship, service and stewardship in the church
- Time for reflection and evaluation and personal enrichment

The parable of the talents (Matt 25) and the pounds (Luke 16) give us good examples of how important proper stewardship is to God. God rewards faithfulness and spiritual productivity and deplores laziness and indifference. . There is such a thing as priority in life and good quality time and time that is not productive. Endeavour to give of your best hours to the Lord first in the morning in devotion first (Mark 1:35).

It is vital to have a balanced and well ordered day. We need to have time for rest, for labour, for family, for exercise, and most important of all, for God. A sister shared at the funeral of her mother, that she wished she had spent more time with her loved ones rather than just work alone. Moses had aptly said in Ps 90:12, *“teach us to number our days and apply our hearts unto wisdom is so true”* (something to think about).

Today, men strive to 'gain control of our time.' Gadget 'gurus' provide time management tools, such as the 'Palm Pilot', PDA to help us track everything from appointments and meetings to addresses, databases, stock quotes and email. But even state-of-the-art technology cannot give us control of time as we ought to if we have no god-given discipline. Discipline and spiritual direction in the proper use of time is needful (Gal 5:23).

Life and Death

At a recent member's loved one's funeral, we reflected upon the faith of the deceased and how she trusted in the words in 'Amazing Grace', which says that when we've been in Heaven 10,000 years, we will have "... no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun ...". It really takes the edge off when we view life in eternal terms. The urgency remains, although for different reasons. We should feel an urgency to share the gospel to others what Christ said in 1 John 11:26, *"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"* I believe, and I want to tell others while there is still time (Ps 90:12) before it is too late. Remember also one of the devil's greatest wiles is to wait awhile.

Life on this earth is brief and how we choose to live it, is up to us. We find an example of this truth in the inevitable end of death. For believers, death is a vivid reminder of Jas 4:14 which describes life as a "vapour that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." It is a departure to a better place, with God forever.

Therefore Paul says in Eps. 5:15-16: *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

- For in the midst of grieving the loss of someone, we are deeply affected and we ask, "could the same tragedy certainly befall us and then what?"
- What would be our eternal destiny? Are we ready to go?
- Did we live our lives to our fullest for Christ as effective Christians for Him?
- A more critical question presented itself: Did we live the abundant and victorious life for eternity available to us through Jesus Christ?

The deaths of loved ones cause several to ask important questions:

- What have I done with my life after I came to know the Lord?
- Am I walking in loving obedience to God? What will the Lord say when I meet Him face to face?
- Do I please Him with a life of fruitful service, stewardship and witness or am I wasting the time He has graciously granted me, worrying and working about the mundane day-to-day concerns of life?

10 Timely Tips for More Effective Personal Time Management

1. Spend Time Praying And Planning

Using time to pray first before the Lord, think and plan in advance for the week. In fact, **if you fail to take time for planning, you are, in effect, planning to fail.** Organise in a way that you can work effectively. Some people need to have papers filed away; others get their creative energy from their messy piles. So pray and organise in a way that you can serve God effectively. The author has a planner with him and a little notebook as well and normally plans in advance for the whole year.

2. Have God-Honouring Goals

Edifying goals give us purpose and direction in life. Knowing God's will and following it is necessary. Set goals which are specific, measurable, realistic and achievable. God-centred goals can give Christian a much-needed sense of direction. For example, do you set aside precious time daily to be with God first in the morning (Mk 1:35; Ps 5:3)? We are creatures of habit, let us develop a good habit of quiet meditation and prayer for the Lord. (i.e. waking up early and reading the word)

The art of prioritising is to isolate and identify those that are valuable and needful over the trivial and unimportant. A general rule of the thumb is: The heavenly is more important than the earthly things (Col 3:1 and Matt 6:33). Let us remember God first, then others and self, for we can trust God for the rest as He is faithful that promised.

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3. Use a To Do List

Some people thrive well by using a daily To Do list which is constructed either as the last thing previous day or first thing in the morning. Such people may combine a To Do list with a calendar or schedule. Others prefer a "running" To Do list which is continuously being updated. Or, one may prefer a combination of the two previously described To Do lists. Whatever method works is best for you, use it regularly as a habit with godly temperance.

4. Be Flexible

Allow time for interruptions and distractions (i.e. baby crying, urgent phone call, visiting someone who is ill). If you are interrupted, re-schedule routine tasks and move on. Ask the crucial question, "What is the most important thing I can be doing with my limited time right now?" **Beware of the tyranny of the urgent that may not be important and vice versa.**

5. Consider Your Personal Prime Time

There is the time of day when you are at your best. Are you a "morning person," a "night owl," or a late afternoon "whiz?" Knowing when your best time is and planning to use that time of day for your priorities (if possible) as in spending time with God in reading His word and prayer is effective time management. Honour God first with your very best time and He will reward you with fruitful discipline and diligence accordingly for the rest of the day.

Have a clear mind to do those things that are right and proper first and do them well to honour the Lord in the light of eternity in your vocation and family life. **Do not compromise your spiritual moral or ethical principles in the process.**

6. Manage the Urgent

Urgent tasks have short-term consequences while important tasks are those with long-term, goal-related implications. Work towards reducing the urgent things you must do so you'll have time for your important priorities. Flagging or highlighting items on your To Do List or attaching a deadline to each item may help keep important items from becoming urgent emergencies (i.e. calling a member in need to counsel or pray). A well-ordered day is half-won for the week.

7. Practise the Art of Neglecting the Trivial

Eliminate from your life trivial tasks or those tasks which do not have long-term consequences for you. Can you delegate or eliminate any of your To Do list? Work on those tasks which you alone can do. Remember the advice Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, gave to Moses in Exod 18:14-27 to involve others in the ministry. It is important to delegate and let others with their gifts and talents have a part in your life and ministry as well. Know for a fact that you cannot do everything yourself. **No one is indispensable except God so delegate and work with others as well to maximize time and talents of others.**

8. Fight Procrastination

When one is afraid of a big task, one tends to avoid it or postpone it. Avoiding something is not as effective as breaking it into smaller tasks and doing it just one of the smaller tasks at a time or set a timer and work on the big task later. By doing a little at a time by God's grace, eventually you will reach a point where you will be able to finish. Every small step is needful to achieving the goal in the end.

DIN (Do It Now!) and Delay It Not for procrastination is a thief of time.

9. Learn To Say "NO"

Distractions are of the Satan's ways of keeping us from God's goals for us. Focus on your right goals and priorities and be clear in your mind. Blocking time for important, but often not scheduled priorities, such as family and friends can also help. But first you must be convinced that you and your priorities are important. Once convinced of their importance, saying "no" to the unimportant in life gets easier, like a friend's invitation to play computer games, watch a movie or other unedifying activities.

10. Remember God

Even for small tasks, **remember to pray and praise and give thanks to God** when it is done (Ps 136:1-3). Jn 16:24 says, "*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*" Share with others God's grace and strength in completing each task, or when finishing the total job. Keep at it until it is done and maintain the necessary balance in life between work and play. "If we learn to balance God-honouring worship, work and play, life would be more enriching, abundant, edifying and meaningful."

Applying Good Time Management Principles

Personal Time Management is about the careful employment of one of your most valuable (and undervalued) resources that God gave to us. Consider these two questions: what would happen if you spent company money with as few safeguards as you spend personal time. Would you be in deficit by now? When was the last time you scheduled a time for personal worship, evangelism, fellowship and prayer?

The absence of good Time Management is often characterised by ill discipline and hence, is a symptom of over confidence (Gal 5:22-23), laziness or indifference which is not a facet of the fruit of the Spirit. Possibly, the reason why Time Management is poorly practised is that it so seldom forms a measured part of sanctified living. We need a spiritual paradigm shift today.

Good Time Management has many facets. There is the concept of keeping a well ordered diary and the related idea of planned activity. It is also a tool for the systematic ordering of your life and important occasions and events.

Good Time Management includes the following:-

- Eliminate wastage of time with responsible and careful planning and maximize opportunities to serve God and complete our work
- Be mentally prepared for important meetings/sessions/services/camps, plan and pray for each week's events and work with a God given discipline and purpose

Since time management is a discipline, it must be developed over time and prayerfully reviewed before the Lord.

Time Wasters

The wise king, Solomon in Prov 6:6-11 says :

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

The first step is a critical appraisal of how one spends one's time (Psa 90:12) and to question some of our habits. In one's time log, identify periods of time which might have been better used or more effectively.

There are various sources of time wasters. The most common are social: telephone calls, short message service, friends dropping by casually, excessive sleep, conversations with others, TV, video games. We are tempted to use of computer for games and chatrooms, dreaming or just aimless loofing. Look to the ant as our example, a tiny creature but an industrious and judicious one as well (Prov 6:6-11). The pig on the other hand is the negative example. It must be a conscious and deliberate effort to stop these aimless activities and choose rather to do things that has a more definite purpose and of lasting value.

Another common source of waste stems from delaying work which is unpleasant by finding distractions which are less important or unproductive. Check your day or week log to see if there are any task that are being delayed unnecessarily and that have to be worked on immediately. Procrastination is a major stumbling block to good usage of time. Beware of undue delays that rob us of previous time and prevent us from getting the work done on time.

There are two major causes of procrastination. The first major category is Avoidance. We procrastinate to avoid overwhelming tasks, difficult tasks, and unpleasant tasks and to avoid change. The second category is Fear and Anxiety. We procrastinate because of our fear of failure, fear of failure, fear of criticism, fear of making mistakes and fear of rejection.

Some students are infamous for delaying their homework and hence submitting their assignments late (or never at all or studying for exams at the eleventh hour). Be disciplined and keep consistent work done throughout the whole semester and...

God will bless your studies with good results.

If we keep in mind that procrastination is a bad habit, and habits can be changed, we can find some hope for changing how we respond to different situations by God's grace and enablement (Phil 4:19) and walk in the spirit to change our habits for the better .

Spiritual Priorities

There will be spiritual concerns for the believer particularly with regard to the work of the Lord in evangelism and mission in the church and the spiritual well being of the family and friends. Long-term **objectives have the characteristics of being important but not necessarily urgent**. For this reason, it is easy to ignore them in favour of the urgent and immediate. Clearly a balance must be struck and a certain weightage given to them. Begin well and, have the endurance and stamina to also complete it as well (i.e. FIT – Finish It Too) (Heb 12:1-2). Spending quality time with your spouse or loved ones are equally important don't neglect your family.

Pray for effective planning in balanced use of time for all commitments self-imposed through the use of the PDA or diary is helpful. For example, a Christian might decide that one hour a week should be devoted to personal, family or church matter and would then allocate a regular block of time to spiritual or secular activity (i.e. family worship or a prayer meeting or bonding time with children).

Use godly prudence and spiritual wisdom (Prov 9:10, Jas 1:5) to augment one's own spiritual life, work and family commitments. It may mean the need to take some quiet weekend to redirect your efforts towards something important, to pray and seek the Lord first and plan judiciously in advance.

Conclusion

Good Time Management is more than a systematic application of common sense strategies. **It requires spiritual discipline, God honouring directions and human responsibility.** It helps us to understand the importance of the use of time in the right perspective and it leads to effective employment of time by focusing on the right things to do. It reveals our priorities and other practical concerns in the life of the believers. It enables us to be responsible before God and take control of precious limited time that God has given to us and be accountable for them. Use it wisely for the Lord and live for the future. **Remember we cannot kill time without injuring eternity.**

*Rev Jack Sin
Maranatha B-P Church, S'pore*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR
AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	<i>Today: 13/04/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 20/04/2008</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mark Chen	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Jack Sin	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	In the Way of the Lord	Knowing the Power of His Resurrection	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Text:</i>	Genesis 24:1-27	Philippians 3:10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greetings from Eld Ford: He is currently recuperating from his knee surgery in a Retirement Care home in Woking and he sent his greetings to the congregation. He has just been admitted as their permanent resident. For those who plan to visit him, the address is: Woking Home, Oriental Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7BE. Please call him at: 01483-763558/775805 before your visit and do continue to pray for him. • 12th Annual Congregation Meeting on 06 Apr 2008: Following the meeting, the Task Force would like to inform the congregation that Pr Mok will be stepping down from his office at the end of August 2008. He and his wife will return to the missions field under the auspices of Life BPC, Singapore. • Thanksgiving from Sis Joyce (Ghana): She has arrived safely back in Ghana and would like to thank the church for praying for her. • Book Table: Please feel free to browse the book table for materials that are of interest to you. Newly included items include those that are brought from Maranatha BP Church, Singapore.
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Pr Mark Chen	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Pr Mark Chen	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Jack Sin	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	Biblical Imperatives for the Local Church	Wisdom and Divine Guidance	
<i>Text:</i>	Acts 6:1-7	Proverbs 3:5-6	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Sophia	Anthony	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 13/04/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 20/04/2008</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	John / Evelyn	Josiah / Yetta	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Esmeralda	Carol	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	No DHW Class	No DHW Class	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 18 Apr	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
Sat 19 Apr	4.00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Pr Mok	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £451.09		Lunch: £30.10	
<u>Memory Verse</u>			
<i>Last Week (Apr 08 Wk 2): Psalm 121:6</i>			
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.			
<i>This Week (Apr 08 Wk 3): Psalm 121:7</i>			
The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.			



Visitation of Elder Ford at Woking Home on 11 April 2008.