

GUARD THE GATE

Guard Your Time

Ephesians 5:15-16

The Importance of Time

- We all get 24 hours each day
- Time, however, never waits for us to use it, time is always moving
- It's been said that every day is a bank account and time is our currency, no one is rich, no one is poor, we all have 24 hours
- How well are you using your 24 hours?

What Wastes/Steals Our Time?

- Anything left unguarded is subject to waste, loss, misuse, or theft, including our time
- Time wasters are activities that drain valuable time without contributing any meaningful returns
- We all have 24 hours a day at our disposal to use
- The key to guarding your time is identifying what's wasting or stealing your time
- What wastes/steals our time?
 - Procrastination ***Proverbs 27:1 (KJV) 1 Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.***
 - Interruptions by people at work, home, via phone/text
 - We distract ourselves
 - Technology
 - Multitasking
 - Lack of organization and planning
 - Overcommitment

Redeeming the Time

Ephesians 5:15-16 (KJV) 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- In these verses, Apostle Paul is urging believers to wise with their time
- There are four principles that can help us be more effective in managing our time
 1. *Understanding the significance of time*
 - Time is precious, valuable, and limited
 - Because time is precious and limited, it behooves us to be careful how we live
 - The text is exhorting us not to live as fools, but as wise
 - What's the difference between the two?
 - To live as a fool means we act unintelligently and irresponsibly
 - A fool doesn't accept the things of God, because they can't understand them, they are foolishness to them
 - A fool substitutes a god of their own making

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- The fool become their own authority **Proverbs 12:15 (KJV)** “*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes...*”
 - Walking as a wise person begins with reverence for God **Proverbs 1:7 (KJV)** **7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.**
 - Wisdom comes from acknowledging God and His ways **Ecclesiastes 9:1 (KJV)** “*For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God...*”
 - Turning from foolishness to wisdom is turning from “self” to God **2 Timothy 3:15 (NLT)** **15 You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.**
 - When a person gets saved, our lives are moved from the realm of foolishness to the realm of wisdom
 - Every moment of our lives must be used wisely
 - We must recognize the significance, the weight of every passing moment and make the commitment to using our time wisely for God’s glory
2. *Seizing opportunities*
- Paul call us to redeem the time
 - Redeeming the time is turning your time in for something of value
 - Redeeming the time means we are *taking advantage of opportunities* that come our way
 - We have the time each day to live godly lives, share our faith, be a diligent worker on or job, be a godly example at home, work, and play; be faithful to God and our families, pray and study God’s Word
 - Our responsibility is to identify opportunities for personal growth, service, and maximizing them all for our overall spiritual development relationships
3. *Realize that time is a limited resource*
- Paul said we are to redeem the time because *the days are evil*
 - i. Once time is gone, you can’t get it back
 - Because we living in evil times, we don’t have time to involve ourselves in things that have not lasting value
 - In these evil times, we must what for things that take time away from godly pursuits, godly opportunities, and righteous living
 - We need to ask ourselves, what am I doing that’s wasting/stealing my time?
 - What activities am I involved in that’s wasting/stealing time from prayer, worship, family, or service to the kingdom of God?

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4. *Be a steward of time*

- These two verses are calling us to be a steward of time
- Wise living involves *stewarding* or managing our time well
- A steward is one who manages something that belongs to another and will have to give an account of their stewardship
- Are you being a good steward of the time God has given you?
- Is God getting a *good return* on the time He's *invested* with you?

Guarding Your Time

- Learn how to say *No*
 - No is a complete sentence
- **Stop procrastinating *John 9:4 (KJV) 4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.***
 - Do what God is calling you to do, stop delaying and putting it off
 - A Chinese proverb says, "The best time to plant was 20 years ago, the 2nd best time is *now*"
- **Give God your day, your plans *Proverbs 16:9 (NLT) 9 We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.***
 - Pray every day and ask God for guidance on how to manage your day
 - If you don't plan your day, someone or something else will
- **Ask God to restore lost time *Joel 2:25 (KJV) "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm..."***
 - God can restore lost years by multiplying your fruitfulness
 - God restored their losses by giving them an abundant harvest
 - In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus spoke of a harvest that could be 30, 60, or 100 fold ***Matthew 13:8 (KJV) 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.***
 - Three years at a 100-fold would be as much fruit as a 10 years and 30-fold
 - **Pray, God "the locusts" have eaten too many years of my life, I've had many fruitless years, but I ask You to give me a harvest in *this season* of my life that's greater than *all* the seasons of the past. Only You can make up lost time and cause my life to be as fruitful as ever. I receive greater fruitfulness in my life now. In Jesus Name, Amen.**