Redeem the Time

Play and ponder Redeem the Time

When as a child, I laughed and wept,
Time crept;
When as a youth, I dreamed and talked,
Time walked;
When I became a full-grown man,
Time ran;
When older still I daily grew,
Time flew;
Soon I shall find in traveling on,
Time gone.

LIVE WISELY:
REDEEM THE TIME!

ARE YOU REDEEMING THE TIME,
"THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE"?

Before reading on, pause and make a list of the things you value most in life. Undoubtedly God, Jesus, family, etc are at the top of your list. But did you list "TIME?"

Here is a link to the song entitled "**Redeem the Time**" - It is beautiful vocal by David Smallwood with well done, and very moving graphics. Father, may the words of this song cause us to soberly ponder the length of eternity and the brevity of our opportunity to live our life in the power of the Spirit for the glory of Christ. Amen Here is the link to my Youtube Recording on Redeem the Time.

Ephesians 5:15-16+ has been called the Bible's key to **TIME MANAGEMENT**. In these passages Paul commands all believers

> Therefore (because we have been awakened from spiritual stupor and spiritual death and have the light of Christ - Eph 5:14+) **BE CAREFUL** how you walk, not as unwise men ("fools"), but as wise, **REDEEMING** (making the most of) **THE TIME**, because (explains why we must redeem the time) the days are evil (Corollary: The evil of our day should motivate us to redeem the time)." (Eph 5:16+)

Paul uses three Greek words or phrases that are very instructive, the first being the command to '**be careful** (present imperative = command to make this vigilant attitude our lifestyle) how you walk." The idea is we as believers are commanded to continually take heed, be alert, be vigilant, to discern with Spirit enabled vision. This command which calls for us to continually live our life wisely and continually dependent on and filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18+).

C H Spurgeon paraphrases it "See then that ye walk circumspectly (being careful to consider all circumstances and all possible consequences), not carelessly, not thinking that it is of no importance how you live; but looking all round you, “walk circumspectly,” watching lest even in seeking one good thing you spoil another." In other words, if we walk wisely, we will be careful not to let the good steal God's best!

Charles Hummel wrote that our "greatest danger is letting the urgent (secular) things crowd out the important (divine things)." Our problem is that too often we live by life's demands, instead of by God's priorities. Remember that life is too short for us to do everything we want to do, but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do!

The second word is **REDEEM** (Eph 5:16+) is the Greek word **exagorazo** which literally means to "buy out of the market place." The picture is of a merchant who diligently seeks to buy up the best bargains in the market place, taking care not to miss the fleeting opportunities! REDEEM is in the present tense which calls for us to make it our lifestyle, our daily, moment by moment practice, to buy up for ourselves (to our eternal advantage) the strategic opportunities which God providentially places in our path. If we are walking wisely (Eph 5:15+), filled with God's Spirit (Eph 5:18+), we will be spiritually alert to those divine opportunities in the "marketplace", and will begin to view people and circumstances not just as encounters (or irritations) in time but as opportunities to impact eternity (read 2Cor 4:18+).

Each new day brings us 24 hours, 1440 minutes, 86,000 seconds, each moment a precious gift from God (Jas 1:17+), each calling for us to be good stewards, mindful that one day we must give an account for how we spent the time God loaned us, how effectively we "bought up" the opportunities He provided. If someone gave us $1440 each day and said spend it or lose it, how diligent would we be to comply? Yesterday is but a cancelled check. Tomorrow is a promissory note. Today is all of the cash that you have. Spend it wisely. As someone has well said

I have only just a minute, only 60 seconds in it;
forced upon me; can't refuse it;
didn't seek it, didn't chose it.
But it's up to me just how I use it.
I must suffer if I lose it, give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it.

A survey asked "What do you have to live for?" to which 94% answered they were just enduring today and living for tomorrow. That is living unwisely (Eph 5:15). Too many people miss today because they are worrying about tomorrow (Read Jesus' advice Mt 6:34-note). Worry does not make us ready but unready to redeem the time. As **Adrian Rogers** said "We face the future out of breath, because we have been fighting tomorrow's battles today!"

Wisdom is taking every opportunity today and fully using the time granted us. We have each been given the same amount of time but the difference is how we redeem this divine gift. Instead of killing time, redeem it. Instead of counting the days, make your days count. Indeed, "ETERNITY will be appreciated only in the measure that we have rightly handled TIME!" Redemption of time is preparation for eternity. The present should be viewed as preparation for the future. As Spurgeon rightly observed "'**NOW**' is the watchword of the wise." LATER may be too late! Right NOW counts for ever. How goes your preparation for the future dear saint? It's now or never. "Time is the seed of eternity." To make our life count for eternity, we must be wise in how we spend our time today. What will your eternal harvest be? **H A Ironside** agrees that "Time is given us to use in view of eternity."

Psalm 107:2+ says "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Paul would say let the redeemed of the Lord DO so (redeem the time in the power of the Spirit for the glory of God!). We should redeem the time because we are redeemed!

In a letter to his wife John Wesley wrote "Redeem the time. Catch the golden moments as they fly." May the Spirit (Eph 5:18) enable us to live wisely (Eph 5:15) and catch the golden moments as they fly by (Eph 5:16+)! Amen.

The word **TIME** (Gk = **kairos**) is better translated **OPPORTUNITY** and refers to a fixed and definite period of time during which something can be accomplished that cannot be accomplished after the time has passed. The idea of kairos is not "clock time" (Gk - chronos) but what one writer refers to as "kingdom opportunities." Wuest adds that Paul's "idea is not to make best use of time as such, which is what we should do in the sense of not wasting it, but of taking advantage of the OPPORTUNITIES that present themselves." The time/opportunity for bringing forth fruit is the spring SEASON (kairos) in which the tree bears fruit, in contrast to late autumn, when there is no fruit. And so kairos is the time which God allots to each believer to bring forth for themselves "spiritual fruit." This truth calls for us to "Seize the Day" (Carpe diem) because "Time flies" (Tempus fugit). As Horace Mann put it "Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever." Kairos represents the best time to do something, the moment when circumstances are most suitable. Kairos can be a moment or a season, but always refers to specific times in which opportunity is "ripe", so that when the time passes, so does the opportunity - "Opportunity only knocks once."

Life's "kairos moments" are limited-edition opportunities
for eternal investment.

The word **OPPORTUNITY** is derived from the Latin "ob portu." In ancient times before modern harbors, ships had to wait for the timing of the tide before they could make it safely to port. Thus "OB PORTU," described the ship waiting "FOR PORT," ready to seize the crucial moment when it could ride the tide into safe harbor. The captain knew that if he missed the passing tide, the ship would have to wait for another tide to come in. God gives each of us many "ob portu's", but we must be spiritually wise and Spirit filled in order to see and seize them. As Charles Swindoll said "We are all faced with a series of great opportunities (ob portu's) brilliantly disguised as impossible situations." Shakespeare's famous line from Julius Caesar conveys the same thought: "There is a tide in the affairs of men (an "ob portu"), Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life Is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat; And we must take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures." In short, kairos conveys the sense of an "opportune time," a "window of opportunity".

John Broadus said "Opportunity is like a fleet horse that pauses for a moment at one's side. If you fail to mount him in that moment, you can hear the clatter of his hoofs down the corridors of time. That opportunity is gone forever."

Jonathan Edwards America's greatest theologian understood Paul's charge to REDEEM THE TIME and as a young man wrote "Resolved: Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can. Resolved: to live with all my might while I do live." "Time that is past you can never recall, Of time to come, you are not sure at all; Only the present is now in your power, Therefore, redeem and improve every hour."

John Piper reiterates that the "OPPORTUNITY will never come again. The days are evil; opposition is great; be wise as serpents (Mt 10:16). Understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph 5:17)… These words ring with a sense of urgency. They are like the words of a platoon leader addressing his unit just before they enter combat. The air is tense and your heart is beating fast and, even if you love battle, your hands are sweaty. “Watch your step; be smart; don’t miss your opportunity; keep yourself lean for the battle!”… In other words, the Christian life is a vigilant life, defensively guarding itself from the subtleties of the evil days and offensively redeeming the time to strike for love and righteousness again and again. We are a vigilant people at war with unbelief and evil. O to be a faithful steward of the breath God has given me… Surely God means for our minutes on earth to count for something significant. Paul said, "In the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain" (Php 2:16). In the same way, I have good hope from the Lord that my "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1Co 15:58). And I commend this promise to you. No minute need be lived in vain. Eternity will render it significant if lived in faith for the glory of God. In the end we rest in this: "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15).

Time is a strange commodity-we can't save it, retrieve it, relive it, stretch it, borrow it, loan it, stop it or store it , but can only use it or lose it. We can't call time out in the game of life. Indeed, there is no such thing as a literal "instant replay." That appears only on film. "When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept. When as a youth I dreamed and talked, time walked. When I became a full grown man, time ran. When older still I daily grew, time flew. Soon I shall find in traveling on, time gone." The pioneer missionary, Robert Moffatt, said, "We shall have all eternity in which to celebrate our victories, but only one short hour before the sunset in which to win them." Jesus said "I must work the works of Him Who sent me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work." (Jn 9:4) It's not how long we live that counts, but how we live, so "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might" (Ec 9:10a).

"We cannot afford to be idle; neither do we desire it. The call is, REDEEM THE TIME. Be always doing something that will last; be always stretching forward to the prize (Php 3:13-14). It will soon be ours, for the Lord is at hand. It is a prize worth all our labour and sorrow here. The very thought of it is enough to put to flight all murmuring, or selfishness, or sloth. To labour here is as blessed as it is to rest hereafter. Work on, work on, till the day of recompense arrives." "The time is short! If thou wouldst work for God, it must be now; If thou wouldst win the garland for thy brow, Redeem the time. With His reward He comes; He tarries not; His day is near; When men least look for Him will He be here; Prepare for Him!" (H. Bonar)

Paul exhorts believers "while we have OPPORTUNITY (kairos), let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:10) If one misses the "seasonable opportunity", he will miss the eternal harvest associated with that spiritual opportunity. Yesterday is past and cannot be changed, and tomorrow may not come, so make the most of the opportunities God gives you today. May God's Spirit enable us to seize the day, while we may! And so again Paul commands us "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of (redeeming, buying up) the OPPORTUNITY (kairos). Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." (Col 4:5-6)

Harry Ironside exhorts us "to be as alert for witnessing to the lost as bargain hunters are to purchase goods to advantage. Yet how often we neglect to use the circumstances which are put in our way, where we may say a word for our Lord and endeavor to point the lost to Him. Our intentions are good, but we become so occupied with other matters, many of them trifling in the extreme, and before we realize it the person to whom we should have spoken is beyond our reach." "We are to be alive to every opportunity to witness in the chance encounter, the unexpected turn in conversation, the opening that comes in the expression of a need or the asking of a question, the signal given by what may appear casual but reflects something deeper, the unplanned incident that brings the “outsider” into our life in a way that mind and heart can meet. We are to seize the critical moment when it comes… There are intersections upon which we sometimes come abruptly. We have to choose, and destiny is in the choice. There are flashes of insight that break in upon us, guidance, intuition, discernment, which, if we do not receive, record, and act upon, we lose." Our few days here on earth are so short and precious, in relation to eternity, that we ought never to waste time on selfish trivia, but to use it only on that "which is good, to the use of edifying" (Eph 4:29). (Dunnam)

Adoniram Judson a famous missionary to Burma wrote that "A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity… the same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever… each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny… How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness! It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, (enabled by God's Spirit) resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly (forever) marked."

Watch Francis Chan's excellent illustration of the shortness of your life in light of the length of eternity!

David Brainerd whose candle burned so brightly that God brought him home at the relatively young age of 29 wrote in his diary "Oh, how precious is time; and how guilty it makes me feel when I think I have trifled away and misemployed it or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty to the utmost of my ability and capacity. Oh, that I might not loiter on my heavenly journey!" It's too late to redeem the time that is past, but not the time that is passing!

Some novel ways to redeem the time - Ask your waiter if there is anything you can pray for him (her) when you pray over you meal. You will be surprised at the variety of responses, some of which open a door for the Gospel! When you get one of those irritating calls asking for money, turn it into an opportunity to ask your caller if they know Jesus as Savior. As an aside it is interesting how the number of calls decreases! Pray daily for an unreached people group (see globalprayerdigest.org) Let us not just "mark time," but use time to make our mark! Yes, time flies, but remember that you are the "navigator!"

Adrian Rogers offers some other practical thoughts on redeeming the time:

> (1) Learn to live in the eternal now. Today is the only day you have. Redeem the time. (2) Stop saying, "If I had time." You do have time. (3) Stop worrying about tomorrow, and stop waiting for tomorrow. Give God today, and He will take care of tomorrow. (4) Cut yourself loose from the past. Bury your failure in the grave of God's forgetfulness (read Mic 7:18-19, Isaiah 43:25, 44:22), and let Him give you a brand new day. (5) If you have not accepted Christ, now is the time "for He says, “AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME (kairos = the opportune time!) I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU”; behold, now is “THE ACCEPTABLE TIME (kairos),” behold, now is “THE DAY OF SALVATION” (2Cor 6:2)

Let us pray like the old Puritan

> Turn my heart from vanity, from dissatisfactions, from uncertainties of the present state, to an eternal interest in Christ. Let me remember that life is short and unforeseen, and is only an opportunity for usefulness; **GIVE ME A HOLY AVARICE TO REDEEM THE TIME**, to awake at every call to charity (love) and piety (godliness), so that I may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, instruct the ignorant, reclaim the vicious, forgive the offender, diffuse the Gospel, show neighborly love to all. Let me live a life of self-distrust, dependence on Thyself (Thy Spirit), mortification, crucifixion, prayer." (From Valley of Vision)

Dear reader, may God by His Spirit cause each of us to so order our steps that when that great day comes we might hear those glorious words

> "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful in a few things, I will put your in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your Master." (Mt 25:21)

> "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom." (Ps 90:12)

Now take a moment, as you ponder the moments of your life which remain and the poignant words of Robin Mark's song…

When It's All Been Said and Done
There is just one thing that matters.
Did I do my best to live for Truth?
Did I live my life for You?
When It's All Been Said and Done
All my treasures will mean nothing.
Only what I've done for love's reward,
Will stand the test of time.

Play "When It's All Been Said and Done"

Let's summarize - Paul's exhortation to "redeem the time" in **Ephesians 5:16** (often translated as "making the most of every opportunity") is a call to live purposefully and wisely in light of the brevity of life and the urgency of our spiritual mission. Here are some practical ways to redeem the time in your life:

1. Live with Purpose and Intentionality

> Set Priorities: Reflect on your God-given purpose and focus on what truly matters—your relationship with God, family, ministry, and service to others.
>
> Avoid Distractions: Identify and minimize activities that waste time or pull you away from meaningful goals (e.g., excessive social media, procrastination).

2. Seek God's Guidance Daily

Pray Regularly: Begin each day with prayer, asking God for wisdom on how to use your time effectively (Ps 90:12 is a great prayer to pray).

Practice the daily presentation of your body as in Romans 12:1+ "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

Study Scripture: Allow God's Word to shape your decisions and actions, aligning your plans with His will, for His will is found in His Word

To help discern God's will obey the two commands in Romans 12:2+ "And **do not be conformed** (present imperative with a negative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey) to this world, but **be transformed** (present imperative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey) by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what **the will of God** is, that which is **good** and **acceptable** and **perfect**."

3. Be Alert to Opportunities

Share the Gospel: Look for moments to speak about Christ or encourage and build up others in their faith.

Make Disciples - Redeeming the time by making disciples is one of the most impactful ways to live purposefully, as it aligns with the Great Commission Jesus gave us in Matthew 28:19-20+, where the one specific command is "**make disciples**" (aorist imperative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey).

Serve Others: Use your talents, resources, and time to meet the needs of those around you.

Practice Gratitude: Embrace opportunities with a thankful heart, recognizing them as gifts from God.

4. Cultivate Discipline

Time Management: Plan your days thoughtfully, using tools like calendars or to-do lists to stay organized.

Avoid Procrastination: Address important tasks promptly instead of delaying them.

Balance Rest and Work: Prioritize rest and renewal to stay effective in your efforts.

5. Focus on Eternal Impact

Invest in Relationships: Spend time nurturing relationships that have eternal significance, such as discipling others or building your family in faith.

Use Your Gifts: Engage in activities that advance God's kingdom, whether in your local church, community, or workplace.

6. Be Aware of the Times

Understand the Spiritual Climate: Paul says the days are evil, reminding believers to be spiritually vigilant and discerning.

Stand Firm in Faith: Commit to living counter-culturally, embodying Christlike values in a world that often opposes them.

By being intentional, prayerful, and proactive, you can redeem the time, living in a way that glorifies God and maximizes the opportunities He places before you. What specific areas of your life do you feel called to focus on in this season?

Related Resources:

- Redeem the Time for the Days are Evil
- Making the Most of Your Time
- Maximizing your Spiritual Opportunities God Gives You
- Redeem the Time - Part 2
- Youtube video from talk I gave to a men's groups on redeeming the time

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REDEEM THE TIME in 2021 - Recording of Zoom Talk given by myself (Bruce Hurt) to men's ministry on Jan 13, 2021

You might skip over the first few minutes of announcements, etc.
Here is the link to the recording which lasts about 1 hour
Here is a link to the "slides" that go along with the zoom talk -- not sure they show up on zoom.https://www.preceptaustin.org/zoom1

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ON REDEEMING THE TIME

Redeeming the Time
F S Shepherd

The grain stands white in the harvest field
And rich the fruitage which it will yield.
Step in today and the sickle wield,
Redeeming the precious time.

Lost souls are hastening down to doom
Without a ray to dispel the gxloom
Give them the Gospel, their path illume,
Redeeming the precious time.

Some lives are darkened by want and care;
The lack of sympathy brings despair;
Seek out such souls and their burdens share,
Redeeming the precious time.

The Lord soon cometh His own to take,
And of their stewardship reckoning make;
Blest will he be that for Jesus' sake,
Has ever redeemed the time!

Refrain:
Redeeming, redeeming,
Redeeming the precious time.
Go work today in the harvest field,
Redeeming the precious time.

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C. T. Studd amply illustrated the importance of making your one life count for the Lord when he penned these powerful words.

Two little lines I heard one day,
Traveling along life's busy way;
Bringing conviction to my heart,
And from my mind would not depart;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one,
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;
Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet,
And stand before His Judgement seat;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice,
Gently pleads for a better choice

Bidding me selfish aims to leave,
And to God's holy will to cleave;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years,
Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;
Each with its days I must fulfill,
living for self or in His will;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore,
When Satan would a victory score;
When self would seek to have its way,
Then help me Lord with joy to say;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Give me Father, a purpose deep,
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;
Faithful and true what e'er the strife,
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn,
And from the world now let me turn;
Living for Thee, and Thee alone,
Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;
Only one life, "twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one,
Now let me say, "Thy will be done";
And when at last I'll hear the call,
I know I'll say "twas worth it all";
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last."

Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.
And when I am dying, how happy I'll be,
If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee."

A farmer's clock ran amuck one morning and struck seventeen. The man of the house jumped up and ran all over the place, saying, "Get up, it's later than it ever has been before!"

It is later than it ever has been by God's eternal timepiece.
It is later than you think.

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Larry Moyer - Decide now what you want written on your tombstone, then live your life backward from there. Life is short and ought to be taken seriously. Decide now how you'd like to be remembered, then live your life accordingly. Do you want your tombstone to read, "He was the head of his corporation," or, "She was the best in her field"? Or would you rather it reflect an important contribution you've made to life?… If, at the end of your life, you want to say "I did," instead of "I wish," alter your course today. (31 days to contagious living: a daily devotional guide on modeling Christ to others)

ILLUSTRATION: Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel awoke one morning and read his own obituary in the local newspaper. It read, "Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, who died yesterday, devised a way for more people to be killed in a war than ever before, and he died a very rich man." It was Alfred's older brother who had died; a newspaper reporter had bungled the epitaph. But that account had a tremendous impact on Nobel, who decided he wanted to be remembered for something different. As a result, he initiated the Nobel Prize to reward individuals who foster peace. He said,

"Every man ought to have the chance
to correct his epitaph in midstream and write a new one."

Paul exhorts believers that "while we have OPPORTUNITY (kairos), let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:10) If one misses the "seasonable opportunity", he will miss the eternal harvest associated with that spiritual fruit. Each new day brings potential new opportunities, which we should recognize and "seize," for once they are passed, they will not return, for "opportunity only knocks once." We cannot undo the moments we've missed, but we can commit ourselves anew to walk in step with the Spirit (Gal 5:25NIV+) and be alert for the opportunities He provides tomorrow to do good.

Leon Morris writes that "Kairos denotes "the right time" or "the proper time" for anything; consequently a time that occurs only once before it is lost forever. No one can hope to reap the harvest before the time appointed for it by God (Gal 6:9+). But if he does not seize the time appointed him for sowing, he will reap no harvest at all (Gal 6:10)." Yesterday is past and cannot be changed, and tomorrow may not come, so make the most of the opportunities God gives you today. May God's Spirit enable us to seize the day, while we may! In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Moments once lost no man can reclaim;
Redeem them now—in Jesus' Name.

If you are continually filled with God's Spirit (Eph 5:18), He will enable you to be on "high alert" for spiritual opportunities—sensitive to divine opportunities that appear and vanish in a moment. What doors is God opening before you today? How will you respond? **Walk wisely. Be filled with the Spirit. Redeem the time.** Don't be like Mark Twain, who once said, *"I was seldom able to see an opportunity until it had ceased to be one."*

Be filled, O soul, with Spirit's flame,
Alert to every fleeting frame;
For moments pass like morning dew—
They vanish ere we bid adieu.

Let Twain's regret not echo thine—
To see too late the grand design.
So seize each gift, each chance sublime,
By the Spirit's strength—redeem the time.

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It takes only a moment to be kind, but the result can last forever

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When one door closes, another one opens, but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us.—Alexander Graham Bell,

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TICK, TICK, TICK - Do you have a clock or watch available with a secondhand on it? Stop and follow that hand as it ticks away 1 minute. Those seconds, of course, are the way we measure time, and time is the very essence of our lives. By the time you reach the age of 75, the clocks and watches of this world will have ticked away a total of nearly 2.5 billion seconds.

Bernard Berenson, an internationally famous art critic, had a zest for life. Even when he was in ill health, he cherished every moment. Shortly before he died at age 94, he said to a friend, "I would willingly stand at street corners, hat in hand, asking passersby to drop their unused minutes into it." Oh, that we would learn to appreciate the value of time!

We certainly don't want to be so time-conscious that we become driven workaholics, neglecting our families, never relaxing with our friends, too busy to smell the roses or admire a sunset. Yet Paul urged us to redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15-16), and Moses

prayed, “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

Let’s ask the Lord to help us appreciate the value of time. May we wisely invest our seconds, minutes, hours, and days, realizing that beyond time lies eternity.

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The first principle of time management is recognizing the value of time and redeeming it—buying it up and using it carefully as the priceless resource which it represents.

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1 Cor 7:29+ But this I say, brethren, **the time (kairos) has been shortened**, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none

> **Comment**: There are two words in Greek that are usually translated with one English word, "time." The one is chrónos, referring to time simply as a measurement or the length of a period of time. The word is used in English in the word "chronometer" which is a device to measure time but without any reference to the relation of time to the accomplishments that it permits. Chrónos denotes the length or space of time, but kairós signifies eukairían, "good or proper time, opportunity." With the definite article in 1 Corinthians 7:29, it means the opportunity to accomplish certain things and not simply time per se. Often when we say, "Time is short," we really do not refer to the measurement of time itself but to the accomplishment of a certain thing or project in that particular time. **What Paul is stressing here as a basic consideration for life is that we merely have the opportunity of using a state of being to accomplish a desired goal.** First, there must be the goal, and the goal as expressed throughout the Scriptures is the glory of God. The basic questions should be, "How can I best glorify God in my life? Is it through being married or being single?" (Spiros Zodhiates -1 Corinthians Commentary)

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Wisdom is taking every **opportunity** and fully using the time granted us.

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David Brainerd, the great missionary to the American Indians, was on one occasion witnessing to a chief, who was very close to deciding for Christ. But he held back; there was some pause or hesitation. Brainerd got up, took a stick, drew a circle in the soft earth about the chief, and said, "Decide before you cross that line." Why this passion and urgency? Because Brainerd recognized that at that moment, that chief was close to God. If he missed that moment, he might never be so close again.

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Steven Cole - “Buying up” in Eph 5:16 pictures a businessman or investor who knows an opportunity to make money when he sees one. He quickly moves in before the opportunity is gone. Or picture a careful shopper who knows that all of the sale items will be gone within the first hour. So she gets to the store early to take advantage of the good deals. A wise witness is on the alert to buy up opportunities to share Christ with lost people.

Max Alderman - We constantly ought to be moved to further advance the cause of Christ, by each tick of the clock. The passing of time should stir us to remove ourselves from a life of slothfulness. Each tick of the clock should be a sharp goad to rouse us from our sleep. It is time that we have, but it is time that we also lose. We are losing the time and then fail as good stewards to redeem the time that we have remaining while here upon this earth.

Making the most of the opportunity - Other phrases that come to mind - "a window of time", "embrace the opportunity," "seize the moment (day)."

We are to live as if every minute counts— because it does. We can always make more money, but we cannot make more time. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. And when our time on this earth is over, we will give an account to the One who gave us our allotment of this precious commodity.

Vance Havner - The big word with God is 'now.'

We do not know how long we have
Till time for us is past,

So let us live as if this day
Is going to be our last.
—D. De Haan

To spend time wisely, invest it in eternity.

Seize the moment - History records that when Hannibal could have taken Rome he did not, and when he later sought to he could not.

McNaughton notes that "everything is to be done for the glory of God and in the light of eternity, remembering that we live in a fallen universe. Don't put off until tomorrow what should be done today, because procrastination is the thief of time. 'Redeeming the time' is about making the best use of time, making time your own property, but this will prove impossible unless one is 'filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5:18)… **Time is loaned to us and, as stewards of Christ, we must use it wisely.**" (Opening up Colossians and Philemon)

Warren Wiersbe - One of the greatest tragedies in life is wasted opportunity--not making the most of what God has given us.

Oswald Chambers has said, "Grace is for 'right now.' It is not the process toward some future goal, but an end in and of itself. If we would only realize this, then each moment would become rich with meaning and purpose."

To **redeem time** is to rescue it from the waste can of unwise living and bring it into the place of good God-glorifying use.

Webster says ***opportunity*** is the convergence of a favorable juncture of circumstances, but in God's universe the convergence of circumstances is not left to "chance" or "fate" but is under His providential control

In Gal 6:10, Paul adds the caveat "while we have opportunity (kairos), let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:10) In the context of this passage one could interpret this ("while we have opportunity") as referring to this present life which affords the believer the one " season" he or she will have to sow good.

Sammy Tippit in one of my favorite books "Fire in Your Heart" writes…

> It doesn't matter if we live to be 36 or 100, life is short. We'll all die and give an account of our lives. After Ken's death, I determined that the sum total of my life would be given to things of eternal value. The Scripture exhorts us to redeem "the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). There's an urgency about the gospel. The eternal destiny of mankind hangs in the balance. Many Christian acts I do on earth I will also din in heaven. I pray. I will pray in heaven. I sing. I will sing in heaven. I serve God. I will serve God in heaven.
>
> **There's one thing I won't be able to do in heaven:**
> **bring the lost to Jesus**.
>
> It will be too late. My heart must be set aflame for the lost now. We must all be about our Father's business. The other truth that should drive us out of our easy chairs is that Jesus is coming again. The last night of an evangelistic meeting in Romania, a young person gave a note to one of our team members. Hundreds were gathered around our van, and we wept as we pulled away from those precious people. A teenager reached in with the note, "Please, read it." It simply said, "Jesus is coming soon!" Christians in the West spend a lot of time debating the theological ramifications of His coming. In the East, they live in anticipation of it.

In Eph 5:15-16 to walk wisely is to redeem the time in these evil days, to understand the will of the Lord and live in light of it, we must be filled with the Spirit.

John MacArthur - Wisdom numbers the days (Ps 90:12), sees the limited time, and buys the opportunity. Don't be foolish—shun opportunities for evil, but seize opportunities for good.

Our English word **opportunity** comes from a Latin word which means "toward the port." It suggests a ship taking advantage the window of time when the wind and tide are such as to allow safe passage into the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of every opportunity God gives us.

We should occupy till He comes, because time is drawing short. We must be about the Father's business, so that one day He will look at us in glory and say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Bruce Wilkinson - Time is a God-given stewardship for which we must render account, and our use of it will determine the value of our contribution to our day and generation. The difference between one man and another lies largely in his use of time.

Time that is past you can never recall,
Of time to come, you are not sure at all;
Only the present is now in your power,
Therefore, redeem and improve every hour.
—Unknown

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.
- 1Cor 15:58+

How valuable is this truth to you?

A worldly wise man will part with nothing except for its value,
yet many foolishly part with time for nothing!

WATCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES "Redeeming the time." Chances must be sought for putting in the right word, and when God sends it we must make the most of it. **We must go on the principle of now or never. This will make us eager to embrace opportunities;** and in turn we must urge the undecided to embrace Christ at once. Every act of kindness to the unconverted will help us. (T. L. Cuyler, D. D.)

Should our question be "Now or when?" No, wisdom dictates we should declare "Now or never!"

F B Meyer…

> Let us number our days against the eternal ages of God's Being; against the age of the mountain and the universe; against the rise and fall of great nations. It is when we realize how short life is that we set ourselves in good earnest to redeem the time, to buy up each golden opportunity.
>
> The heart of wisdom will show itself in giving God a just proportion of our time. Every day it is wise to set apart time for the reading of His Word, for prayer and holy fellowship; in every week it is wise to reserve a seventh part for His holy service. We may learn deep lessons from the amount of time that the Hebrews gave to their religious institutions. "Prayer and provender hinder no man," says the old proverb. It is specially wise to make God to be our Guide, that He may show us how to use this precious thing called life. Apart from Him all our desire to use our time aright will be in vain, but when the soul walks in fellowship with God every action tells, every day adds something to the growing power and influence of existence. Nothing is little, nothing trivial, nothing unworthy, if your soul holds fellowship with God. Then will come satisfaction and gladness, and the work of our life will be established by the Divine Hand. (Our Daily Walk)

Joseph Parker on **Using our Opportunities**…

> Our efforts in life must be seasonable. There is a religious forethought. He who neglects to gather in summer neglects the bounties of the Lord as well as neglects his own future necessities. The man who sleeps in harvest is pronounced a fool, because he lets his opportunity slip. The historian writes concerning Hannibal that when he could have taken Rome he would not, and when he would he could not. We are to be men of opportunity--that is to say, we are to buy up the opportunity, to redeem the time. When God opens a gate He means that we should go through it, and pass into all the inheritance beyond. There was a king of Sicily who was called "The Lingerer," not because he stayed till opportunity came, but because he stayed till opportunity was lost. There is a time to wait and a time to act. Overlong waiting means loss of chance, for the king has passed by, and the gates are closed; but to wait patiently until everything is ripe for action is the very last expression of Christian culture. (J. Parker, D.D.) (Biblical Illustrator-Proverbs 10:5)

Begin at once to redeem the time. Say to yourself each morning-" My soul, thou hast to-day a God to glorify, a Christ to imitate, a soul to save, a body to keep under, time to redeem, temptation to overcome--verily, I must be about my Father's business." (Dean Goulburn.)

James Stewart notes that

> The consideration of the past will stimulate us to redeem the time.
>
> 1. The whole life of man is short.
>
> 2. How much shorter has it become to us!
>
> 3. Had it been spent aright, its increased shortness would not be a matter of regret.
>
> 4. But only look back! (Biblical Illustrator-Psalm 143:5)

We may be rich or poor or bankrupt but none of us is absolutely bankrupt for the precious commodity time remains--redeem it.

A dying English queen cried, "A world of money for an inch of time!"

Ps 31:15 **My times are in Thy hand**; - Spurgeon - The sovereign arbiter of destiny holds in his own power all the issues of our life; we are not waifs and strays upon the ocean of fate, but are steered by infinite wisdom towards our desired haven. Providence is a soft pillow for anxious heads, an anodyne for care, a grave for despair.

D. L. Moody recalls an incident in his ministry that brought him great distress because he failed to redeem the time. "On the night when the courthouse bell of Chicago was sounding an alarm of fire, my sermon was upon 'What Shall I Do with Jesus?' I said to the audience, 'I want you to decide this question by next Sunday.' What a mistake! That night I saw the glare of flames, and knew that Chicago was doomed. I never saw that audience again."

We need to live in such a way that we get the most for our time. We are to live as if every minute counts— because it does. We can always make more money, but we cannot make more time. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. And when our time on this earth is over, we will give an account to the One who gave us our allotment of this precious commodity.

Kent Hughes says that believers…

> ought to be like the little boy whose family clock malfunctioned and struck 15x so that he rushed wide-eyed to his mother crying, "Mommy, it's later than it's ever been before!" What sanctifying logic! We should also keep in mind that if Christ does not return in our time, He will certainly come individually for us in death. Each ache, pain, gray hair, new wrinkle or funeral is another reminder that it is later than it has ever been before. It is time to love our neighbors as ourselves. It's later than you think. Redeem the time!… May God help us to love with a sense of urgency and selflessness. Let us cultivate a sense of debt. Just as when we owe someone money and our debt is the first thing we think of when we see him, so may it be with our debt of love (see Ro 13:8-11). Let us enlarge our definition of neighbor as, "My neighbor is not necessarily someone like me. It is any person God has put in my way whom I can help." Let us cultivate a sense of the time—"It is later than it has ever been before." Let us consciously put off the deeds of darkness (we individually know what these are) and put on Jesus—every day! (Ro 13:12-14) (Hughes, R. K. Romans: Righteousness from heaven. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books)

Fleeting Opportunity

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days (Hebrews 11:30).

As a sculptor showed a visitor some marble figures displayed in his studio, an unusual sculpture caught the guest's attention. It had two peculiar features. Where the statue's face normally would have been, the sculptor had chiseled a covering of hair, and on both feet were wings.

> "What is the name of this one?" asked the visitor.
>
> "Opportunity," the artist answered.

"Why is its face hidden?"

"Because," said the craftsman, "we seldom know opportunity when he comes to us."

"And why does he have wings on his feet?"

"Because he is soon gone, and once gone, he cannot be overtaken."

The apostle Paul spoke of the quickly passing nature of opportunity in Ephesians 5:16. The word time used in this verse can also be translated "opportunity"—suggesting occasions for accomplishing high and noble purposes. But what are these opportunities? They are brief moments of personal contact—the passing incident, the turn of a conversation, or the "chance" meeting of an old acquaintance. Such times present golden opportunities for caring, for witnessing, for eternal good.

Alexander MacLaren, the noted Baptist preacher from England, said,

> "Every moment of life is granted us for one purpose: becoming like our dear Lord. That ultimate, all-embracing end is reached through a multitude of near and intermediate ones."

Like the young shepherd David, when our faith is strong we will have the wisdom and courage to see every obstacle as an opportunity. —P.R.V.

Excerpts from Adrian Rogers sermon "The Time of Your Life"
INTRODUCTION
1. Resolutions go in one year and out the other.
2. Yet, our God is the God of a new start - the God of a second chance.
3. The scene is the Rose Bowl in Pasadena - two undefeated teams - Georgia Tech and the University of California - two quarters almost gone - time running out - Georgia Tech has the ball - pressing hard on the 33 yard line - Thomason is hit - fumble - the center for California scoops it up.

The crowd goes wild. He cuts down the field and starts toward the goal line - everything breaks loose - he's running brilliantly - knees high, legs wide apart, stepping sideways. He is running toward the wrong goal, however. He is running in the wrong direction. One of the classic stories of football is being written as Roy Riegels carries the ball in the wrong direction. Sixty-seven yards down the field he runs. His own teammates try to tackle him, and the opponents lead in interference for him. Finally, at the one yard line, Benny Lon, his teammate, brings him down. Then he realizes what he has done. Shaken up on the play he had carried the ball in the wrong direction. Can you imagine how he felt? All of the laughing and hooting of the crowd as he begins the slow, long walk off the field and back to the bench to sit down in humiliation by himself. You may feel like that. Perhaps God has put the ball in your hands, and in confusion, you've been pursuing the wrong goal. Satan has been glad to run interference for you. During the halftime, Roy's coach spoke to him words of assurance and encouragement. In the second half he played brilliantly. So may you.

There are two words for time.

A. Chronos - This speaks of moments or time as it passes on the clock.

B. Kairos - This speaks of seasons of opportunity.

Galatians 6:10 "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

5. Here are some wise ways for evil days.

I. TIME IS A PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY. (Eph 5:14)

1. We need to awaken to the gift that God has given.

2. God is the Creator of time.

3. Time is God's great gift to you - time to work, serve, love, laugh. But like any gift, the value you receive from it is up to you.

4. Learn to see every day as a gift from God. God doesn't need to take your life - just stop giving it.

Lamentations 3:22-23 "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

5. We are stewards of every God-given day. One day we will give an account for these opportunities.

A. There are 24 hours, 1440 minutes, 86,000 seconds in every day. We all have the same amount.

B. Every minute is precious,

"I have only just a minute - only 60 seconds in it.
Forced upon me - can't refuse it
But it's up to me just how I use it; I must suffer if I lose it.
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute - but eternity is in it."

6. Don't say that someone has more time than you do. The difference between people is **how** they use the time that God has given them.

II. TIME IS A PRESENT OPPORTUNITY. (Eph 5:15) "**Days**"

1. There are two days that can steal the strength and joy from today.

A. Yesterday.

Philippians 3:13-14 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this is one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

1. Past guilt - Paul refused to be haunted by the ghost of guilt.

2. Past glory - Paul, the greatest apostle, church builder.

3. Past grief - He had known suffering.

4. Past grudges - Mistreated, now in prison.

B. Tomorrow.

1. Those who are waiting for tomorrow.

Psychologist, William Marston, surveyed 3,000 people. "What have you to live for?" Ninety-four percent said they were just enduring today and living for tomorrow. Learn to enjoy today. We look forward to having friends, weep when we have lost them, but we fail to enjoy them while we have them. Women look forward twenty years to becoming a mother, look back twenty years with memories when their children are gone, but complain during the twenty years that they have them.

2. Worrying about tomorrow.

A. Some miss today by worrying about tomorrow.

Matthew 6:34 "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

B. God has an ecology for the soul. He gives enough difficulty to cause us to come to Him. Then enough strength from Him to meet today's needs. But he only gives today's strength for today's needs.

Deuteronomy 33:25 "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

C. Worry does not take the sorrow out of tomorrow. It only takes the strength out of today.

D. Worry does not make us ready, but unready. We face the future out of breath because we have been fighting tomorrow's battles today.

E. Worry pulls tomorrow's clouds over today's sunshine,

F. The man who hired a professional worrier. "That's his worry."

2. Yesterday is but a cancelled check. Tomorrow is a promissory note. Today is all of the cash that you have. Spend it wisely.

3. A wise man said thousands of years ago: "Look well to this one day, for it and it alone is life. Yesterday is only a dream and tomorrow is but a vision. Yet each day, lived well, makes yesterday a dream of happiness

and each tomorrow a vision of hope."

III. TIME IS A PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY

1. We need to value every day. Time is life. To waste time is to waste life. It is foolish.

2. To kill time is suicide by degrees. Murder is really stealing time from someone else, because they are going to die anyway.

3. The art of living is to spend time wisely.

Psalm 90:12 "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

A. The prayer principle.

1. Spend enough time with God to get a clear sense of His direction.

2. It is not a waste of time to wait on God. The woodsman is not wasting time when he sharpens his axe.

3. There's enough time to do gracefully all that God wants us to be.

B. The priority principle.

1. Don't let the good steal the best.

2. What you do is more important than how you do it.

3. Jesus said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

4. Charles Hummel wrote a little booklet called, "The Tyranny of the Urgent." In this incredible book he points out that a 30-hour day wouldn't solve the problem. We would soon be just as frustrated as we are now. A mother's work is never finished, and neither is that of any student, teacher, minister, or anyone else we know. Nor will the passage of time help us to catch up. "Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important."

C. Promptness principle.

1. Recognize **procrastination** as a **sin** and **repent** of it.

James 4:17 "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

2. Cultivate the habit of **immediate obedience**.

3. **Procrastination** and **disobedience** are really the same kind of sin.

4. When you have a job to do, begin this very hour. You supply the **will** and God supplies the **power**. (Ed: Actually God supplies both - but we still have to exercise the will or desire He gives us - see Php 2:12 = our responsibility is to "work out" what God's Spirit "works in" us in the following passage, Php 2:13 = the indwelling Spirit's part to give us the desire and the power!)

D. The power principle.

1. The command to be filled comes after the command to redeem the time.

2. Most time management books are telling us really how to get more done. We may be doing, more of the wrong thing. Even if we know the right thing, we need the power to do it.

3. Learn to burn the oil - not the wick.

4. The idea is not primarily to work harder (unsaved people can do that), but to work more effectively.

IV. TIME IS A PASSING OPPORTUNITY. (Eph 5:15) "Days are evil."

1. Time is a strange commodity, You can't save it, borrow it, loan it, leave it, or take it. You can only do things with it - use it or lose it.

A. Time cannot be stopped. You can't call time out in the game of life.

B. Time can't be stored. You can't put it in the bank.

C. Time can't be stretched. Only so much possible in a given day.

D. Time cannot be shared. It cannot be loaned or borrowed.

2. When as a child I laughed and wept time crept.

When as a youth I dreamed and talked time walked.

When I became a full grown man, time ran.

When older still I daily grew, time flew.

Soon I shall find in traveling on, time gone.

3. The pioneer missionary, Robert Moffatt, said, "We shall have all eternity in which to celebrate our victories, but only one short hour before the sunset in which to win them."

John 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

4. Horace Mann, writing about the importance of using time well, concludes the matter like this:

"Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever."

CONCLUSION

1. Learn to live in the eternal now. Today is the only day you have. Redeem the time.

2. Stop saying, "If I had time." You do have time.

3. Stop worrying about tomorrow, and stop waiting for tomorrow. Give God today, and He will take care of tomorrow.

4. Cut yourself loose from the past. Bury your failure in the grave of God's forgetfulness, and let Him give you a brand new day.

5. If you've not accepted Christ, now is the time.

2Corinthians 6:2 "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, not is the day of salvation.)"

Time wasted can never be recovered. No man ever possessed the same moment twice.

Williamson writes "Spend (buy the opportunities of) this life in earnest, as if your eternal future depended upon it. Spend (buy up opportunities) today as if there were no certain tomorrow. Be watchful about little things, and especially the brief moments of time.

Joseph Parker wrote "Redeem the time, buy up the opportunity, knowing that our brightest genius shall be eclipsed, our strongest sagacity shall lose its penetration, and our judgment shall halt for the judgment of others. (Biblical Illustrator-Lamentations 4:2–12)

Archibald Alexander

My next counsel is that you set a high value upon your TIME. Time is short and its flight is rapid. The swiftness of the lapse of time is proverbial, in all languages. In Scripture, the life of man is compared to a multitude of things which quickly pass away after making their appearance; as to a runner, a weaver's shuttle, a vapor, a shadow, etc. All the works of man must be performed in time, and whatever acquisition is made of any good—it must be obtained in time. Time, therefore, is not only short, but precious. Everything is suspended on its improvement, and it can only be improved when present. It is no sooner present, than it is gone! So that whatever we do, must be done quickly. This precious gift is sparingly parceled out by 'moments', but the progression of these moments is rapid and uninterrupted. Nothing can impede or retard the current of 'the stream of time'. Whether we are awake or asleep, whether occupied or idle, whether we realize the fact or not—we are borne along by a silent but irresistible force!

Our progressive motion in time may be compared to the motion of the planet on which we dwell, of which we are entirely insensible; or to that of a swift-sailing ship, which produces the illusion that all other objects are in motion, while we seem to be stationary. So in the journey of life, we pass from stage to stage—from infancy to childhood—from childhood to youth—from youth to mature age—and finally, before we are aware of it, we find ourselves declining towards the last stage of earthly existence. The freshness and buoyancy of youth soon pass away: the autumn of life soon arrives; and next, and last, if disease or accident do not cut short our days—old age with its grey hairs, its wrinkles, its debility and pains, comes on quickly.

The period of old age, is described by the wise man as one in which men are commonly disposed to be grumbly and fretful, and to acknowledge that the days draw near in which they have no pleasure. "So remember your Creator while you are still young, before those dismal days and years come when you will say, "I don't enjoy life." That is when the light of the sun, the moon, and the stars will grow dim for you, and the rain clouds will never pass away. Then your arms, that have protected you, will tremble, and your legs, now strong, will grow weak. Your teeth will be too few to chew your food, and your eyes too dim to see clearly. Your ears will be deaf to the noise of the street. You will barely be able to hear the mill as it grinds or music as it plays, but even the song of a bird will wake you from sleep. You will be afraid of high places, and walking will be dangerous. Your hair will turn white; you will hardly be able to drag yourself along, and all desire will be gone. We are going to our final resting place, and then there will be mourning in the streets. The silver chain will snap, and the golden lamp will fall and break; the rope at the well will break, and the water jar will be shattered. Our bodies will return to the dust of the earth, and the breath of life will go back to God, who gave it to us." (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7)

Time wasted can never be recovered. No man ever possessed the same moment twice. We are, indeed, exhorted "to redeem the time", (Eph 5:16; Col 4:5) but this relates to a right improvement of that which is to come, for this is the only possible way by which we can redeem what is irrevocably past. The counsels which I would offer to the young on this subject are: Think frequently and seriously on the inestimable value of time. Never forget that all that is dear and worthy of pursuit, must be accomplished in the short span of time allotted to us here. Meditate also profoundly and often on the rapidity of the flight of time. Now, you are in the midst of youthful bloom, but soon this season will only exist in the dim shades of recollection, and unless it has been well improved, of bitter regret.

If you will make a wise improvement of your time, you must be prompt. Seize the fugitive moments as they fly; for otherwise they will pass away before you have commenced the work which is appropriated to them.

Diligence and constancy are essential to the right improvement of time. "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might." (Eccles 9:10) "Work while it is called today." (John 9:4) Walk while you have the light, for the dark night rapidly approaches when no work can be done.

Let everything be done in its season. There is a time for all things; and let all things be done in order. The true order of things may be determined by their relative importance, and by the urgency of the case, or the loss which would probably be sustained by neglect.

If you would make the most of your time, learn to do one thing at a time, and endeavor so to perform every work, as to accomplish it in the best possible manner. As you receive but one moment at once, it is a vain thing to think of doing more than one thing at one time; and if any work deserves your attention at all, it deserves to be well done. Confusion, hurry, and heedlessness often so mar a business, that it would have been better to omit it altogether.

Beware of putting off the duty of today—on tomorrow. This is called procrastination, which is said, justly, to be "the thief of time". Remember that every day and every hour has its own appropriate work; but if that which should be done this day is deferred until a future time, to say the least, there must be an inconvenient accumulation of duties in future. But as tomorrow is to everybody uncertain, to suspend the acquisition of an important object on such a contingency, may be the occasion of losing forever the opportunity of receiving it. The rule of sound discretion is, never to put off until tomorrow—what ought to be done today.

Grant Richison notes by way of application that…

> **Time** means **opportunity**. The Greek word here means a time in which something is seasonable. Evangelism is seasonable! We need to seize on the season! God wants us to take advantage of the opportunity when it comes along. We cannot recall the opportunity if we miss it. Are we making the most of every opportunity? There is a favorable time to preach the gospel. We can mark time, waste time and kill time. Only a Christian who walks in wisdom can redeem time. In sharing our faith, God wants us to "Strike while the iron is hot" or "Make hay while the sun is shining." We squander so many opportunities. God places opportunities at our disposal but we waste the moment." (Notes on Col 4:5)

Our English word **opportunity** comes from the Latin and means “toward the port.” It suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of every **opportunity** God gives us. The Greek word **Kairos** does not emphasize a **point** of time but rather a **space** of time filled with possibilities and opportunities. Paul tells the saints at Colossae and Ephesus to buy up every one of these opportunities for yourselves and ultimately for God's glory. All believers are presented with opportunities to redeem. Paul exhorts us to go into the open market and buy up those opportunities by using them rightly. Remember that **interruptions** can be **opportunities** to serve. As someone has accurately

stated, the three most difficult things to do are : keep a secret, forget injury, and make good use of your leisure time (it's really not yours anyway but His… He's just "loaning" it to you.)

Peter said,

> If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man's work,**conduct** (aorist imperative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey) yourselves in fear during **the time** of your stay upon earth (1Pe 1:17+). (This is a "kairos" opportunity we dare not miss!)

Your entire life should be built around looking for opportunities to present Christ, seizing the time and using it wisely. Evaluate all of your activities and determine how they affect your testimony for Christ. Ask yourself --

> "Will any particular activity provide an opportunity to present Christ or will it make it more difficult for me to present Him?"

The opportunity - Note the Greek has the definite article (ton) preceding kairon, indicating the "specific" opportunity, implying the specific one that God's providence has arranged and to which the indwelling Spirit makes you sensitive. How critical then is it that we begin each day filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit that we might walk by the self-same Spirit, all through the day, ready to seize the opportunity He presents! That is abundant life! That is a life of full joy! Enjoy!

Daniel Whedon - Redeeming the time—Better, buying up for yourselves the opportunity. Olshausen remarks (from Beza) that "the phrase is taken from the figure of a provident merchant who uses everything for his ends." We are to watch for the opportunity to commend the gospel and win a soul, seizing the right time to speak, in order that we may advance the Master's cause.

John Trapp - Redeeming the time] Opportunities are headlong, and must be timously laid hold on, or all is lost. {See Trapp's comments below on Eph 5:16} It is said of Hooper the martyr, that he was spare of diet, sparer of words, and sparest of time. Latimer rose usually at two of the clock in a morning to his study. Bradford slept not commonly more than four hours in the night, and in his bed, till sleep came, his book went not out of his hand. He counted that hour not well spent wherein he did not some good, either with his pen, tongue, or study. These worthies well weighed what a modern writer hath well observed, that they that lose time are the greatest losers and wastefullest prodigals. For of all other possessions two may be had together, but two moments of time (much less two opportunities of time) cannot be possessed together.

Christianity gives real value to life for it "is a life that impels the seizure of every opportunity for good-doing. "Redeeming the time "--buying up the opportunities. **Opportunity** is the flower of time which blooms for a moment and is gone for ever." (G Barlow)

Wayne Barber

> Making the most of the time means to**redeem the time.** To redeem the time means to purchase it. That is one thing that we all have in common. Every one of us has exactly the same amount of time. You've got 24 hours, and what you do with it is your business. You've got to make choices. But now wait a minute. He says, "Redeem the time." What do you mean, "redeem the time"? Purchase it. To purchase it, I have to have the collateral.
>
> Not only do you have to have the collateral, you have to have the right kind of collateral if you are going purchase anything. So what is the collateral to purchase time? It is my choices. We have to understand this. Life is filled with one choice after another choice after another choice. It is not putting the garment on in the morning and thinking it is going to stay on you all day. You have to continue all day long to make those choices. What are those choices motivated by? They are motivated by what the Word of God has taught us. They are motivated by our respect of Who God is. Now to be the right choice it has to be a choice that honors Christ and what His Word has to say. That is the way I purchase time. I have only got one time around, and I have to learn to make proper choices. How many choices did you make yesterday?
>
> We have to learn that time is short. We only have one season. We only go around one time. Make those choices. Why? Because every time you choose, you are going to do something. That is called a deed and one day we will answer for those deeds at the Bema Seat of Christ. Are they wood, hay and stubble? What is wood, hay and stubble? They are stupid, fleshly, religious choices. Sometimes they are not even religious. What are precious stones? They are choices that were made based on God's Word and my willingness to do what He tells me to do. We are making those choices, moment by moment by moment.

Redeeming the time - As wise merchants, trading for the most precious commodity, and taking their best opportunity. The common complaint is, We lack time; but the truth is, we do not so much lack it as waste it. Non parum habemus temporis, sed multum perdimus. (Sen.) The men of Issachar were in great account with David, because they had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 1 Chronicles 12:32. So are they in great account with God that regard and use the season of well doing. It is reported of holy Ignatius, that when he heard a clock strike, he would say, here is one hour more now past that I have to answer for. And of Mr Hooper the martyr, that he was spare of diet, sparer of words, and sparest of time; for he well knew that whereas of all other possessions a man might have two at once, he cannot have two moments of time at once, for any money.

Our goal as believers is to enter into those works that He has already prepared for us, for those are the only eternally lasting and "good" works. The idea of kairos is that God gives each believer opportunities - each new day brings its opened doors, its vast potential. It behooves believers to live in such a way that we are sensitive to when God gives us one of those "kairos" opportunities, because when it passes, it is gone. We can achieve our potential in His service only as we utilize those opportunities He has given us. If this admonition was urgent during Paul's day, how much more urgent today!

What if we as believers began to see the everyday opportunities that God places in our path as "opportunities of a lifetime", as opportunities to invest in eternity accompanied by a "divine guarantee" that our "investment" would yield priceless, ceaseless, unfathomably blessed spiritual dividends! I believe we would all begin to invest wisely in the lives of those around us if we kept these secular worldly missed opportunities in mind to motivate us not to miss the divine heavenly opportunities to do eternal good. Open the eyes of our heart Lord to see and seize those "opportunities of a lifetime" for Your glory. Amen.

Instead of **killing** time, redeem it. Instead of **counting** the days, make your days count. ETERNITY will be appreciated only in the measure that we have rightly handled TIME!—F. King (**Addendum**: Instead of marking your time, make your mark on time!)

Kefa Sempangi (whose story is told in the book A Distant Grief, Regal Books) was a national pastor in Africa and barely escaped with his family from brutal oppression and terror in his home country of Uganda. They made their way to Philadelphia, where a group of Christians began caring for them. One day his wife said, "*Tomorrow I am going to go and buy some clothes for the children,"* and immediately she and her husband broke into tears. Because of the constant threat of death under which they had so long lived, that was the first time in many years they had dared even speak the word ***tomorrow***. Their terrifying experiences forced them to realize what is true of every person: **there is no assurance of tomorrow**. The only time we can be sure of having is what we have at the moment. To the self–satisfied farmer who had grandiose plans to build bigger and better barns to store his crops, the Lord said, "*You fool! This very night your soul is required of you*" (Lk 12:20). He had already lived his last tomorrow.

Warren Wiersbe… Life is an adventure of faith, and each of us is like a merchant, investing today in that which will pay dividends tomorrow. We are like the farmer, sowing various kinds of seeds in different soils, trusting God for the harvest (Gal. 6:8-9; Ps. 126:5-6; Hos. 10:12). If we worried about the wind toppling a tree over on us, or the clouds drenching us with rain, we would never accomplish anything. "Of course, there is no formula for success," said famous concert pianist Arthur Rubinstein, "except perhaps an unconditional acceptance of life and what it brings."… No good deed done for the glory of Jesus Christ will ever be forgotten before God. No loving word spoken in Jesus' name will ever be wasted. If we don't see the harvest in this life, we'll see it when we stand before the Lord. Even a cup of cold water given in the name of Christ will have its just reward (Mt 10:42; 25:31-46). (Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament)

Psalm 1:1-3 uses the word **Kairos** (season) in the Greek translation (Lxx)…

> Ps 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its **season** (Lxx = Kairos), and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

Opportunities to be kind,
are never hard to find.

John Eadie… The kairos here refers to the kairos of the preceding verse: as there is one kairos for reaping, there should be also one for sowing; and in proportion as we have it, so ought we to improve it; the season for reaping is coming, the season for sowing is fast passing away.

As believers we can achieve our potential in God's service and for His glory only as we maximize the time He has given us.

Robert Newton - God has made eternity to depend on time.

John Flavel (1627-1691) points out that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Nebuchadnezzar alludes to buying up the time declaring to the magicians who could not give either his dream or the interpretation…

> The king answered and said, "I know for certain that **you are bargaining for time**, inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm (Da 2:8)

The idea of kairos is not clock time but what one writer calls "kingdom opportunities" those openings for ministry that often come at inconvenient times - a friend who wants to talk, a child with a problem, the chance to lend a hand to someone in need. Paul is encouraging us to keep our lives uncluttered so that we can respond when the need arises—because kingdom opportunities can get squeezed out of an overly tight schedule. Think back on your last 24 hours - were there some "kingdom opportunities" you saw (or see now in retrospect) and which you rushed past because you were "too busy"? Am I so task oriented that I miss the "kingdom tasks" God gives us the privilege to experience? May His Spirit give us all "kingdom vision"! Amen

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Bruce Thielemann - What Shakespeare is saying is not only that the tides have great power, but that they also are irretrievable, unstoppable, unrecallable. Their lifting strength comes for but a few hours and then is gone. And if you miss the flood, you will be left in shallows and in miseries, having lost your ventures.

Alexander Graham Bell (1847–1922) wrote that… When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us.

An old Chinese adage says, "Opportunity has a forelock so you can seize it when you meet it. Once it is past, you cannot seize it again."

John Ruskin (1819–1900)… Sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting an opportunity of doing a kindness, speaking a true word, or making a friend.

Napoleon said, "There is in the midst of every great battle a ten to fifteen minute period that is the crucial point (kairos). Take that period and you win the battle; lose it and you will be defeated."

If **time** is a ring of gold, **opportunity** is the rich diamond that gives it both its value and glory. (J. Flavel.)

Here are lines from **William Cowper's** poem "Retirement"

Anticipated rents, and bills unpaid,
Force many a shining youth into the shade,
Not to redeem his time, but his estate,
And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.

There is an appointed time for everything.
And there is a time for every event under heaven.
--Solomon (Eccl 3:1+)

Charles E. Hummel said… Our greatest danger in life is in permitting the urgent things to crowd out the important." The writer of Hebrews called these "urgent things" "encumbrances" or "weights" the Christian runner needs to cast aside, in order to be able to run the race and redeem the time.

The 16th-century reformer Philip Melanchthon kept a record of every wasted moment and took his list to God in confession at the end of each day. Little wonder that God used him in such great ways.

An ancient Greek statue depicted a man with wings on his feet, a large lock of hair on the front of his head, and no hair at all on the back. Beneath was the inscription:

- "Who made thee? Lysippus made me.
- What is thy name? My name is OPPORTUNITY.
- Why hast thou wings on thy feet? That I may fly away swiftly.
- Why hast thou a great forelock? That men may seize me when I come.
- Why art thou bald in back? That when I am gone by, none can lay hold of me."

We need to live in such a way that we get the most for our time. We are to live as if every minute counts— because it does. We can always make more money, but we cannot make more time. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. And when our time on this earth is over, we will give an account to the One who gave us our allotment of this precious commodity. The Lord Jesus was sensitive about time. He began His ministry at age thirty and ended it a mere three years later. His life was jammed with people with immediate needs. Sick. Dead. Scared. People pushed through crowds to touch Him. In Mark 1:35, 36, 37, before sunrise, Christ spent time with the Father. Peter and his friends “searched for Him. When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’ ”In Matthew 14:23, He spent time with the Father in the evening. In Luke 6:12, 13, He spent the night in prayer. And in Luke 5:15, 16, we see that He slipped away into the wilderness to spend time with the Father. He had three short years to teach, preach, heal, and lead. But the most important thing in His life was the time He spent with the Father. If it was that important for Him, as the God-man, what about you?

2Cor 6:2 for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME (kairos) I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU"; behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME (kairos)," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION."

Romans 13:11 And this do, knowing the time (kairos), that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Webster defines "opportunity" as a favorable juncture of circumstances wherein there is a good chance for advancement or progress.

Kairos is a season, an opportune time, an opportunity ("window of opportunity"). It is a fixed & definite time. It is a period possessed of certain characteristics. For example, a "season" is a time characterized by a particular circumstance or feature.

Most of us are familiar with Garage Sales - if the ad says the sale begins at 8AM, you can rest assured there will be a number of "redeemers" on site thirty minutes early, so that they can find the best bargains before they are gone. Believers need to be as determined as Garage Sale shoppers, seeking diligently to make every moment count.

Henry Blackaby (known for his excellent study Experiencing God) says

> Timing our obedience is crucial. Invitations from God come with a limited opportunity to respond. Some opportunities to serve Him, if not accepted immediately, will be lost. Occasions to minister to others may pass us by. When God invites us to intercede for someone, it may be critical that we stop what we are doing and immediately adjust our lives to what God is doing. Missing opportunities to serve the Lord can be tragic. When an invitation comes from God, the time to respond is now.

Do a deed of simple kindness,
Though its end you may not see;
It may reach, like widening ripples
Down a long eternity.
—Anonymous

The good we do is never lost,
Each kindly act takes root,

And every bit of love we sow
In time will bear rich fruit.
—Anonymous

Jesus said to one and all:
“Take your cross and follow Me.”
When you sense the Spirit’s call,
Seize the opportunity!
—Hess

It takes only a moment to be kind,
but the result can last forever

BREVITY OF LIFE: God wants to impress on our heart and mind the brevity of life and the length of eternity. And so it is not surprising that Scripture repeatedly presents powerful pictures that speak of our brief "season of opportunity" on earth using metaphors such as a breathe, a swift ship, an eagle's dive, a shadow, a hand breath (thumb to little finger), smoke, vapor, grass, flowers of the field, a weaver's shuttle! Oh my! In light of this is sobering truth regarding the shortness of life, we have not a moment to waste! A man may regain lost health, wealth, friends, but never time. Oh, how we ought to redeem what remains, for what remains is uncertain. All can ascertain how much has been expended, but none how much remains. Over 3000 years ago Moses prayed a prayer we would all do well to pray daily "So teach us to number our DAYS, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)

Buying up the hours; they are of such value that you cannot pay too high a price for them. If you want excitement, seek this highest, holiest, happiest form of exhilaration, the divine exhilaration which the Holy Spirit alone can give you: “Be filled with the Spirit.”

Often we don’t see the results of doing good until much later. Leslie B. Flynn tells about Dyson Hague, a chaplain in an English hospital who visited a ward of dying soldiers. One man asked him if he would write his Sunday school teacher and tell her he would die a Christian because of her teaching. Chaplain Hague wrote the letter. A few weeks later he received this reply: “Just a month ago I resigned my class of young men which I had been teaching for years, for I felt that my teaching was getting nowhere. Then came your letter, telling how my teaching had helped win this boy to Christ. I’ve asked for my class back. May God have mercy on me!”

The shortness of time

Time’s a hand’s breadth; ‘tis a tale;
’Tis a vessel under sail;
’Tis an eagle in its way,
Darting down upon its prey;
’Tis an arrow in its flight,
Mocking the pursuing sight;
’Tis a short-lived fading flower;
’Tis a rainbow on a shower;
’Tis a momentary ray
Smiling in a winter’s day;
’Tis a torrent’s rapid stream;
’Tis a shadow; ’tis a dream;
’Tis the closing watch of night,
Dying at the rising light;
’Tis a bubble; ’tis a sigh;
Be prepared, O man, to die.
(Quarles.)

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The use of opportunity - The apostle bids us “buy up” out of the market what we can never purchase so cheaply again--what, in fact, we can never buy again at any price. The lesson is--use opportunity, and use it thoroughly while you have it. Go read the old weird myth of the Cumaean Sibyl. She wrote her predictions upon leaves, and laid them at the entrance of her cave. Those who consulted her were compelled to exercise the greatest care and caution, lest the wild wind should take up the leaves, and scatter and displace them, destroy their arrangement, break their connection, and turn the clear oracles into inexplicable enigmas. That was

a mythological lesson on seizing opportunity. Again, according to the familiar Roman legend, a Sibyl came to the palace of Tarquin II bearing nine volumes, for which she demanded a high price. Her offer being declined, she went away, and burned three of the precious books. Returning, she offered the remaining six, but asked for them the same price which she had demanded for the nine. Again her proposition was rejected, and again she departed and committed to the flames three more volumes. Once more she came back, bearing the last three, and refusing any less sum for them than that by which all might once have been bought. Tarquin, startled by this strange conduct of the merciless Sibyl, advised with his augurs, and bought the books, which proved the invaluable "Sibylline Verses"; but the chance of purchasing those priceless sister volumes was forever lost. Buy up opportunity!" Your privileges will never be offered so cheaply again. Each time life's Sibyl comes to us her precious treasures are diminished in number, and relatively increased in value. Each time she has less to offer, and asks a higher price for each opportunity that remains. So comes Time's stern, relentless Sibyl, until she herself finally disappears, and Time and her opportunities are no morel (A. T. Pierson.)

Jonathan Edwards… Why Should We Redeem It?

According to my propounded method I proceed to show you how reasonable it is that we should redeem the time. You will find this to be a most rational performance when you have considered of these following things.

1. The inestimable value of time.

2. The brevity and uncertainty of it.

3. The impossibility of recalling it.

4. The end and design of God's intrusting us with it.

5. The account we must give for it.

I read of Amasis, an Egyptian king, that he made an order, that every man should once a year give a particular account how he spent his time, and in what way he lived. My brethren, there is a day coming, when you must all give an account of your time; all your time must be reckoned for at the great and general audit of the world.

Reasons for redeeming the time

1.Redeem the time, for time is very precious. Nothing is so valuable as time. Not all the gold in the universe--not all the hoards of ages--can purchase a single moment.

2. Redeem the time on account of the momentous consequences which depend on our use of it. These consequences are an eternity of woe, or an eternity of bliss.

3. Redeem the time, for the time is short. What are the longest lives? "My days," says Job, "are swifter than a post: they are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle that hasteth to her prey." "What is your life?" says St. James; "It is but a vapour which appeareth for a time and then vanishes away." Time is short, and the work we have to do is great. How important it is to "redeem the time."

4. Redeem the time, for when it is once past it cannot be recovered. If we chance to lose a valued treasure, is may be found again though it be buried in the depths of the sea. It is not so with time. Not all the entreaties of eternity will bring back a single moment of time. It is a vessel dashed in a thousand pieces which can never be repaired; it is as water spilt upon the ground which can never be gathered up again.

5. The last reason I shall urge why we should redeem the time, is that it is not our own. Woe to that idle servant who neglects to improve and to trade with the talents given him to traffic with. (J. J. S. Bird, B. A.)

The redemption of time

I. The importance of time. This may be inferred from the names given it in Scripture--"The day of salvation," "The acceptable year of the Lord," "An appointed time." It is the season in which alone the business of religion can be transacted. Those advise badly who say "there is time enough yet," for who knows what a day may bring forth. It may be longer or shorter, but the day of salvation, like any other, is limited, and must soon come to an end.

II. The rapidity of the flight of time. "Time and tide wait for no man." The little we have on hand is all we have, and even this short space is hurrying on so fast that to catch it is like dipping your hand in a running stream which glides through the fingers that would detain it. The Egyptians represented it as a serpent creeping on silently and gliding away imperceptibly. And yet there are those who act as though it had no assignable limit.

III. The large portion of our time lost. The season of boyhood--much of which was wasted in indolence; the

season of youth--much of which was simply dissipated; the season of riper years--how much of that is being lost in the pursuit of shadows. Some misspend time because they have no proper object to engage their attention. How many fashionable people there are who are quite at a loss what to make of themselves. Others lose much time in mere delays and in expecting what will never come.

IV. The best means of redeeming it.

1. Misspend no more. Treasure up scraps of time. He who is prodigal of a minute spends far above his estate.

2. Rise early.

3. Husband your time well during the day. (T. Watson, B. A.)

Spurgeon reduced our lives to four words

"Sown,
groan,
blown,
gone!"

Buying Up the Time - Consider this: “If we had to buy time, would there be any difference in how we would spend it? Would the days of our lives be used more wisely?” That’s what time management consultant Antonio Herrera asked the participants in a seminar he conducted on the subject. Then Dr. Herrera became more specific. He asked, “What if you had to pay in advance $100 an hour for the time allotted to you? Would you waste it?” The answer should be obvious. Of course, we can’t put a price tag on the minutes and hours we possess. They are given to us freely. But that doesn’t excuse us from using them conscientiously, carefully, and wisely. The giver of time is God Himself, and that places a far greater value upon it than any monetary figure could suggest. We must therefore use our time intelligently, taking advantage of opportunities it provides for us to serve the Lord and to do His will. - R W De Haan

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Time: Handle With Care - If you had to buy time, would there be any difference in the way you would spend it? Would you use the minutes, hours, and days of your life more wisely? Of course, we can’t put a price tag on the minutes and hours we possess. They are given to us freely. But that doesn’t excuse us from using them carefully and wisely. The giver of time is God Himself, and that places a far greater value on our time than any monetary figure could suggest. We must therefore take advantage of the opportunities time provides to serve the Lord and to do His will.

This doesn’t mean that we have to be working every single moment. It’s necessary to take a break every so often, to stop and smell the roses along the way, or to enjoy the beauty of a sunset. We use our time wisely when we combine the appropriate “stops” with the proper “steps.” According to Solomon, there is a time for all of God’s purposes to be accomplished (Ecclesiastes 3:1). I’m so grateful that the Lord doesn’t sell time. He provides it as a gift of His grace. So let’s spend our days “redeeming the time,” using the opportunities to live for God (Colossians 4:5). Yes, time is precious. Handle with care! —R W De Haan

We do not know how long we have
Till time for us is past,
So let us live as if this day
Is going to be our last. —D. De Haan

To spend time wisely, invest it in eternity.

Vance Havner - It is a tragic thing to end up one's days like Saul, trying to call back the Samuels of lost opportunity. There is no witch or wizard in time or eternity who can turn back time in its flight and make one "a child again just for tonight."

Henry Blackaby - "There will be times when, immersed in the ordinary details of life, you may be oblivious to the extraordinary that is right next to you. You can be in the midst of a common moment, only this time the activity is filled with the presence of God. There may be times when, in the middle of your harried day, you notice something unusual. Your first reaction might be “I'm too tired to go aside to investigate this!” or “I'm not going to disrupt my life for this.” Yet, in that moment you may have the opportunity for a unique encounter with God. God usually speaks out of the ordinary experiences of life. Often, it is not while you are worshiping at church. Many of God's most profound and history-changing encounters come during the ordinary experiences of life. When you see the unusual in the midst of the mundane, don't continue business as usual. It may be that God has ordained that moment to be a life-

changing time for you and those around you."

What do you do when you redeem something? You pay for it. I mean, dear friend, there is something you must give in exchange, if you would live up to the opportunities that God has given you. You see, you need to see how valuable time is. To waste time is to waste life, because time is the stuff that life is made out of. A person who is killing time is not killing time; he is killing himself. He's committing suicide by degrees. A murder, in the true sense, doesn't take someone's life—that person is going to die anyway. What he takes is that person's time. You understand what I am saying? He just causes that person to die sooner. You see, time is life. Time is life. How precious it is. When I give you my time, when you give me your time, you're giving me a piece of yourself. When I give you time, I give you something that even Heaven can't give. In Heaven, time makes no difference. You see, time is so valuable. Time is so important, and, therefore, we need to redeem the time. Do you know what wisdom is? Wisdom is the art of spending time wisely. Or the art of living is spending time wisely. Put this verse down—Psalm 90, and verse 12: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

It is a passing opportunity. The days are evil. Time is passing away. This day is passing. I must give an account for this day. I must give an account one day for this sermon that I have preached. Time is such a strange commodity. You can't save it. You can't borrow it. You can't loan it. You can't leave it. You can't take it. You can't give it. All you can do is use it or lose it.

Time can't be stopped. In a football game, you can call time out. But you can't call time out in life. Time can't be stored. You can put your money in the bank, but you can't put your time in the bank. Time can't be stretched. You can add another cup of water to the soup, but there's no way that you can stretch time. Time can't be shared. I can give you my books, I can give you my money, I can give you my automobile, but I can't give you my time. I can give you a part of my time; but, when I give you my time in that sense, I've not added anything to your time. So, in that sense, time can't even be shared. Someone wrote these words,

When as a child, I laughed and wept,
Time crept;
When as a youth, I dreamed and talked,
Time walked;
When I became a full-grown man,
Time ran;
When older still I daily grew,
Time flew;
Soon I shall find in traveling on,
Time gone.

Time cannot be stopped; it cannot be stored; it cannot be saved; it cannot be shared. "We are to redeem the time, for the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). **Conclusion** - It was Horace Mann who wrote these words—he said, "**Lost, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours studded with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are lost forever.**" Oh, my dear friend, if you could only see the preciousness of just one day. I've come to the end of my message—but listen to me now. I'm just going to wrap it up and lay it in your lap. And, as I talk to you, I'm talking to me, on the threshold of a new year. Listen—don't gather your books, just listen.

Nothing venture, nothing gained.

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep
to gain what he cannot lose.”
--Jim Elliot,

How important is time? Ask death-beds. “Doctor,” said a dying man, “the whole of my estate for half-an-hour,” but no, the whole of his estate could not purchase half a moment. (Borrow book The Last Words of Saints and Sinners by Herbert Lockyer)

Henry Blackaby - The disciples had the opportunity of a lifetime to pray with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and yet they fell asleep! Mark records "Then He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The time has come. Look, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.”—Mark 14:41a “It is enough!” How these words from the Master stung the disciples! They were given the opportunity to share a sacred moment with Jesus. They failed Him. This time, not even Peter had an answer for Jesus. Jesus forgave them, and they went on to experience God working powerfully through their lives, but that unique moment with their Lord was lost. The angels had comforted the Savior on that lonely night as He prepared for the cross, not the disciples. Scripture indicates that the disciples later became diligent in prayer, but the memory of that night would remain with

them for the rest of their lives. Like the disciples, you receive unique **opportunities** to serve your Lord. There are times when Jesus will ask you to join Him as He is at work in the life of your friend, family, or coworker. If you are preoccupied with your own needs, you will miss the blessing of sharing in His divine activity. God is gracious; He forgives, and He provides other opportunities. He will even use our failings to bring about good, but it is critical that we respond in obedience to every prompting from God. God does not need our obedience; He has legions of angels prepared to do His bidding when we fail Him. The loss is ours as we miss what God wants to do in our lives. Respond immediately when God speaks to you. His will for you is perfect, and it leads to abundant life. (Experiencing God Day by Day)

Blackaby - It's easy to become so busy that you are oblivious to those in need. Your schedule can become so full of accomplishing good things that you are of no help to the people around you. God is at work in the lives of your friends, your neighbors, your family members. He may ask you to interrupt your day long enough to join Him as He ministers to them. Nothing on your agenda, no matter how pressing, is reason enough to ignore the voice of God when He tells you to stop and help. If you have become too busy to minister to those around you, ask God to reestablish your priorities so that you do not miss opportunities to serve Him. (Experiencing God Day by Day)

Blackaby - There will be times when, immersed in the ordinary details of life, you may be oblivious to the extraordinary that is right next to you. You can be in the midst of a common moment, only this time the activity is filled with the presence of God. There may be times when, in the middle of your harried day, you notice something unusual. Your first reaction might be “I'm too tired to go aside to investigate this!” or “I'm not going to disrupt my life for this.” Yet, in that moment you may have the **opportunity** for a unique encounter with God… Don't assume every **opportunity** that arises is from God. Satan will disguise himself as an “angel of light,” and his invitations will seem to be in your best interest (2 Cor. 11:14). Yet his way leads only to death (John 8:44). The word of God will be like a light to your path, guiding you in the ways of righteousness (Ps. 119:105). It can be perilous to follow a path that seems right without first consulting the Holy Spirit for guidance (John 16:13). Take time to seek the Holy Spirit's direction when you face decisions. He knows the full ramifications of your choices. The Holy Spirit will assist you to understand truth and to experience abundant life. Trust Him as He leads you… Even when Paul was shipwrecked on an island, he used that **opportunity** to share the gospel there. Regardless of his circumstance, Paul's concern was how he could use his current situation to tell others of God's good news of salvation. Even when Paul was shipwrecked on an island, he used that opportunity to share the gospel there. Regardless of his circumstance, Paul's concern was how he could use his current situation to tell others of God's good news of salvation… **Timing our obedience is crucial. Invitations from God come with a limited opportunity to respond. Some opportunities to serve Him, if not accepted immediately, will be lost. Occasions to minister to others may pass us by. When God invites us to intercede for someone, it may be critical that we stop what we are doing and immediately adjust our lives to what God is doing. Missing opportunities to serve the Lord can be tragic. When an invitation comes from God, the time to respond is now**… If you are spiritually prepared when a crisis comes, you will not have to try to develop instantly the quality of relationship with Christ that can sustain you. If you suddenly have an **opportunity** to share your faith with an unbeliever, you will be equipped to do so. If you enter a time of worship spiritually prepared, you will not miss an encounter with God. If you are spiritually filled when you meet a person in sorrow, you will have much to offer. If you have established safeguards in your life in advance, you will not give in to temptation. Christians lose many **opportunities** to experience God's activity because they have not devoted enough time to their relationship with God. If you have not yet developed the habit of daily prayer and Bible study, why not begin now, so that you will be equipped for whatever life brings?… If you are unprepared, you, too, will miss the opportunity to experience Jesus. You may practice religion, but you will miss God. While others encounter the Lord personally in worship, your heart will remain unmoved. As others receive a fresh word from God, you will experience a painful silence. Religious activity can never substitute for a heart that is pure before Him. Purity comes only through repentance. Pray, as the Psalmist did, that God will examine your heart and reveal your need to repent of your sin (Ps. 139:23–24). (Experiencing God Day by Day)

Blackaby - God has tried, at times, to get our attention by revealing where He is at work. We see it, but we do not immediately identify it as God’s work. We say to ourselves, Well, I don’t know if God wants me to get involved here or not. I had better pray about it. **By the time we leave that situation and pray, the opportunity to join God may pass us by.**A tender and sensitive heart will be ready to respond to God at the slightest prompting. God makes your heart tender and sensitive in the love relationship we already have talked about. (Borrow Experiencing God)

The final rewards and position of the saved will be governed by their faithfulness, after their conversion, in filling the hours here with loving service, holy adoration, and diligent study. The lost too will be beaten with "few" or "many stripes" in relation to their deeds and attitudes while here on earth. Therefore, someone has wisely written: "Use well opportunity, drift not with the tide; killing time is not murder, it's suicide!" Indeed, eternity will magnify that which we have done in time. - RBC

Life is the seedtime of eternity!

Believe in Christ, redeem the time,

Prepare without delay;
That death is certain should affect
The way you live today.
-- Hess

Our Measured Life- Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. . --Psalm 90:12

The root meaning of the word translated **number** in "teach us to number our days" (Ps. 90:12) is "to weigh" or "to measure." We are to place each day in the balance and make it tip the scales in a way that will bring glory to God and blessing to the lives of others.

When the great artist Raphael died at the early age of 37, friends and relatives carried his marvelous but unfinished painting The Transfiguration in the funeral procession. His family felt that because of the limited time he was allotted to use his creative genius, the painting was an appropriate symbol of his unfulfilled earthly aspirations. That half-completed picture has another meaning--a message that should impress itself on all of us: Life is fleeting and death may come unexpectedly. We should treasure each hour as a gift of great value and use it to the best advantage.

If we realize the value of our days, we will try to spend them profitably. To have no regrets at life's end and have much reward in heaven, we must make the most of every opportunity (Eph. 5:15-16). In the words of the psalmist let us pray, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Ps. 90:12). --H G Bosch

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Warren Wiersbe commenting on Ps 90:12 said "We number our **years**, but it is wiser to number our **days**, for we live a day at a time."

Mark Dever - As Christians, we have come to realize that history is not cyclical, always repeating itself in an endless rotation of events, but that God will one day bring history to a close in judgment. We know that He has given us this life, and that He will require it back. The time that we have is limited, the amount is uncertain, and how we use it is up to us. So Paul tells the Ephesians to make the most of every opportunity (Eph. 5:16). Like a collector buying up every known specimen of some cherished item, we should desire to capture each fleeting hour and turn it into a trophy for God, using it for Him. We shouldn't be content with thinking, "I'll live another couple of years in selfishness and then, when all of my desires are taken care of, I'll turn and follow Christ." No, we shouldn't be content with that! We should know, as Paul knew, that, "The time is short. From now on… those who use the things of the world [should use them] as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away" (1 Cor. 7:29, 31). What situations are you in right now that you won't always be in? How are you using those situations in obedience to God? Trust the Lord to use you in those situations instead of always seeking for new situations. Trust the Lord to use you in this moment, instead of waiting until the next one, since you don't even know if the next one will come. Don't let the passing permanence of great buildings and established institutions, or the lulling tedium of long hours and minutes, make a fool of you! "The days are evil," says Paul in Ephesians 5:16 , meaning that they are dangerous, they are a fleeting opportunity, and so we must redeem the time, we must make the most of every opportunity. So we say with Paul that, in view of certain judgment, Christ's love compels us to proclaim the Good News (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10-14).

Bishop Hall - Every day is a little life; and our whole life is but a **day** repeated: whence it is that old Jacob numbers his life by **days**; and Moses (Ps 90:12) desires to be taught this point of "holy arithmetic"—to number not his **years**, but his **days**. Those, therefore, that dare lose a **day**, are dangerously prodigal; those that dare misspend it, desperate.

Ps 90:12 "invites us to embrace an **eternal** perspective in a **temporal** world." (K. Boa)

Warren Wiersbe (Ps 90:12) - Number your days and make your life count! We live a day at a time. Usually, we don't number our days; we number our years. When you have a birthday and someone asks how old you are, you tell them your age in the number of years. But we had better number our days, because we live a day at a time. "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11). God has ordained that the entire universe functions a day at a time. Moses gives the secret of making life count--live it a day at a time. You need God's help to apply His Word to your life. Live as though this may be your last day. Ask God for the wisdom you need and apply it by faith. Since life is so brief, we cannot afford to "spend our lives" and we certainly do not want to "waste our lives." We know nothing about tomorrow; only God knows. Life is uncertain--a cloud that quickly comes and goes (Job 7:7, Ps 102:3) Every believer needs to keep before his or her eyes an awareness of the brevity of life. We number our years, not our days, but all of us have to live a day at a time, and we do not know how many days we have left. A successful life is composed of successful days that honor the Lord.

Instead of spending our lives or wasting our lives, we must "invest our lives" in those things that are eternal! The world speaks of SPENDING time, while Paul commands us to be BUYING time. Indeed, time should not be spent, it should be invested in the kingdom of God.

OUR LIFE IS LIKE…
BREATH, SHADOWS, A RUNNER, SMOKE

Brevity of our life is a repetitive theme in Scripture - life to us seems long and we measure it in years, but in comparison to eternity live is "just a vapor." The idea of death is mentioned some 1300 times in Scriptures (die, death, dead, etc) so clearly it is a major Biblical topic.

> James 4:14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are **just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away**.
>
> Job 7:6 "**My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle**, And come to an end without hope. 7 "Remember that **my life is but breath**, My eye will not again see good.
>
> Job 8:9 For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, **Because our days on earth are as a shadow**.
>
> Job 9:25-26 "Now **my days are swifter than a runner**; They **flee away**, they see no good. 26 "They **slip by like reed boats**, **Like an eagle that swoops on its prey**.
>
> Job 14:1-2 Man, who is born of woman, Is **short-lived** and full of turmoil. 2 **Like a flower** he comes forth and withers. He also **flees like a shadow** and does not remain.
>
> 2Sam 14:14 "**For we shall surely die and are like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again**. Yet God does not take away life, but plans ways so that the banished one may not be cast out from him.
>
> 1Chr 29:15 "For we are **sojourners** before Thee, and **tenants**, as all our fathers were; **our days on the earth are like a shadow**, and there is no hope.
>
> Ps 39:4 LORD, make me to know my end, And what is the extent of my days, Let me know how **transient** (fleeting) I am (**David is asking God to give him a sense of the brevity of his life. Why? Because most of us do not contemplate how short our life is when held up to eternity! To grasp this deep within our soul should motivate us to be more careful with the precious golden moments we have today, to buy up all the opportunities God presents to us**). 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**. Selah 6 Man is a mere **phantom** (shadow) as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it.
>
> > **Matthew Henry**: Lord, make me to know my end, means, "Lord, give me wisdom and grace to consider it (Dt. 32:29) and to improve what I know concerning it." The living know that they shall die (Eccl. 9:5), but few care for thinking of death; we have therefore need to pray that God by his grace would conquer that aversion which is in our corrupt hearts to the thoughts of death. "Lord, make me to consider," (1.) "What death is. It is my end, the end of my life, and all the employments and enjoyments of life. It is the end of all men," Eccl. 7:2. It is a final period to our state of probation and preparation, and an awful entrance upon a state of recompense and retribution. To the wicked man it is the end of all joys; to a godly man it is the end of all griefs. "Lord, give me to know my end, to be better acquainted with death, to make it more familiar to me (Job 17:14), and to be more affected with the greatness of the change. Lord, give me to consider what a serious thing it is to die." (2.) **"How near it is. Lord, give me to consider the measure of my days, that they are measured in the counsel of God" (the end is a fixed end, so the word signifies; my days are determined, Job 14:5) "and that the measure is but short: My days will soon be numbered and finished." When we look upon death as a thing at a distance we are tempted to adjourn the necessary preparations for it; but, when we consider how short life is, we shall see ourselves concerned to do what our hand finds to do, not only with all our might, but with all possible expedition.** (3.) That it is continually working in us: "Lord, give me to consider how frail I am, how scanty the stock of life is, and how faint the spirits which are as the oil to keep that lamp burning." We find by daily experience that the earthly house of this tabernacle is molding and going to decay: "Lord, make us to consider this, that we may secure mansions in the house not made with hands."

Ps 90:5 Thou hast swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew.6 In the morning it flourishes, and sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades, and withers away. (NLT - My life passes as swiftly as the evening shadows. I am withering like grass.)

Ps 90:9 For all our days have declined in Thy fury; **We have finished our years like a sigh**.

Ps 102:3 For my **days have been consumed in smoke**, And my bones have been scorched like a hearth. 11 **My days are like a lengthened shadow; And I wither away like grass.**

Ps 103:15 As for man, **his days are like grass**; **As a flower of the field**, so he flourishes. 16 When the wind has passed over it, it is no more; And its place acknowledges it no longer. (NLT = 15 Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. 16 The wind blows, and we are gone-- as though we had never been here.)

Ps 144:4 **Man is like a mere breath; His days are like a passing shadow.**

Isa 40:6 A voice says, "Call out." Then he answered, "What shall I call out?"**All flesh is grass**, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. 7 The **grass withers**, the **flower fades**, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.

Pr 10:5 He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

Eccl 7:10NLT - Don't long for "the good old days," for you don't know whether they were any better than today.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Eccl 3:1 There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven–

Time is a gift of God and should be spent remembering our Creator, especially in our youth (Eccl. 12:1). It should be a time of doing something, “casting our bread upon the waters,” or nothing will return to us. Outside of the boundaries of “time” stands God, who will judge us for how we spent our time (Eccl. 12:13–14).

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Illustration - A millionaire in New York came to the end of his journey and died. On his deathbed he gave continual expression to his remorse for what his conscience told him had been an ill-spent life. “Oh,” he exclaimed, “if I could only be spared for a few years, I would give all the wealth I have amassed in my lifetime! It is a life devoted to money-getting that I regret. It is this which weighs me down and makes me despair of the life hereafter!”

W E Vine - Make the most of every opportunity, turning each to the best advantage, since none can be recalled if missed.

Proper use of time

Recognizing the brevity of human life Ps 90:12 See also Ps 39:4-6; Pr 27:1; Jas 4:14

Seeking God Isa 55:6 See also Ps 32:6; 69:13; 95:7-8; Ecc 12:1,6-7

Looking to eternal realities 1Co 7:29-31 See also Ps 10:6; Isa 56:12; Lk 12:16-21; Ro 13:11-12; Jas 5:7-9

Isa 56:12 “Come,” they say, “let us get wine, and let us drink heavily of strong drink; And tomorrow will be like today, only more so.”

Redeeming the Time - Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—making the most of the time, because the days are evil.—Ephesians 5:15–16

These days we are bombarded with opportunities that entice us to invest our time and energy. Each day the voices of urgency cry out for every available moment. So many causes promise that time spent on them will reap great rewards; how can we recognize God's voice among so many competing voices?

A fool makes unwise choices with his time. With every new opportunity that comes along, the fool chases off in a different direction, not questioning whether that is the best choice. The loudest voice gains his attention. At some point the fool discovers to his dismay that he has squandered the investment of his time.

The days in which you live are evil. Marriages are under tremendous pressure, families are disintegrating. Multitudes are dying each year without hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Investing your life wisely is critical to you and to those around you. Foolishly spending your time in sinful or wasteful pursuits can cost you and others dearly.

Often, it is not evil pursuits that rob your time. Rather, the temptation is to sacrifice what is best for what is good. The enemy knows that blatantly tempting you with evil will be obvious, so he will lure you with distractions, leaving you no time to carry out God's will. He will tempt you to so fill your schedule with good things that you have no time for God's best. You may inadvertently substitute religious activity for God's will, pursuing your own goals for God's kingdom instead of waiting for His assignment. Time is a precious commodity. Be sure to invest it wisely. (Henry Blackaby - Experiencing God Day by Day)

Spurgeon on Ps 90:12 - Here is heavenly arithmetic! It has been well said that many men will number their cows or their coins, but forget to number their days! Yet number our days is the kind of arithmetic that would be exceedingly profitable to those who practice it aright. Counting our days and finding them but few, we should seek to use them discreetly and we should reckon that we cannot afford to lose so much as one of them! Who would be a spendthrift (miser) with so small a store as that which belongs to us? Count how many days have gone. Will not the time past suffice us to have wrought the will of the flesh? (1Pe 4:1-2) You cannot tell how few remain, but still, if you live to the longest period of life, taking that for granted which you may not take for granted, how little remains! Oh! that we might, by the shortness of life, be led to apply our hearts unto wisdom, so as to live wisely (Eph 5:15). And what is the best way of living wisely, but to live in union with Christ, in the enabling power of His Spirit and to the glory of God the Father?

That is the great matter, after all, to get the heart applied to wisdom, to learn what is the right way, and to walk in it in the practical actions of daily life. It is of little use for us to learn to number our days if it merely enables us to sit down in self-confidence and carnal security; but if our hearts be applied to true wisdom, the Lord’s teaching has been effectual.

The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To say just when the hands will stop;
At late, or early hour.

Now is the only time we own
to do His precious will,
Do not wait until tomorrow;
For the clock may then be still.
-Anon.

Instead of counting the days,
make your days count.

Ephesians 5:15-16 has been called the Bible's key to time management. But "redeeming the time" goes far beyond being efficient. It's a wonderful phrase that can also be translated "making the most of every opportunity." It suggests an attitude toward living that sees every situation as the perfect occasion to do God's will and influence others for Him. During these evil days, we are to live out the goodness God has placed in us through faith in Christ. How much time do we have today? Time for prayer? Time to answer a child's question? Time to be interrupted by someone in need? Time to consider others during an inconvenience or delay? May the Lord give us wisdom to grasp today's opportunities and make time for what's important to Him. --D C McCasland

Lord, help us to redeem the time
You give us every day--
To take each opportunity
To follow and obey.
-Sper

There's always enough time to do God's will.

A poet once wrote,
Time that is past you can never recall,
Of time to come, you are not sure at all;
Only the present is now in your power,

Therefore, redeem and improve every hour.
—Unknown

F. Ferguson - We speak of time as past, present, and future; but what a mystery it is! The present moment is all of time that actually exists. All past time ends in the present moment. All future time begins in the same point. To use the experience of the past so as to shape the future aright is to redeem the time. This gives to every moment of time a tremendous importance.

A day is full of many hours just waiting for your using;
and there are many ways to spend them,
so be careful in your choosing.

Larry Richards has some sage words on "**time**" from a Biblical perspective…

> Scripture locates the significance of time outside the experience of any individual. Time, like the rest of the environment in which human beings move, has been ordered and designed by God. It is marked by cycle and repetition and yet flows from a beginning toward a culmination. Time is also marked by significant moments. The greatest of all significant moments are significant because God sets them aside as times of his own action in history. These moments are also significant because they provide opportunity for each of us to confront the reality of God and to respond to him. Spans of time may be remembered as troubled or peaceful, but the truly significant points in each person's life are those in which he or she senses the call of God and responds to him —with rejection or with joyful obedience. The NT focuses on the fact that all time finds its focus and fulfillment in Christ. His coming transforms every moment into opportunity; and when he returns, the fulfillment of every promise God ever made will be achieved. How important, then, that we use our moments of time wisely, sensing the eternal significance that our relationship with Jesus brings to all time. (New international encyclopedia of Bible words)

G Campbell Morgan - In these words ("redeem the time") we have a remarkable revelation of Christian**privilege** and **responsibility** in days of calamity. ***Redeem*** suggests keen business acumen, the ability to know exactly what to buy, and when to buy. It is a strictly commercial term. ***Time*** indicates a special occasion, and therefore a special opportunity. ***Evil*** refers to evil in the effect it produces: evil is that which is hurtful, harmful, calamitous. The element of sacrifice is involved, the giving up of something, in order that the opportunity may be seized. Of course, involved in that is the larger thought that all such giving results in getting. As in the market place in the olden days, as in the market place today, the man, keen and shrewd and honest and upright and true, is ever prepared to give, but he expects also to gain… The true attitude for heavenly commerce is a threefold one, and the apostle has carefully marked it for us. "Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise"; "understanding what the will of the Lord is." "Be filled with the Spirit." (Sermon by G Campbell Morgan - "The Opportunity of Calamity")

Although we cannot keep time from passing, we can keep from using it unwisely. This inestimable gift, which a most gracious God has committed to our use, must not be squandered. We do not know how much time we have left. the years, freighted with golden possibilities, have been buried one by one in the bosom of an eternity which never gives up its dead. (Duckworth)

John Phillips - Suppose that a wealthy man were to give someone $1440 a day to spend. He had to spend it. The gift did not allow him to save it, still less to hoard it. At the end of each day what was not spent was lost. The same sum would arrive every day until the end of life. Then an accounting would be made of what the recipient had done with the sum. There it was $1440 a day to spend or squander, to be used buying things for oneself or in helping others, to be wasted on trifles or invested for eternity. Every day God gives us 1440 minutes to be spent by us and us alone. We have to spend it. We cannot save up some of today's time for tomorrow. We have none of yesterday's time left over for today. All of these precious minutes are ours. However, when life is over, there will be a strict accounting of what we have done with that time. We, as Christians, will give our accounting at the judgment seat of Christ. The unsaved will render account at the Great White Throne. But an accounting will be made. "Make the best possible use of your time," Paul says. Paul might have wasted his time moping over the restrictions placed upon his liberty. Not him! He invested that time in writing immortal books, in praying for the furtherance of the gospel, in talking to those who came or were sent to him about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, in meditating upon the Scriptures long since committed to memory, and in preparing himself for new missionary journeys should he be released or to meet the Lord in Glory should Nero order his execution. (Exploring Colossians)

Our efforts in life must be seasonable. There is a religious forethought. He who neglects to gather in summer neglects the bounties of the Lord as well as neglects his own future necessities. The man who sleeps in harvest is pronounced a fool, because he lets his

opportunity slip. **The historian writes concerning Hannibal that when he could have taken Rome he would not, and when he would he could not. We are to be men of opportunity--that is to say, we are to buy up the opportunity, to redeem the time. When God opens a gate He means that we should go through it, and pass into all the inheritance beyond. There was a king of Sicily who was called "The Lingerer," not because he stayed till opportunity came, but because he stayed till opportunity was lost. There is a time to wait and a time to act. Overlong waiting means loss of chance,** for the king has passed by, and the gates are closed; but to wait patiently until everything is ripe for action is the very last expression of Christian culture. (J. Parker, D.D.)

TIME IS SIGNIFICANT because it is so rare. It is completely irretrievable. You can never repeat it or relive it. There is no such thing as a literal instant replay. That appears only on film. It travels alongside us every day, yet it has eternity wrapped up in it. Although this is true, time often seems relative, doesn't it? For example, two weeks on a vacation is not at all like two weeks on a diet. Also, some people can stay longer in an hour than others can in a week! Ben Franklin said of time, " … that is the stuff life is made of." Time forms life's building blocks. The philosopher William James once said, "The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it." —Lloyd Cory, Quote Unquote

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It is too late to redeem the time that has passed but not the time that is passing.

Tim Schoap - "Making the most of the opportunity." exagorazo kairos, Lit. "redeem the time," buy it up. **Picture a garage sale shopper, making every Saturday morning minute count.** Time is short for this fallen world. We must redeem time, and every opportunity God has given us by using it in the most effective way possible. Think of Jesus' parables of hidden treasure, the pearl of great price in Mt. 13:44-46, where the characters give up all for that treasure of the kingdom. This is the same idea. You can never have the last 5 minutes back, so evaluate your activity. How does it contribute? Each opportunity with outsiders is to be bought, and treated as precious.

Mark Dever - What situations are you in right now that you won't always be in? How are you using those situations in obedience to God? Trust the Lord to use you in those situations instead of always seeking for new situations. **Trust the Lord to use you in this moment, instead of waiting until the next one, since you don't even know if the next one will come. Don't let the passing permanence of great buildings and established institutions, or the lulling tedium of long hours and minutes, make a fool of you!** "The days are evil," says Paul in Ephesians 5:16 , meaning that they are dangerous, they are a fleeting opportunity, and so we must **redeem the time**, we must make the most of every opportunity. So we say with Paul that, in view of certain judgment, Christ's love compels us to proclaim the Good News (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10-14). (Nine Marks of a Healthy Church)

Thomas Carlyle - Life is a little gleam of time between two eternities.

Life Application Commentary: The believers should carefully use their time, making use of opportunities for doing good (see Galatians 6:10). This implies that we should not allow ourselves to be controlled by our circumstances; rather, we should make use of time as a valuable commodity or resource, as a master does with his servant. We should not read into this verse that God expects or condones workaholics. God has given us periods of both work and rest. We must never find in Scripture an excuse to neglect our physical needs or the needs of our families. **Make a quick mental list of the things you really value. Undoubtedly your list would include your loved ones, your home, your church, and perhaps a few other possessions. Would it also include your time?** Paul's admonition to live carefully, "making the most of every opportunity," is a reminder of the preciousness of time. (Life Application Commentary)

Ps 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Thy doings; I muse on the work of Thy hands. - The consideration of the past will stimulate us to redeem the time.

1. The whole life of man is short.
2. How much shorter has it become to us!
3. Had it been spent aright, its increased shortness would not be a matter of regret.
4. But only look back! (James Stewart)

The lights which God hath set in the firmament ENABLE US TO REDEEM THE TIME; **to retrieve the misspent past by the right improvement of the present. Each day is a miniature of the whole of life and of all the seasons of the year.** Morning answers to spring; midday to summer; afternoon to autumn; evening to winter. We are children in the morning, with fresh feelings and hopes; grown-up men and women, with sober and sad experiences, at noon; aged persons, with whom the possibilities of life are over, in

the afternoon and night. - H. Macmillan, D. D.

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Harry Ironside: Just as people go out bargain hunting and say, "There, if I buy that today, I can get it at a good price, much better than if I have to let it go until another time. It is worth my while to buy these bargains up at this rate." Let the Christian be just as eager, just as earnest, to obtain opportunities to witness for Christ, to serve the blessed Lord, and to be a means of blessing to others with whom he comes in contact. Buying up the opportunities, seeking to use them to the glory of our Lord Jesus, realizing that the days are evil and the time for serving Christ is slipping fast away, and that opportunities once lost will never be found again. Therefore, the importance of buying them up while we have the chance. (Amen!)

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John Henry Jowett discusses "**The Watchful Use of Opportunity**" based on "Redeeming the time." Eph. 5:16.

> **The disciple of Christ is to be an expert merchant in the commodity of time.** He is to be always engaged in "**buying up opportunity**." He is to allow no one to be the peer of the Master's servant. His vigilance must never sleep, and he must never be away from the market. Every moment must be bought up for the King, and used in the service of His Kingdom.
>
> And therefore the disciple will be busy buying in seasons both sad and joyful. He will not allow the evil one to buy any of the brighter seasons for his own infernal purpose. Seasons of merriment will be purchased for the Lord; bright moments of wit and humour will be gained for Him. This will never mean that merriment will lose its sparkle; it will really mean that sunlight will be added to common daylight, because the merriment will shine with the very lustre and purity of the love of Christ. All wit will be perfectly clean and therefore translucent, containing nothing which darkens or defiles. Gaiety will become the most intimate friend of sanctity and will be the possession of the Lord.
>
> And the watchful merchant will also buy up the darker seasons for his Lord. He will not allow his moments of disappointment, or sickness, or adversity, to be owned and used by the devil. He will rather claim that the black seasons may be used for the home of Christ, and he will accordingly bring them and offer them to His service. A dark house, with the Lord in it, becomes a temple of ineffable fellowship.
>
> But in all these purchasings everything goes to the early buyer. To be first in the market must be our constant aim. Let us regard every moment as precious treasure, and before the enemy of our souls can lay his hand upon it let us be up and buy it for the Lord. (Life in the Heights)

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May not life be filled fuller of blessings, if only we know how to redeem the time, and appreciate the opportunity to perceive the God that is near us? (H. W. Beecher.)

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If any day passes without embracing some opportunity for learning new truth, or doing some fresh good, we should agree with that Roman Emperor who said, “I have lost a day.” (J. G. Angley, M. A.)

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The astronomer measures time by light-years, the geologist by vast cycles, the historian by epics and centuries, the industrialist by the fiscal year, the salaried person by the month, the laborer by the weekly paycheck, the child by the birthday party. But for most of us the common measure of time begins with the awkward motions of rising in the morning and the weary movements at night. In this dimension we determine our day. While the vast majority of the hours are predetermined, planned for us, we nevertheless have precious tidbits of time which we are free to use and which ultimately determine the quality of our character and the degree of our commitment. The Lord measures time in terms of responsible living.

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The late Will Rogers had these lines engraved on a huge watch which he presented to David Rubinoff, the consummate violinist:

The Clock of Life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.

Now is the only time we own;
Love, life, toil with a will;
Do not wait until tomorrow,
For the Clock may then be still.

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Ridley Pearson - Life itself is the opportunity upon which eternity depends. And during life opportunities more or less are given every one for laying up provision against the future.

Ps 31:15 **My times are in Thy hand**; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

Warren Wiersbe - We would say, "All the affairs and details of my life are in the Lord's hands." This is the Old Testament version of Romans 8:28. David trusted God to bring light into the darkness and truth into the sea of lies that was overwhelming the people.

R. C. Sproul - "We all have an equal measure of time in every day. Where we differ from one another is in how we redeem the time allotted. When something is redeemed it is rescued or purchased from some negative condition. The basic negative condition we are concerned with is the condition of waste. To waste time is to spend it on that which has little or no value."

Fred Smith - Many Christians read the Bible's command to "redeem the time" and, as a result, spend too many hours simply organizing their time. That is not the intent of Scripture. Time management isn't nearly as important as life management. Perhaps the greatest life management skill is to develop good reflexes in knowing when to say yes and when to say no. All kinds of opportunities and decisions confront us. We can't say yes to all of them. But neither do we want to be ungracious, saying no simply for our own convenience or because we're selfish or negative. (Tabletalk Magazine, June 1990: Held Captive by Time)

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Horatius Bonar - Live for Something

> "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."—EPH. 5:15, 16
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> OUR life here, as saints, is no aimless life. We know the true way of living. We have found an object worthy of our living for. In all we speak and do we serve the Lord Christ. We do not live at random. Each hour, each word, each action, has its aim. Far short, indeed, we come of that which we propose to ourselves, but still we have always something in our view; something exalted, large, unselfish; something that will last for eternity. We have done with idleness, frivolity, and vain amusement. Our desire is, not to kill time, but to use it; to gather up all its fragments, to lay out every moment well, to lose nothing of so precious a boon. All that we have of it is too little to be trifled with, too precious to be thrown away. We would fain live busy lives. We cannot afford to be idle; neither do we desire it. The call is, REDEEM THE TIME. Be always doing something that will last; be always stretching forward to the prize. It will soon be ours, for the Lord is at hand. It is a prize worth all our labour and sorrow here. The very thought of it is enough to put to flight all murmuring, or selfishness, or sloth. To labour here is as blessed as it is to rest hereafter. Work on, work on, till the day of recompense arrives.

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Steven Cole - Our text tells us how to walk wisely, so that we make the precious years that God allots to us count for His purpose and glory. There is a paradox in that God is the sovereign over time. He has a divine will (Eph 5:17) and He "works all things after the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11). And yet at the same time, He allots time to us to use responsibly to bring about His sovereign will. We must walk carefully and redeem the time that He gives us (Eph 5:15-16). To make your life count for eternity, you must give careful thought to how you spend your time. To walk wisely, you must know what God wants you to be, what dangers to avoid, and how to take advantage of the opportunities that God gives you… As I said a couple of weeks ago, when you're around a bad odor for a while, your nose adjusts and it no longer smells so bad. When you're in an evil day, if you aren't careful, after a while you don't even notice how rotten things have become. After a while, even Christians absorb the world's values. We think it's okay to live together outside of marriage, especially if it saves money, because the world does so. We accept divorce for incompatibility, because after all, shouldn't we be happy? We tolerate gambling as innocent fun, because there are casinos and state lottery tickets everywhere. We begin to look just like the world, except that we go to church occasionally. But Paul calls such behavior unwise and foolish… Unwise people live for temporal fulfillment and pleasure. In the Bible (especially in Proverbs), fools live for immediate gratification according to their feelings, impulses, and desires. Fools, like the rich man building bigger barns to store his goods, don't think about the fact that today could be their last and then they face God and judgment. Fools don't think about storing up treasures

in heaven. They are focused completely on the here and now. In short, they do not understand the will of the Lord.

Redeeming the time - The idea is, being alert to the spiritual opportunities that God brings your way, so that you grab them as a wise merchant grabs a bargain. The reason that you are alert to these opportunities is that you are living wisely, with a view to eternity and God's kingdom. As Paul puts it (2 Cor. 4:18), "we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Luis Palau tells a story from one of his evangelistic crusades in Paraguay many years ago (Heart After God [Multnomah Press], pp. 114-116). At each crusade they set up family counseling centers, where people could come for spiritual help. They trained local people to work in them, teaching them how to lead people to Christ and how to deal with common problems. At this crusade, a man named Jose who took the training could not even read or write. But he loved the Lord and he had a fantastic memory. He passed the training exams because he had memorized all the answers. But because he was illiterate, the training director asked the receptionist not to assign Jose to anyone who looked like a professional person. One day all the counselors were busy when a very sharp looking gentleman walked in. He was obviously upper middle class. The only one left with no one to counsel was Jose. The receptionist got flustered, but Jose was alert. He walked up to this gentleman and said, "I'll help you." The receptionist was too bashful and embarrassed to say no. So, Jose took this gentleman into a room, talked with him, and led him to Jesus Christ. He turned out to be a medical doctor. Meanwhile, the receptionist had gotten through to the training di-rector and explained the situation. When the doctor and Jose walked out of the session, the training director greeted the doctor warmly, but just got a quick, "Hello." He thought, "Jose must have blown that session." So he told the receptionist, "The next time a distinguished looking gentleman comes in, make sure he is assigned to another counselor. Don't give him to Jose. Even if I'm busy, call me anyway and I'll take care of it." The next day the same doctor returned, with two men with him. These men were well-dressed, impressive looking men also. The center was busy, so the secretary rushed off to get the training director. He came out, turned on the charm and offered to help the man and his friends. But the man insisted that his friends talk alone with Jose. So, they went and found illiterate Jose, and he took the men into a private room. Jose led the doctor's two friends, who were also doctors, to faith in Christ! And, the next day, the three doctors brought a fourth man who was having family problems and illiterate Jose led that man to Christ! The next week, the doctors had a party and the only one from the counseling staff that they invited was humble, uneducated Jose.

1Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, **arm** (aorist imperative) yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 1Pet 4:2 so as to live **the rest of the time** in the flesh (refers to physical flesh, not the anti-god tendency still latent even in believers) **no longer for the lusts of men** (no longer or no more - looks back and indicates that the former time devoted to evil practices as unsaved humans was more than enough! The memory of that sinful past is to serve as a sharp goad against our fleshly tendency to relapse into that kind of depraved living), but (instead we should live) for the will of God.

> **Comment**: "The rest of the time" looks to the future and reminds us of the brevity of the remainder of our present earthly life. That perspective should inspire all readers in make haste to redeem the time. "Time" (chronos) denotes the chronological duration of life allotted to each of us. Note that we live either for the depraved will of our flesh or the blessed will of our God. There is no middle ground. Don't try to straddle the line! Hiebert adds that "When living such a life (seeking God's will not ours), "His will is our law, His word our rule, His Son's life our example, His Spirit rather than our own soul the Guide of our actions." His will should ever be the pole-star for the believer." And remember that God's will for believers may at times include suffering for righteousness.

CORAM DEO!
CARPE DIEM!
TEMPUS FUGIT!

Coram Deo living is living consciously before the face of God;**Carpe Diem** seizing the day, because **Tempus Fugit**, time flies and so our daily prayer should be

> So **teach** (an imperative) us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90:12)

> **Spurgeon commenting on Psalm 90:12 writes**:

> **So teach us to number our days**. Instruct us to set store by time, mourning for that time past wherein we have wrought the will of the flesh, using diligently the time present, which is the accepted hour and the day of salvation, and reckoning the time which lies in the future to be too uncertain to allow us safely to delay any gracious work or prayer. Numeration is a child's exercise in arithmetic, but in order to number their days aright the best of men need the Lord's teaching. We are more anxious (eager) to count the stars than our days, and

yet the latter is by far more practical.

That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Men are led by reflections upon the brevity of time to give their earnest attention to eternal things; they become humble as they look into the grave which is so soon to be their bed, their passions cool in the presence of mortality, and they yield themselves up to the dictates of unerring wisdom; but this is only the case when the Lord himself is the teacher; he alone can teach to real and lasting profit. Thus Moses prayed that the dispensations of justice might be sanctified in mercy. "The law is our school master to bring us to Christ", when the Lord himself speaks by the law. It is most meet that the heart which will so soon cease to beat should while it moves be regulated by wisdom's hand.

A short life should be wisely spent. We have not enough time at our disposal to justify us in misspending a single quarter of an hour. Neither are we sure of enough life to justify us in procrastinating for a moment. If we were wise in heart we should see this, but mere head wisdom will not guide us aright.

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Phil 3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Comment: "This one thing I do" is only one word in the Greek, succinctly expressing single-minded concentration and determination. (H. Morris)

You can't successfully run forward if you are looking backward. The contestant who takes his eyes off the goal is in danger of losing both his direction and his motivation. He must not be distracted by the crowd, either their cheers or jeers; and he must not let the other runners distract him. Nor should he look back inwardly and depend on past successes or be discouraged by the memory of past failures. Each race is unique and demands the very best.

The word "forgetting" is stronger in the Greek = "completely forgetting." Paul knew that the moment a Greek runner would think of the men behind him, the thud thud of their pounding feet, his speed would be slackened. So he presses home the lesson that when a child of God thinks of his past failures, the things he should have done and failed to do, the things he did which he should not have done, his onward progress in the Christian life is hindered. When a Christian has confessed & sought the gift of repentance & thus made things "right" with God and his fellow-man, (1Jn1:7,v8,v9) the proper technique is to completely forget them.

When the devil brings up your past, remind him of his future!

In his painting "An Allegory of Prudence," the 16th-century Venetian artist Titian portrayed Prudence as a man with three heads. One head was of a youth facing the future, another of a mature man eyeing the present, and the third, a wise old man gazing at the past. Over their heads Titian wrote a Latin phrase that means, "From the example of the past, the man of the present acts prudently so as not to imperil the future." We need that kind of wisdom to overcome the anxiety created by our past failures and the fear of repeating them in the future--an anxiety that can keep us from redeeming the time to the fullest right now.

RESOLUTIONS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS

The goals (resolutions) of the great preacher Jonathan Edward's, written before Edward's was 20 years old: 'Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat Him, by His grace, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to His will.'

#1 - Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God, and my own good, profit, and pleasure… To do whatever I think to be my duty… for the good and advantage of mankind in general.

#4 - Resolved, Never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body less or more, but what tends to the glory of God… '

#5 - Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

#6 - Resolved, To live with all my might, while I do live.

#7 - Resolved, Never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

#28 - Resolved, To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive, myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

#43 - Resolved, Never, henceforward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.

#46 - Resolved, Never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother.

#70 - Resolved, (That) there be something of benevolence in all I speak. - (Edwards resolved to read these resolutions over once a week!).

The great sixteenth-century reformer **Philip Melanchthon** kept a record of every wasted moment and took his list to God in confession at the end of each day. It is small wonder that God used him in such great ways.

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While all of our times are in God's hands (Ps. 31:15), He wants us to walk wisely, redeeming the time, in accordance with His sovereign will. No matter who you are, if you walk with Christ and grow wise through His Word, He can use you greatly for His eternal purpose.

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The time is short!
If thou wouldst work for God it must be now;
If thou wouldst win the garland for thy brow,
Redeem the time.
With His reward
He comes; He tarries not; His day is near;
When men least look for Him will He be here;
Prepare for Him!
—Horatius Bonar

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Consider your ways

Haggai 1:7 **Consider your ways** - Command from the Lord of Hosts… Fix your thoughts upon them with diligence, earnestness, and heart application. Be honest with yourselves, serious and particular in the inquiry into your real character in the sight of God… God hath endowed us with the powers of recollection and reflection. By these we can bring the transactions of our whole lives into present view, and arrange the several actions of them in their proper order and colors. It is our wisdom to converse with our departed hours, that we may learn to redeem the time.

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A driver stopped his car at an intersection and waited for the green signal. When the green light came, he waited further to confirm it. That is, he waited until the light turned green a second time! After that, he waited still further until the green light flashed a third time, before he proceeded on his way. Absurd? Of course. No one would drive like that. But are there not Christians who live like that driver drove? They are so overcautious that they wait for signs from God, wait to reconfirm the signs, and then wait for an auspicious moment to act. They are waiting almost perpetually and can never redeem the time they wasted or the opportunities they lost. (1500 illustrations for biblical preaching)

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Letter from John Wesley - MY DEAR BETSY, March 23, 1775. I AM glad you have had an**opportunity** of spending a little time at L——, and with Miss B. This, I doubt not, has been a blessed means of increasing your spiritual strength. And I trust you will find more and more **opportunity** of using whatever strength you have, even at O——. Wherever the work of God revives, we are more particularly called to work together with him. Now be instant in season and out of season! **Redeem the time! Buy up every opportunity.** In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening slack not thy hand; and God will give the increase! In a day or two I expect to embark. Possibly in autumn we may meet again; and, in the mean time, I am persuaded you will not forget. Yours affectionately.

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Ps 25:7 - Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Thy lovingkindness remember Thou me, For Thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

> How, in answer to such a prayer as David's, will man stand related to the follies and sins of his past life? He will not be entirely rid of their consequences, especially of their physical consequences. Nor will God cease to use the faultful past in the new man's education. But He will never taunt him with the past. He wants to use the past only as a help, not as a sting. And into the heart there will come a tranquil rest, a deep peace, founded not upon hone of retrieving the past, for there may be little time left; but simply upon the conviction that God has taken the whole sadly confused and stained life into His own hands. And there will come a turning with fresh zest to redeem the time which remains. (Marvin R. Vincent, D. D.)

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The uncertainty of life (**Thoughts on Eccl 8:8**) - Autumn, with its tinted leaves, its slanting shadows, and brief sunshine, points out the same truth as the text (Ecc 8:8). Man is powerless--much as he might wish it--to check the fast falling shower of faded foliage, or to throw back the shadows of the sundial. The fortune of the world could not procure a moment's respite from that silent and regular work of decay which is going on in the surrounding world. So, likewise, "No man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit." Each one of us must gradually pass away from the visible universe. When that solemn moment arrives, there will be those who would long to retain us by their side--those who have yet to learn that the "communion of saints" is not broken by the accident of death. And yet it cannot be; we must let go our hold of the departing soul. Others will long and vainly struggle to remain behind themselves. As we contemplate the prospect of death, a new stimulus should be given to duty and action. For it has been well said, "Duty is done with all energy then only when we feel 'the night cometh when no man can work' in all its force." Let me lead your thoughts then for a brief space in this direction. "Redeem the time." This is the precept, the echo of a past inspiration, which the Holy Spirit of God would still sound in our ears as we look forward to the termination of present life. Spend the life in earnest, and as if the whole future depended upon it. Spend to-day as if there were no certain to-morrow. Be watchful about little things, and especially the brief moments of time. The few pence and the fragments of food have their value. (A. Williamson, M. A.)

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What would you change if this day were your last? Someone has wisely said,

"You should treat every day as if it's your last one,
because one of these days you're going to be right."

There's no getting around it. Whether our earthly life ends by accident, illness, the ravages of age, or our Lord's return, one of these days will be our last. That's why we should guard so carefully the things we do and the words we say. We ought to be tying up the loose ends of long-neglected matters by expressing our love and gratitude to others, by seeking reconciliation with an alienated friend, or by sharing the gospel with a neighbor.

Dr. Robert Morehead tells the story a young man from Rwanda who was forced by his tribe in 1980 to renounce Christ or face death. He refused to renounce Christ, and he was murdered on the spot. The night before he had written the following commitment which was found in his room: Can you make this kind of commitment for the Gospel of Christ and become a member of the Fellowship of the Unashamed?

I am a part of the fellowship of the Unashamed. I have the Holy Spirit
Power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has
been made. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look back, let up, slow
down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense,
and my future is secure. I am finished and done with low living, sight
walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions,
mundane talking, chintzy giving, and dwarfed goals.
I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or
popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised,
regarded, or rewarded. I now live by presence, learn by faith, love by
patience, lift by prayer, and labor by power.
My pace is set, my gait is fast, my goal is Heaven, my road is narrow, my
way is rough, my companions few, my Guide is reliable, my mission is clear.
I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, diluted,
or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the
presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the

pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.
I won't give up, back up, let up, or shut up until I've preached up, prayed
up, paid up, stored up, and stayed up for the cause of Christ.
I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I must go until He returns, give until I drop,
preach until all know, and work until He comes.
And when He comes to get His own, He will have no problem recognizing me.
My colors will be clear for "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the
power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.." (Romans 1:16)

Adrian Rogers - I would to God that I could get you and your pastor to live in the eternal now. Cut yourself loose from yesterday. Last year, with its heartaches and its failures, is gone. Forget those things which are behind, confess them to the Lord, and bury them in the grave of God's forgetfulness (**Cut yourself loose from the past. Bury your failure in the grave of God's forgetfulness, and let Him give you a brand new day**). Tomorrow is a time nowhere but on the fool's calendar. Stop saying, "If I had the time." You do have the time; use it. And, if you've not accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, the Bible says, "Behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). Now is the time to be saved. Rogers, Adrian

John 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

How important that you let prayer be the key that unlocks the door of the morning, that you begin your day with prayer. As the poet said, "Lean your arms upon the windowsill of Heaven, and gaze at the face of God" (paraphrase of Thomas Blake). As you greet the day, begin the day with prayer, spend enough time every day, in the morning, to get God's will for your life. Prayer must be in the morning. **There's enough time in every day to do everything that God wants you to do and to do it gracefully.** It's an insult to God to say you don't have enough time. If you don't have enough time, you're doing something God did not intend for you to do—either something that you've imposed upon yourself, or you've allowed others to impose upon you. So, what you must do in prayer every morning—the principle of prayer—is to get quiet before the Lord, and let God speak to your heart. Charles Hummel, called The Tyranny of the Urgent. It's a great little book: The Tyranny of the Urgent. Do you know what our problems are, dear friend? We're constantly having a battle between the important and the urgent.

Listen—in verse 16, he says, "Redeem the time" (Ephesians 5:16)—that's the promptness principle. In verse 17, he says, "Be… not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17)—that's the prayer principle. Look in verse 18: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18)—that's the power principle. You see—the power principle is to do God's will in the power of the Holy Spirit. Most of us don't need to learn to work harder—we need to work with more power. We need to learn to work with more effectiveness

Time is the word "**kairos**." Gal 6:10 use of kairos helps us understand the meaning… "So then, while we have **opportunity**, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." So in Eph 5:16 Paul commands us to "make the most of the opportunity God gives us."

We need to see time, not just as something that is passing, but you need to see time as an incredible opportunity. And, when you're redeeming time, what you're really redeeming is opportunity. What he is trying to tell us is how to live wise ways for evil days. The days are evil, so therefore, take advantage of every opportunity that God has given us. It takes such incredible willpower, such an incredible prioritizing of priorities, to see the difference between the urgent and the important. Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important things.

"Somewhere in Africa each morning, a gazelle and a lion wake up. The gazelle knows that if he cannot outrun the fastest lion, he will not make it. He will be dinner. The lion knows if he cannot outrun the slowest gazelle, he will starve. So both of them wake up running." And, you know, we have to wake up running. Ah, it's, it's, there, there's a race to run. And Satan, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And Satan is on our trail, and we can't stop and become indolent.

Ps 90:10 The length of our days is seventy years-- or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

the Bible says, "As your days are, so shall your strength be." God gave that verse to the Israelites who were coming out of Egypt and going into Canaan, and He says, "As your days are, so shall your strength be."

And how did they get to Canaan? They didn't have a bus, they didn't have an airplane, they didn't have a stagecoach. They walked to Canaan. And you're going to find out that the Christian life is, by and large, not all that romantic, not all that dramatic; it is dignity and drudgery put together. And, that, you need strength for that; I mean, just to live tomorrow in your office, amen? (amen). You know you do. Ha, ha, ha. This is, this is the walk. And that requires patience.

A snail started up the trunk of an apple tree. You know how slow a snail moves. A worm stuck, came out of a crevasse and said to the snail, "No need going up there. There's no apples up there." He said, "There will be when I get there". Friend, just day by day by day being faithful.

Now let me just take two words in there and the word, first of all, is the word renew. The word renew is a Hebrew word, chalaph, and it literally means to change or exchange. When you wait upon the Lord, you exchange your strength. It's like you taking off your coat and giving it to someone else, and he takes his coat and gives it to you. There is an exchange. You see, God says, "My strength is made perfect in your weakness." God's strength.

God says in the Book of Ephesians, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." And the Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me."

Devin Barber - Walking circumspectly is walking mindful of the circumstances and consequences. To correctly apply our knowledge of God's word at every opportunity is to walk with that wisdom. We must all strive to spread the word, recognizing the opportunities that arise for us to do so, and capitalizing on each one… Each moment must be wisely used in service to God, because we will get no second chance at a missed opportunity or a wasted minute. (Christianity Magazine: November 1989, Volume 6, Number 11)

F Ferguson - We speak of time as past, present, and future; but what a mystery it is! The present moment is all of time that actually exists. All past time ends in the present moment. All future time begins in the same point. To use the experience of the past so as to shape the future aright is to **redeem the time**. This gives to every moment of time a tremendous importance. It makes the thought of it the most practical of all things. (Biblical Illustrator-Revelation 1:4–9)

Erwin Lutzer - Remember that the Lord will not say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, for thou hast watched 5,312 hours of television!" We only get one shot at life; when a single hour is gone, it can never be retrieved. So we must ask: How do I want to spend the few short years and hours on this planet, knowing that I will have to give an account to our Lord? (Who are you to judge? learning to distinguish between truths, half-truths, and lies)

Joni Eareckson Tada's prayer - "God, I turn today over in my hands and ask you to help me to pay attention to what you have for me in it, not for the future but for right now."

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A Williamson on **The uncertainty of life**

> Autumn, with its tinted leaves, its slanting shadows, and brief sunshine, points out the same truth as the text. Man is powerless--much as he might wish it--to check the fast falling shower of faded foliage, or to throw back the shadows of the sundial. The fortune of the world could not procure a moment's respite from that silent and regular work of decay which is going on in the surrounding world. So, likewise, "No man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit." Each one of us must gradually pass away from the visible universe. When that solemn moment arrives, there will be those who would long to retain us by their side--those who have yet to learn that the "communion of saints" is not broken by the accident of death. And yet it cannot be; we must let go our hold of the departing soul. Others will long and vainly struggle to remain behind themselves. As we contemplate the prospect of death, a new stimulus should be given to duty and action. For it has been well said, "Duty is done with all energy then only when we feel 'the night cometh when no man can work' in all its force." Let me lead your thoughts then for a brief space in this direction.
>
> **"Redeem the time."**
>
> This is the precept, the echo of a past inspiration, which the Holy Spirit of God would still sound in our ears as we look forward to the termination of present life. Spend the life in earnest, and as if the whole future depended upon it. Spend today as if there were no certain tomorrow. Be watchful about little things, and especially the brief moments of time. The few pence and the fragments of food have their value. (Biblical Illustrator-Ecclesiastes 8:8)

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AN APPOINTMENT
YOU WON'T MISS!

Warren Wiersbe - How long will the rest of our lives be? We don't know; nobody knows. We may have many years, or we may have many days. We could be called home to glory before the day ends. We don't know. "Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Heb. 9:27). It is an **appointment**, not an **accident**, and God knows when it is going to be. When you are redeemed,

you are set free from bondage to the old life. This is why Ephesians 5:16 tells us to **redeem the time**. Don't live the rest of your life the way you used to live. You have been set free from that. "The old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17). Therefore, **redeem the time**, buy up the opportunity, **make the most of the rest of your life** I would like to apply that, if I may. Perhaps you are born again, but you are following the traditions of other people. You are doing what everybody else does. **Why don't you ask God what He wants you to do with the rest of your life?** Perhaps you are in the wrong school, and you ought to be in another school training to serve God. Perhaps you are pursuing the wrong career. Perhaps you are a successful businessman, but God is calling you into His service. You could use your experience and your gifts to glorify God in full-time Christian service.

If you knew you had only ten years left to live
or one year left to live,
how would it change your life?
We should be living each day
as though it were our last.

We are redeemed from bondage to sin; we are redeemed from bondage to the old life. We should live wholly for God. (Key Words of the Christian Life)

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I wasted time; now time doth waste me.—William Shakespeare

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Be not afraid, oh, duty-neglecting Christian, to rise up with a fixed resolve and retrace your steps and say : "I will redeem the time. I will renew my vows with Jesus." (George Truett - A Quest for Souls)

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Lord, for tomorrow and its needs,
I do not pray;
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin,
Just for today!
Now, set a seal upon my lips,
For this I pray;
Keep me from wrong, or idle words,
Just for today!
Let me be slow to do my will,
Prompt to obey;
And keep me, guide me, use me, Lord,
Just for today!

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The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer said, "Ordinary people think merely how they shall spend their time; a man of intellect tries to use it." It's a wise saying, but we might want to change the adjective their. Our time is not really ours. It is God's!

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Many can relate to the cartoon that showed the boss leaning over an employee's desk and shouting, "Of course I want it today. If I had wanted it tomorrow, I would have given it to you tomorrow."

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TOO BUSY - Too busy to read the Bible, too busy to wait and pray! Too busy to speak out kindly to someone by the way! Too busy to care and struggle, to think of the life to come, Too busy building mansions to plan for the heavenly Home. Too busy for all that is holy on earth beneath the sky, Too busy to serve the Master, but—not too busy to die!—Anon.

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Before World War II northern Kentucky was in the Central time zone. A redrawing of the map put this area in the Eastern time zone along with its neighbors across the Ohio River in Cincinnati. Then came Daylight Saving Time that put them, for the summer months, another hour faster. One farmer stubbornly refused to change his clock. He remained two hours behind everyone else, declaring that that was "God's time" and people should not be messing with it. However we measure time, all of our time is truly God's time.

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In Charles Schulz's "Peanuts" comic strip, a little girl says, "Grandma is mad at me. She said it's inexcusable to be six weeks late with a 'thank you' note. I didn't think six weeks was that long to a grandmother."

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Learn from yesterday;
Live for today;
Hope for tomorrow.

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ETERNITY will be appreciated only in the measure that we have rightly handled TIME!—F. King

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May not life be filled fuller of blessings, if only we know how to redeem the time, and appreciate the opportunity to perceive the God that is near us? - H. W. Beecher

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“We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work” (see John 9:1–12). This tremendous passage inspired Elton Trueblood to entitle his autobiography While It Is Day. This eighth-generation Quaker, distinguished author, pastor, and professor took seriously John’s admonition. To read the life of Trueblood is to become better acquainted with one who values time and the relevance of the gospel. He is a confirmed believer in discovering one’s prime time and using it for first-class work.

YOU'RE NOT HOME YET - The idea that we are not home yet is one we all would do well to keep foremost in our mind as illustrated by the true story of **Henry C. Morrison** a little known "hardworking farmer" (2Ti 2:6-note) in God's missionary fields, toiling some forty years in the difficult fields of Africa. As the story is told, he became sick and had to return home to America, and as providence would have it, the boat he returned on was also carrying a well known guest. As the great ocean liner docked in New York Harbor there was a great crowd gathered to greet President Teddy Roosevelt who received a grand welcome-home-party after his widely publicized African Safari. **Two men in Africa, one hunting to kill wild animals, the other seeking to save wicked men!** Resentment seized the "hardworking farmer", Henry Morrison, and he turned to God saying "I have come back home after all this time and service to the church and there is no one, not even one person here to welcome me home." Then a still small voice (cp Elijah's experience = 1Ki 19:12, 13, 14, 15ff) came to Morrison reminding him "**You're not home yet.**" Our ultimate harvest is yet future and our future reward is "out of this world!" Ready to be revealed in the last time(1Pe 1:5-note)! Praise the Lord.

Live today for that great tomorrow!

A study revealed that an average seventy-year-old man has spent twenty-four years sleeping, fourteen years working, eight years in amusements, six years at the dinner table, five years in transportation, four years in conversation, three years in education, and two years in studying and reading. His other four years were spent in miscellaneous pursuits. Of those four years, he spent forty-five minutes in church on Sundays, and five minutes were devoted to prayer each day. This adds up to a not at all impressive total of five months that he gave to God over the seventy years of his life. Even if this man had been a faithful churchgoer who attended Sunday school and three one-hour services per week, he would have spent only one year and nine months in church! If you have a question about the above arithmetic, sit down and figure out how you have been using your time. How large a portion of it is for the things related to God? When you finish this exercise, ponder what Jesus said: “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?…” (Matt. 16:26, NIV).

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Time is what we want the most but what we use the worst.—William Penn

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Time is God’s gift to mortal man.
It is that fleeting little span
Between our birth and heaven’s door,
Where we begin God’s ever more

When time is o’er.
How then, should we our time employ?
In service or in passing joy?
Can we afford to throw away
And squander time in passing play—
O men of clay?
—Neighbor

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It’s up to me to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it.
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it.

A Tiny Little Minute
Just a tiny little minute.
Sixty seconds in it.
Forced upon me;
Didn't ask it,. didn't choose it.
Yet, it's up to me to use it;
Must give account if I abuse it.
Just a little minute.

I have only just a minute
Just sixty seconds in it;
Forced upon me—can’t refuse it,
Didn’t seek it, didn’t choose it
It's up to me to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it,
Give account if I abuse it;
Just a tiny little minute
But eternity is in it.

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Twenty-four hours in the day, 1,440 minutes in the day, 86,000 seconds in the day—and every one of them is a precious gift from God.

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Robert G Lee - If you had a bank that credited your account each morning with $86,400, that carried no balance from day to day, allowed you to keep no cash in your account, and finally every evening canceled whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. what would you do? Draw out every cent—of course! Well, you have such a bank and its name is “Time.” Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it rules off—as lost—whatever of this you had failed to invest to good purpose. It carries no balances. It allows no balances. It allows no overdrafts. Each day the bank named “Time” opens a new account with you. Each night it burns the records of the day. If you fail to use the day’s deposits the loss is yours.

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Somebody once thought it would be a wonderful thing if every day of our lives each of us had $1,440 in the bank that we had to spend before the end of the day—none of it could be carried over to the following day. Each of us does have 1,440 minutes every day. Could they be spent in a better way?

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O God, Our Help in Ages Past
Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away.
We fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.
—Isaac Watts

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Time wasted is existence; time used, is life.

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Oswald Chambers - We can choke God's word with a yawn; we can hinder the time that should be spent with God by remembering we have other things to do. "I haven't time!" Of course you have time! Take time, strangle some other interests and make time to realize that the centre of power in your life is the Lord Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

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If you want to kill time, why not try working it to death? —E. C. Mckenzie

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There is the old proverb, “One has to spend money to make money.” Likewise, “One must spend time in order to save time.”—James Hastings

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Time is what we want most, but what, alas, we use worst, and for which God will surely most strictly reckon with us when time shall be no more.—William Penn

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LIFE'S COUNTDOWN - Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. —Colossians 4:5

If we live 65 years, we have about 600,000 hours at our disposal. Assuming we are 18 when we complete high school, we have 47 years, or nearly 412,000 hours to live after graduation.

If we spend 8 hours a day sleeping, 8 hours for personal, social, and recreational activities, and 8 hours for working, that amounts to 137,333 hours in each category. When we think of the time we have to work and play in terms of hours, it doesn’t seem like much. **And when seen in the light of eternity, it’s but a fleeting moment. How important, therefore, that we spend our waking hours wisely!**

D. J. De Pree, a former member of the RBC Board of Directors who lived to be almost 100 years old, had for many years been calculating his age in terms of days. If you asked him, “How old are you?” he answered immediately with the number of days. He based this practice on Psalm 90:12, “Teach us to number our **days**, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Literally counting his days reminded him of the swift passage of time and the need to live with eternity’s values in view.

The hours, days, and years are here and gone. So whether we count them or not, let’s be sure to make them count—for Christ.

God set a goal, yet gave the choice
To mortals how time may be spent,
Admonishing that worth, not length,
Values time's accomplishment. —Mortenson

Don't just spend time; invest it.

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Take time to work—it is the price of success.
Take time to think—it is the source of power.
Take time to play—it is the secret of youth.
Take time to read—it is the foundation of knowledge.
Take time to worship—it is the highway of reverence.
Take time to help and enjoy friends—it is the source of happiness.
Take time to love—it is the one sacrament of life.
Take time to dream—it hitches the soul to the stars.
Take time to laugh—it is the music of the soul.
Take time to pray—it helps bring Christ near.

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John Erskine, the well-known author, professor, and lecturer, once wrote that he learned the most valuable lesson of his life when he was fourteen. His piano teacher asked him how much he practiced and how long at a stretch. The boy replied that he practiced for an hour or more at a time. “Don’t do that,” warned the teacher. “When you grow up, time won’t come in long stretches. Practice in minutes, whenever you can find them—five or ten minutes before school, after lunch, between chores. Spread the practice throughout the day, and music will become part of your life.” Erskine stated that the observance of this advice enabled him to live a comparatively complete life as a creative writer, outside his regular duties as an instructor. He wrote most of Helen of Troy, his most famous work, on streetcars while commuting between his home and the university.

How can you make good use of your spare moments? Consider carrying a Bible or a devotional booklet with you. Use the time to read, or to pray, or to write a note of encouragement or admonition to some needy soul.

Beware of wasting the present. Instead of killing time, redeem your spare moments today.

Redeem the time! God only knows
How soon our little life may close,
With all its pleasures and its woes,
Redeem the time! —Anon.

Wasting the gift of time insults the giver of time.

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Life is a book of Volumes three
The Past—the Present—and the Yet-to-be:
The First is written and laid away,
The Second we are writing day by day;
The next and the last of the volumes Three—
Is locked from sight—God holds the key.

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Time management consultant Antonio Herrera asked the participants in a seminar, “If we had to buy time, would there be any difference in how we would spend it? Would the days of our lives be used more wisely?” He asked, “What if you had to pay in advance one hundred dollars an hour for the time allotted to you? Would you waste it?” The answer should be obvious.

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Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours;
All must be earnest in the world like ours.
Not many lives, but only one have we,
Only, only one.
How earnest should that one life be,
That narrow span;
Day after day spent in blessed toil.
-Horatius Bonar

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I have only just a minute, only 60 seconds in it;
Forced upon me; can't refuse it; didn't seek it, didn't chose it.
But it's up to me just how I use it.
I must suffer if I lose it, give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it.

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Nobody on his deathbed ever said:
"I wish I'd spent more time at the office."

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THE NEW YEAR - Let the year be given to God in its every moment! The year is made up of minutes: let these be watched as having been dedicated to God! It is in the sanctification of the small that hallowing of the large is secure.—G. Campbell Morgan,

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Have you seen the television commercial for a telephone company that shows a drive-through window such as you would see at a fast-food restaurant? Over the window are the words: TIME "R" US. One customer drives up and says, "Gimme a couple of seconds." Another one drives up and with great weariness says, "Can I have another day?" It's a great commercial, because we can all identify with it. —Donald W. McCullough, "Now is the Time," Preaching Today,

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No time for God,
What fools we are to clutter up
And leave without heart's gate
The Lord of life, and life itself—
Our God.
No time for God?
As soon to say, no time
To eat or sleep or love or die.
Take time for God
Or you will dwarf your soul.
And when the angel death
Comes knocking at your door,
A poor misshapen thing you'll be
To step into eternity.
No time for God?
Some day you'll lay aside
This mortal self and make your way
To worlds unknown
And when you meet Him face to face
Will He—should He—
Have time for you?
—Trott

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It has been said that it is not the length of the story that makes it worth reading, and it is not the length of a life that makes it worth living. Some of the greatest stories are the parables of Jesus. They are very short. Some of the greatest men and women died young but led useful lives.

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John Piper - The clock never stops ticking. Nothing but God is more persistent than the passing of time. You can't stop it or slow it. It is sovereign over all human resistance. It will not be hindered or altered or made to cease. It is utterly oblivious to young and old, pain and pleasure, crying and laughing. Nothing, absolutely nothing, makes a difference to the unstoppable, unchangeable tick, tick, ticking of time. Anna Akhmatova, a Russian poet, said that war and plague pass, but no one can cope with "**the terror that is named the flight of time**" (Quoted in D. M. Thomas, Alexander Solzhenitsyn [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998], 270). (A Godward Life - Part 2)

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Warren Wiersbe on 1Pe 3:14-15 - Instead of experiencing fear as we face the enemy (1Pe 3:14-note), we can experience blessing, if Jesus Christ is Lord in our hearts (1Pe 3:15-note). When Jesus Christ is Lord of our lives, each **crisis** becomes an **opportunity** for witness. We are "always prepared to give an answer." Every Christian should be able to give a reasoned defense of his hope in Christ, especially in hopeless situations. A **crisis** (**Ed**: see note below on "Opportunity") creates the **opportunity** for witness when a

believer behaves with faith and hope, because the unbelievers will then sit up and take notice. (Pause for Power: A Year in the Word)

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Opportunity - The Chinese symbols for "**crisis**" are identical to those for the word "**opportunity**." Literally translated it reads "Crisis is an opportunity riding the dangerous wind." Billy Graham said that "Today's world is said to be multiplying crises all around us. But we must never forget that, for the gospel, each crisis is an opportunity." (**Caveat**: Note that this illustration is popular but may not be accurate - see Chinese word for crisis).

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Chuck Swindoll - We are all faced with a series of great **opportunities** brilliantly disguised as impossible situations (**Ed**: Crisis).

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F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk - THE WISE USE OF TIME

"Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise redeeming the time, because the days are evil."-- Eph 5:15-16

GOD DESIRES to give each life its full development. Of course, there are exceptions; for instance, in some cases the lessons and discipline of life are crowded into a very brief space of time, and the soul is summoned to the Presence-chamber of eternity. But, on the whole, each human life is intended to touch all the notes of life's organ. There is an appointed time when it shall be born or die, shall weep or laugh, shall get or lose, shall have halcyon peace or storm cast skies. These times have been fixed for you in God's plan; do not try and anticipate them, or force the pace, but wait thou the Lord's leisure. In due time all will work out for thy good and for His glory. Say to Him" "All my times are in Thy hand."

Times and seasons succeed one another very quickly. Milton, in his glorious sonnet on the Flight of Time, bids her call on the leaden-stepping hours, referring to the swing of the pendulum; and, indeed, as we look back on our past life it will seem as though each experience was only for a moment, and then had vanished, never to return. We are reminded of the cobbler, who, as he sat in his kitchen, thought that the pendulum of his clock, when it swing to the left, said For ever; and to the right, Where? For ever--where? For ever--where? He got up and stopped it, but found that, although he had stopped the questioner, he had not answered the question. Nor could he find rest until, on his knees, he had been able to face the question of the Eternal, and reply to it.

We must be on the alert to meet the demand of every hour. "Mine hour is not yet come," said our Lord. He waited patiently until He heard the hours strike in heaven, and then drawing the strength appropriate to its demand, He went forth to meet it. Each time and season is kept by the Father in His own hand. He opens and none shuts; He shuts and none opens. But in that same hand are the needed supplies of wisdom, grace, and power. As the time, so is the strength. No time of sighing, trial, temptation, or bereavement is without its special and adapted supplies. Take what is needed from His hand, and go forth to play the part for which the hour calls.

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John Piper writes

> The clock never stops ticking. Nothing but God is more persistent than the passing of time. You can't stop it or slow it. It is sovereign over all human resistance. It will not be hindered or altered or made to cease. It is utterly oblivious to young and old, pain and pleasure, crying and laughing. Nothing, absolutely nothing, makes a difference to the unstoppable, unchangeable tick, tick, ticking of time. Anna Akhmatova, a Russian poet, said that war and plague pass, but no one can cope with "the terror that is named the flight of time" (Quoted in D. M. Thomas, Alexander Solzhenitsyn [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998], 270). I have an unusual habit when I go to bed. After Noël and I pray, I crawl into bed and situate myself on my left side, facing the red glow of the radio-alarm-clock numbers on the bedside table. I pull my hands up in front of me at about face level and wait for a few minutes in stillness, usually praying silently with gratitude for the wife who lies behind me, and for my children, and for the ministry God has given me. Then I take my right hand and curl my fingers around my left wrist and find my pulse. I watch the red minute number until it changes, and then I begin counting. One… two… three… When the number changes and one minute has passed, I stop. I began this peculiar habit out of the vain notion that if my heart rate were very slow, from good exercise (or genes), it may mean that my heart is healthy and I will live long. Such is the silliness of human thought. The effect has been otherwise. Now, as I count the beats, it is not the rate that fixes my attention, but the succession. One beat, then another, then another, on through the night, about twenty-one thousand times while I sleep. The effect of this little exercise is

that I fall asleep most nights, lulled by the steady rhythm of my heart and with a sober sense of my very fragile existence. Any one of those beats could be my last. I cannot will my heart to beat one more time. If it stops, it stops. I and my time on earth are over. "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." Time is precious. We are fragile. Life is short. Eternity is long. Shall we not then enter on every venture with a vigilance like that of the young Jonathan Edwards when he wrote his fifth resolution: "Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can;" which is really a subpoint of his sixth resolution: "Resolved, To live with all my might, while I do live" (The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 1, ed. Edward Hickman [Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974], xx). Yes, this can become compulsive and unhealthy But for those of us who need to hear it as an antidote to squandering the preciousness of irretrievable time, let us hear it. The church I serve is generous to me beyond all my deserving. As I write these words I am on a one-month leave to complete this book. I enter the month with a sense that every minute counts. O to be a faithful steward of the breath God has given me. Three texts resound in my ears. 1) "Redeem the time" (Ephesians 5:16, KJV). 2) "It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy" (1 Corinthians 4:2). 3) "His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10, author's translation). Surely God means for our minutes on earth to count for something significant. Paul said, "In the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain" (Philippians 2:16). In the same way, I have good hope from the Lord that my "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58, KJV). And I commend this promise to you. No minute need be lived in vain. Eternity will render it significant if lived in faith for the glory of God. In the end we rest in this: "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15). (A Godward Life - Part 2)

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"MAY I NEVER LOITER ON MY HEAVENLY JOURNEY"

David Brainerd (who died at age 29) called his passion for more holiness and more usefulness a kind of "pleasing pain." "When I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of him the more insatiable, and my thirstings after holiness the more unquenchable; … Oh, for holiness! Oh, for more of God in my soul! Oh, this pleasing pain! It makes my soul press after God … Oh, that I might not loiter on my heavenly journey (p. 186)!" He was gripped with by the apostolic admonition: "Redeem the time for the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:16) He embodied the counsel: "Let us not grow weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap if we do not faint." (Gal. 6:9) He strove to be, as Paul says, "abounding in the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58)." {John Piper} (Piper's book on Brainerd is entitled "May I Never Loiter on My Heavenly Journey")

Brainerd wrote: Oh, how precious is time; and how guilty it makes me feel when I think I have trifled away and misimproved it or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty to the utmost of my ability and capacity.

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John Piper - When Jonathan Edwards was a student at Yale 270 years ago he wrote 70 resolutions to stir him up to run his race. One of them catches the spirit of verse 24. He wrote: "Resolved: to live with all my might while I do live." "With all my might." It's the practical outworking or the great commandment: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind." "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). The New Testament is full of ways to say this. "Strive to enter by the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24). "Labor for the food that endures to eternal life" (John 6:27). "Be steadfast, immovable always abounding in the word of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). "Let us not be weary in well-doing for we shall reap if we do not faint" (Galatians 6:9). "Redeem the time for the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15). "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 3:12). "Christ gave himself to purify for himself a people zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:14). "Show earnestness in realizing the full assurance of hope to the end" (Hebrews 6:11). "Love one another earnestly from the heart" (1 Peter 1:22). Strive, labor, abound, be zealous, be earnest. Run like the winner runs. Be done with half-heartedness and laziness and lukewarmness. Christ has laid hold on you for this very thing. You do not do it in your own strength. You strive and labor and abound and love in the strength that he supplies so that in everything he gets the glory (1 Peters 4:11). {Piper, John},

On the one hand the text says, Watch carefully how you live, that is, be alert, be vigilant. Apply wisdom to redeem the time. That opportunity will never come again. The days are evil; opposition is great; be wise as serpents. Understand what the will of the Lord is. Don't surrender your powers of judgment to alcohol. These words ring with a sense of urgency. They are like the words of a platoon leader addressing his unit just before they enter combat. The air is tense and your heart is beating fast and, even if you love battle, your hands are sweaty. "Watch your step; be smart; don't miss your opportunity; keep yourself lean for the battle!" {Piper, John}

Edwards exhorts us to redeem the time and to do what our hand finds to do with all our might. His 6th resolution was simple and

powerful: "Resolved: to live with all my might while I do live." Resolution #5 was similar: "Resolved: Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can." He was a great believer in doing what you could in the time you have, rather than putting things off till a more convenient time. {JP}

Spurgeon on Time…

I remember hearing an old lady say to a man who said that he had no time, “Well, you have got all the time there is.” I thought that was a very conclusive answer. You have had the time, and you still have all the time there is—why do you not use it? Nobody has more than twenty-four hours in a day, and you have no less.

Do not think that you are stable things; fancy not that you are standing still; you are not. Your pulses each moment beat the funeral marches to the tomb. You are chained to the chariot of rolling time—there is no bridling the steeds, or leaping from the chariot; you are constantly in motion.

If you have not the time, God gave it to you, and you must have misspent it.

It is a grand thing to have faith for the present, not bemoaning the past, nor dreaming of some future faith which we hope may yet be ours. The present hour is the only time we really possess.

Be parsimonious of minutes now, though you may have been, at one time, prodigal of years.

Had we plenty of time, we might try two or three schemes at once, though even then we should most probably fail for want of concentrating our energies; but as we have very little time, we had better economize it by attending to one thing.

Life is very short, but a great deal may be done. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in three years, saved the world. Some of his followers in three years have been the means of saving many and many a soul. It was a short life that Luther had to do his work in. If I remember rightly, he was hard upon fifty before he began to preach the truth at all, a hopeful sign for some of you who have wasted your young days; so there have been men of sixty that have yet achieved a life’s work before they had slept and gone their way. After all, **time is long or short as you like to make it so**.

Eph 5:15, 17 - “Look carefully then how you walk… Do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is.” So together these verses call us to use our minds in careful thought. Look carefully! Know yourself, know your enemy, know your commander, know the situation, apply your mind to understand what the Lord wills in this crucial time. This is what I mean by analysis. It is the use of the mind to scrutinize, to examine, to sort out distinctions and seek relationships and patterns and to draw conclusions and inferences. {Piper, John},

“Since the days are evil be alert how you can snatch up every opportunity for good.” You can see it in verse 17: “Don’t be foolish. Apply your mind. Think through what the will of the Lord is.” In other words, the Christian life is a vigilant life, defensively guarding itself from the subtleties of the evil days and offensively redeeming the time to strike for love and righteousness again and again. We are a vigilant people at war with unbelief and evil.

The glue that holds them all together is the work of the Holy Spirit: “Do not be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit!” And God will uncover for you

• the mystery of gratitude for all things, even when the days are evil,

• the pleasures of exultation even in the midst of analysis,

• and the peace that passes all understanding even in the vigilance of our daily conflict with evil.

Urgency and gratitude. Glued together in one heart by the work of the Holy Spirit. This morning we have been heavy on the side of urgency, analysis, and vigilance. {Piper,

Life is a series of never to be repeated opportunities!

The opportunity will never come again. Days are evil. Opposition is great. Stakes are high. Be wise as serpents, innocent as doves. Piper dramatically portrays our engagement in making the most of our time "The air is tense and your heart is beating fast and even if you love battle, your hands are sweaty. Watch your step. Be smart. Don't miss your opportunity. Keep yourself lean for the battle!"

In addition, this verb was used of ransoming or redeeming slaves from the market place, and used by Paul to describe Christ Who "redeemed us from the curse of the Law" by paying the only acceptable price, His life, His blood securing our eternal life, eternally

covered by His blood.

Paul used this same verb in Col 4:5 calling for all believers to "Conduct ourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of (redeeming, "buying up") the opportunity."

Can you buy time? Yes and no. Today is the only "today" you will every have. You cannot buy another "today." But you can purchase or buy time, by making the most of your opportunities. Who could you have prayed for today? Who came in your office discouraged and could have used an encouraging word, perhaps even a comforting Bible passage?

Time: A creation of God which marks the duration of life and which is measured by changes in the created order. The flow of time is directed by God who appoints particular “times” within his unfolding purposes. Because human life is brief, time should be used properly, making the most of every opportunity. (Manser, Martin H., Dictionary of Bible Themes)

The NT focuses on the fact that all time finds its focus and fulfillment in Christ. His coming transforms every moment into opportunity; and when he returns, the fulfillment of every promise God ever made will be achieved. How important, then, that we use our moments of time wisely, sensing the eternal significance that our relationship with Jesus brings to all time. (New international encyclopedia of Bible words)

William MacDonald:

> “Redeeming the time.” (Eph. 5:16)
>
> In a day when men of the world are becoming increasingly allergic to work, Christians must make the most of every passing moment. It is a sin to waste time.
>
> Voices from every age testify to the importance of diligent labor. The Savior Himself said, “I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).
>
> Thomas a Kempis wrote, “‘Never be idle or vacant; be always reading or writing or praying or meditating or employed in some useful labor for the common good.”
>
> When asked the secret of his success as an interpreter of the Word, G. Campbell Morgan said, “Work—hard work—and again, work!”
>
> We should never forget that when the Lord Jesus came into the world, He served as a carpenter. The greater part of His life was spent in the shop in Nazareth.
>
> Paul was a tentmaker. He considered it an important part of his ministry.
>
> It is a mistake to think that work is a result of the entrance of sin. Before sin entered, Adam was placed in the garden to dress it and to keep it (Gen. 2:15). The curse involved the toil and sweat that accompany work (Gen. 3:19). Even in heaven there will be work, for “his servants shall serve him” (Rev. 22:3).
>
> Work is a blessing. Through it we find fulfillment of our need for creativity. The mind and body function best when we work diligently. When we are usefully occupied, we enjoy greater protection from sin, because “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do” (I. Watts). Thomas Watson said, “Idleness tempts the devil to tempt.” Honest, diligent, faithful work is a vital part of our Christian testimony. And the results of our labor may outlive us. As someone has said, “Everyone owes it to himself to provide himself with some useful occupation while his body is lying in the grave.” And William James said, “The great use of a life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” (Truths to Live By-Daily Devotional)

When I was a little boy I used to pray a simple prayer "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

I have only just a minute
Just sixty seconds in it;
Forced upon me—can’t refuse it,
Didn’t seek it, didn’t choose it
It's up to me to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it,
Give account if I abuse it;
Just a tiny little minute
But eternity is in it.

John Piper writes "Time is precious. We are fragile. Life is short. Eternity is long. Shall we not then enter on every venture with a vigilance like that of the young Jonathan Edwards when he wrote his fifth resolution: "Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time,

but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can;" which is really a subpoint of his sixth resolution: "Resolved, To live with all my might, while I do live" (The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 1, ed. Edward Hickman [Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974], xx). Yes, this can become compulsive and unhealthy But for those of us who need to hear it as an antidote to squandering the preciousness of irretrievable time, let us hear it. The church I serve is generous to me beyond all my deserving. As I write these words I am on a one-month leave to complete this book. I enter the month with a sense that every minute counts. O to be a faithful steward of the breath God has given me. Three texts resound in my ears. 1) "Redeem the time" (Ephesians 5:16, KJV). 2) "It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy" (1 Corinthians 4:2). 3) "His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10, author's translation).Surely God means for our minutes on earth to count for something significant. Paul said, "In the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain" (Philippians 2:16). In the same way, I have good hope from the Lord that my "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58, KJV). And I commend this promise to you. No minute need be lived in vain. Eternity will render it significant if lived in faith for the glory of God. In the end we rest in this: "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15). (A Godward Life - Part 2)

Time management consultant Antonio Herrera asked the participants in a seminar, “If we had to buy time, would there be any difference in how we would spend it? Would the days of our lives be used more wisely?” He asked, “What if you had to pay in advance one hundred dollars an hour for the time allotted to you? Would you waste it?” The answer should be obvious.

Pause and make a list of the things you value most in your life. Undoubtedly God, Jesus, family, etc would be at the top of the list. But did you list "time?" Asked what he would do if he knew Christ would return in three days, George Whitefield replied, "I would do just what I have scheduled to do." God by Your Spirit make of imitators of such men. Amen

The Christian should treasure every second of time, savoring the moments for the glory of his Lord. These “few precious days,” to quote a phrase from a song, are but a prelude to eternity.

TIME IS SIGNIFICANT because it is so rare. It is completely irretrievable. You can never repeat it or relive it. There is no such thing as a literal instant replay. That appears only on film. It travels alongside us every day, yet it has eternity wrapped up in it. Although this is true, time often seems relative, doesn’t it? For example, two weeks on a vacation is not at all like two weeks on a diet. Also, some people can stay longer in an hour than others can in a week! Ben Franklin said of time, “ … that is the stuff life is made of.” Time forms life’s building blocks. The philosopher William James once said, “The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” —Lloyd Cory, Quote Unquote

Instead of spending our lives or wasting our lives, we must "invest our lives" in those things that are eternal! The world speaks of spending time, while Paul commands us to buy time. Indeed, time should not be spent, it should be invested in the kingdom of God.

Where did we come up with this concept of "spare time," anyway? Is there any time for which we aren't accountable to God? Is there any time during which God doesn't care what you are doing? No Christian has ever had spare time. You may have spare time from labor or necessity, you may stop working and refresh yourself, but no Christian ever had time off from living like a Christian. —**William Law**

Warren Wiersbe on Psalm 90:12 - We live a day at a time. Usually, we don't number our days; we number our years. When you have a birthday and someone asks how old you are, you tell them your age in the number of years. **But we'd better number our days, because we live a day at a time.** "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mt. 6:11). God has ordained that the entire universe functions a day at a time. We live from the heart. "So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." We need to take care of the heart. That's why Solomon wrote in Proverbs 4:23, "Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it spring the issues of life." **What is in your heart will direct your life**. We also live by God's wisdom. Wisdom is knowing and having discernment, so that we can apply the truth of the Word of God at the right time, in the right way, with the right motive. Wisdom comes from the Word of God and from getting to know Him and ourselves better. Moses gives the secret of making life count--live it a day at a time. You need God's help to apply His Word to your life. Live as though this may be your last day. Ask God for the wisdom you need and apply it by faith. (Prayer, Praise and Promises)

Wasting time is really wasting a life. One thing we cannot recycle is wasted time.

Counting time is not nearly so important as making time count.

Don’t just mark time; use time to make your mark.

Time is a little chunk of eternity that God has given us.

The Lord wants our precious time—not our spare time.

Time passes quickly. We cannot buy it. We can do nothing but make good use of it.

Time flies; but remember, you are the navigator.

Lost time is never found. And when you kill time, remember that it has no resurrection. Horace Mann said it this way "Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever."

Time is a precious gift of God, so precious that it is He only gives in the smallest possible increments—moment by moment.'

Vance Havner - We ought to watch and pray because of the shortness of the time, the seriousness of the hour, and the shallowness of our nature.

A converted Hindu who had been given a Bible and a clock said, "The clock will tell me how time goes, and the Bible will tell me how to redeem it."

Most time is wasted, not in hours, but in minutes. A bucket with a small hole in the bottom gets just as empty as a bucket that is deliberately kicked over. Paul Meyer

The chief value of an anniversary is to call us to greater faithfulness in the time that is left. - William Manning

Don't let yesterday use up too much of today.—Will Rogers

Time is life—nothing more, nothing less. The way you spend your hours and your days is the way you spend your life.—John Boykin

Our greatest danger in life is in permitting the urgent things to crowd out the important. Charles Hummel (Tyranny of the Urgent)

Asked what he would do if he knew Christ would return in three days, George Whitefield replied, "I would do just what I have scheduled to do."

Pause and make a list of the things you value most in your life. Undoubtedly God, Jesus, family, etc would be at the top of the list. But did you list "time?"

Only eternal values can give meaning to temporal ones. Time must be the servant of eternity. Erwin Lutzer

The clock of life is wound but once,

And no man has the power

To say just when the hands will stop;

At late, or early hour.

Now is the only time we own

to do His precious will,

Do not wait until tomorrow;

For the clock may then be still.

-Anon.

Instead of counting the days,

make your days count.

Swindoll - I'D LIKE TO PLAY DEVIL'S ADVOCATE and tell you how to waste your time. Five proven ideas come immediately to mind: First, worry a lot. Start worrying early in the morning and intensify your anxiety as the day passes. Second, make hard-and-fast predictions. For example, one month before his July 1975 disappearance, Jimmy Hoffa announced: "I don't need bodyguards." Third, fix your attention on getting rich. You'll get a lot of innovative ideas from the secular bookshelves (I counted fourteen books on the subject last time I was in a bookstore), plus you'll fit right in with most of the hype pouring out of entrepreneurial seminars and high-pressure sales meetings. Fourth, compare yourself with others. Now, here's another real time-waster. If it's physical fitness you're into, comparing yourself with Arnold Schwarzenegger or Jane Fonda ought to keep you busy. Fifth, lengthen your list of enemies. If there's one thing above all others that will keep your wheels spinning, it's perfecting your skill at the Blame Game. Put these five surefire suggestions in motion and you will set new records in wasting valuable time.

We are to redeem the time because we ourselves are redeemed. Richard Chester

There is no time after time, but there is an eternity.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Indeed, let the redeemed of the Lord do so (redeem the time)!

Counting time is not as important as making time count.

Time is but the fringe of eternity. Anon.

We dare not waste time since we are living for and in eternity now. An hour lost is never found.

The greatest use of time is to spend it for something that will outlast it.

Eternity will reveal whether we have made the right use of time.

What we weave in time we wear in eternity. Anon.

"You can tie a knot in time that you cannot untie in all eternity."

Time is not a utility, it is an opportunity. Edward Norman

The less one has to do, the less time one finds to do it in.

The great weight of eternity hangs upon the small wire of time. Thomas Brooks

Time is not yours to dispose of as you please; it is a glorious talent that men must be accountable for as well as any other talent. Thomas Brooks

It is difficult for me to understand how an intelligent person can spend all of time building for this world and have no time for the future world. Billy Graham

Eternity depends upon this moment. Thomas Manton

We give so little thought to the fact that God made time as a preparation for eternity,

God hath given man a short time here upon earth, and yet upon this short time eternity depends. Jeremy Taylor

Right now counts for ever. R. C. Sproul

Kill time and you murder opportunity. Lost time is never found. Time can be wasted, but it can never be re-cycled. To waste time is to squander a gift from God.

A man has no time for which he is not accountable to God. If his very diversions are not governed by reason and religion he will one day suffer for the time he has spent in them. Thomas Watson

What is past cannot be recalled; what is future cannot be insured. Stephen Charnock

It is better to lose anything than to lose time; we can recover lost money, but time is irrecoverable. Chrysostom

Know the value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every minute of it.—Philip Chesterfield

No time like the present.

Isaac Watts

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,

Bears all its sons away;

They fly forgotten, as a dream

Dies at the opening day.

Time is not a commodity that can be stored for future use. It must be invested hour by hour, or else it is gone for ever. Thomas Edison

One today is worth two tomorrows. Benjamin Franklin

We live by demands when we should live by priorities. J. A. Motyer

Give me a Christian that counts his time more precious than gold. Joseph Alleine

Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do; but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do. Anon. (Think of David Brainerd)

Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of;

in nothing on which you might not pray for the blessing of God;

in nothing which you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed;

in nothing which you might not safely and properly be found doing if death should surprise you in the act. Richard Baxter

The historian writes concerning Hannibal that when he could have taken Rome he would not, and when he would he could not. We are to be men of opportunity--that is to say, we are to buy up the opportunity, to redeem the time. When God opens a gate He means that we should go through it, and pass into all the inheritance beyond. There was a king of Sicily who was called "The Lingerer," not because he stayed till opportunity came, but because he stayed till opportunity was lost. There is a time to wait and a time to act. Overlong waiting means loss of chance, for the king has passed by, and the gates are closed; but to wait patiently until everything is ripe for action is the very last expression of Christian culture. (J. Parker, D.D.)

("redeem the time") we have a remarkable revelation of Christian **privilege** and **responsibility** in days of calamity. Redeem suggests keen business acumen, the ability to know exactly what to buy, and when to buy. It is a strictly commercial term. Time indicates a special occasion, and therefore a special opportunity. Evil refers to evil in the effect it produces: evil is that which is hurtful, harmful, calamitous. -GCM

Time's Shortness by Thomas Watson

A sermon preached July 2, 1676, at the funeral of Pastor John Wells

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short." 1 Corinthians 7:29

The blessed Apostle in these words shows us what our station in the world is, and what all our secular enjoyments are. They are short and transient. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short." The text consists of two parts:

1. A kind address—"Brethren."

2. A seasonable admonition—"The time is short."

1. A kind address—"Brethren." The saints of God are brethren. They are cemented together with the blood of Christ. Then let there be no strife among them, seeing they are brethren (Genesis 13:8). Believers are regenerated by the same Spirit; they suck the same breasts—the promises; and wear the same garment—Christ's righteousness. They sit at the same board—the table of the Lord; and partake of the same glory—the inheritance in light (Colossians 1:12). Should they not love one another? There ought to be no contending among God's people—but as to who would love most.

Satan foments discord and warms himself at the fire of men's passions. If he cannot divide the spiritual members from their Head, he will endeavor to make them smite one against another. If he cannot keep the saints from heaven, he will endeavor to make them fight with one another along the way.

It was ill for Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's to fight with one another, when the Canaanite was in the land (Genesis 13:7). It is an ill time for mariners to be fighting, when the enemy is boring a hole in the bottom of the ship. Take heed that the popish enemy does not enter at your breaches.

Let Christians remember they are brethren. Unity among brethren resembles the harmony among angels. Psalm 133:1-3: "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, as the dew of Hermon." It is compared to ointment because it is sweet; and compared to the dew of Hermon because it makes everything fruitful. The primitive Christians were of one heart (Acts 4:32).

Let us pray that that golden motto may be written upon the churches: "One heart and one way" (Jeremiah 32:39). What a blessed place will heaven be, where our light shall be clear, our love shall be perfect, and our joy shall be full.

2. A seasonable admonition—"The time is short." This word "time" I shall take more strictly as the term and period of man's life. The time is short. The diverse instances of mortality, may serve as so many commentaries upon the text. The Greek word for "short" alludes to mariners who roll up their sails and bring them into a narrow compass when the ship draws near the harbor. Though the sails of man's life were spread larger in the times of the patriarchs, now God is folding up these sails in a narrower compass: "The

time is short." The Scripture frequently asserts the brevity and transitoriness of man's life. Psalm 89:47: "Remember how short my time is." Psalm 39:5: "Behold, You have made my days as a hand-breadth," which is the least of the geometrical measures.

Job used three elegant metaphors to set forth the shortness of man's life. Job 9:25-26: "My life passes more swiftly than a runner. It disappears like a swift boat, like an eagle that swoops down on its prey." If we look to the land, man's life is like a swift runner. If we look to the sea, it is like a swift ship. If we look to the air, there it is like a flying eagle.

Life is compared to a cloud (Job 7:9). A cloud is a vapor drawn up by the sun into the middle region of the air. When this cloud comes to its full proportion, it is soon dispersed and blown away with the wind. Life gathers as a cloud, bigger and bigger—but all of a sudden it is dissipated by death. Our life is but a breath, even less. Psalm 39:5: "My life is no longer than the width of my hand. An entire lifetime is just a moment to you; human existence is but a breath." There is but a span between the cradle and the grave. Solomon said, "There is a time to be born—and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3:2)—but mentions no time of living—as if that were so short, it were not worth speaking of.

QUESTION. In what sense is the time of life short?

ANSWER. It is short in respect to the uncertainty—it may instantly expire. Our time is short, because of the uncertainty. Hezekiah, it is true, had a lease of fifteen years sealed (Isaiah 38:5)—but we have no such lease sealed for us—death may be within a day's march.

There are so many casualties, that it is a wonder if the slender thread of our life is not cut off by an untimely death. Have you not seen a virgin on the same day dressed in her bridal apparel—and her winding sheet?

Time is short in respect to its improvement. If we reckon that for time which is well-spent, then time is brought into a narrow compass indeed. A great part of our time lies fallow. Take from our life all the time of eating, drinking, sleeping, besides idle impertinences—and then how short is our time! How little is the time wherein we can truly say, "This time I have lived!" Oh, how little is the time which is spent with God! Time misemployed is not time lived—but time lost.

Time is short compared with eternity. There is no telescope which can see to the end of eternity. Eternity is a day which has no sun setting. It is a circle—without beginning or end. Eternity is a sum which can never be numbered, a line which can never be measured. Reckon as many millions of years as there have been minutes since the creation, and they stand as ciphers in eternity. The most elevated strains of rhetoric cannot reach eternity. It is a sea without bottom—or banks. Time may be compared to a spot of earth lying at the mouth of the great ocean. Time is a spot on this side of eternity. What a little spot of that, is man's life! Thus you see, in this sense, time is short.

It will not be long before the silver cord is loosed and the golden bow broken (Ecclesiastes 12:6). Time goes on apace. The poets painted time with wings, because it flies so fast. In Joshua's days, when the sun and moon stood still, time went on. In Hezekiah's reign, when the sun went ten degrees backward, time went forward. Our whole life is nothing else but a passage to death—where there is no staying by the way or slacking our pace.

USE 1. See what a poor inconsiderable thing life is. The time is short, and upon this small wire of time hangs the weight of eternity. Life is but a short scene acted here. It is but a vapor or puff of wind (James 4:14). Life is made up of a few flying minutes. Oh, then, how imprudent are those, who will damn their souls to save their lives! He would be unwise who, to preserve a short lease, would lose his inheritance. How many there are who, to preserve this short life, will take sinful courses, defraud and oppress and build up an estate—but will pull down their souls! Many, to save their skins, will destroy their souls.

It is better to endure a blow on our body or estate—than suffer our precious soul to be damaged. The soul is the man of the man. The soul is the princely part, crowned with reason. It carries in it some faint idea or resemblance of God. The soul is a rich diamond set in clay. What folly it is to save the clay—and lose the diamond! Tiberius the emperor, for a drink of water—lost his kingdom!

USE 2. EXHORTATION.

BRANCH 1. Is time so uncertain and short? Let us often contemplate the shortness of life. Feathers swim upon the water—but gold sinks into it. Light, feathery people float in vanity—but serious Christians sink deep into the thoughts of their death. Deuteronomy 32:29: "Oh, that they were wise—that they would consider their latter end." Forgetfulness of the latter end—makes life sinful—and death formidable. People naturally shrink back from the thoughts of death. Amos 6:3: "They put far away from them the evil day." When they are young, they hope they shall spin out life to the blossoming of the almond tree. When old age comes, they hope to renew their strength as the eagle, though their bodies are subject to corruption and they feel the symptoms of mortality in them. Deafness of hearing—is death creeping in at the ear. Dimness of sight—is death creeping in at the eye. Yet they are so frantic as to persuade themselves of long life. Bodily diseases are but death's harbingers which go before to prepare a lodging for death. Why, then, do men dream of an earthly eternity? Psalm 49:11: "Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever." Where is

the man who contemplates time's shortness, or makes another's death a looking-glass in which he may see his own dying face?

Some may say this discourse of the shortness of time is fit for such as are mortally ill, whom the physicians have given over. But those who are in health, may live many years.

Though your blood is fresh in your veins, and your bones are full of marrow—you know not how short your time may be. He was not sick nor in fear of sickness who said, "Soul, take your ease—eat, drink, and enjoy yourself." But that very night, death terminated his life (Luke 12:20). A strong constitution is no guarantee of a long life. People likely enough to live, have been suddenly taken away by convulsions and strokes. How soon may death sound its alarm! It is reported of Zelenchus that the first he brought into his new house, was a tombstone. Oh, meditate on the transitoriness and brittleness of life! Think often of your tombstone!

QUESTION. What advantage will accrue to us, by often thinking of our short stay here?

ANSWER 1. Meditation on the shortness of time would cool the heat of our affections for the WORLD. These visible objects please the fancy—but they do not so much delight us—as delude us. They are suddenly gone from us. Worldly things are like a fair picture drawn on the ice—which the sun quickly melts.

The time is short, so why should we overly love that which we cannot keep over long? 1 Corinthians 7:31: "The fashion (or pageant) of the world passes away." Time passes away as a ship in full sail. This, thought on seriously, would mortify covetousness. Paul looked upon himself as ready to loosen anchor and be gone. His love to the world had already died, Galatians 6:14: "The world is crucified to me—and I unto the world." Who would covet that which has neither contentment nor continuance?

Peter had the same view in 2 Peter 1:14: "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Among the Grecians, the city of Sparta had a king for a year and then he was to lay down his crown—which made everyone strive not to be king. Why should we so toil about the world as if we were to live here forever? What need is there for a long provision—if it is for a short way? If we have enough to bear our charges to heaven, that should suffice. Suppose a man's lease were ready to expire and he should fall to building and planting; would not he be judged to be foolish? When our time is so very short now, to follow the world immoderately, as if we would fetch happiness out of the earth which God has cursed—is a degree of madness. We shall soon have no need of the earth—but to be buried in it!

ANSWER 2. Meditation on the shortness of time should be a means to HUMBLE us. Augustine calls humility the mother of the graces. Balm sinks to the bottom of the water. A good Christian sinks low in humility. And what can sooner pull down the flags and banners of pride—than to consider we are shortly dropping into the dust! The priest was to cast the feathers of the fowls by the place of the ashes (Leviticus 1:16). Just so, all your feathers of honor must shortly lie in the ashes. Shall not he who is clothed with mortality—be clothed with humility? The thoughts of the grave—should bury our pride.

ANSWER 3. Meditation on the shortness of time, would hasten our REPENTANCE. Repentance is as necessary, as heaven. As moisture and natural heat preserve life—so repenting tears and a heart burning with love preserve the soul. It is natural to delay repentance. We say with Haggai 1:2, "The time is not yet come." But, the text says, the time is short. Our life is a candle, which is soon blown out.

The thoughts of time's uncertainty and swiftness, would keep us from putting off our repentance. There is no time for us to delay. It is observed of the birds of Norway, that they fly faster than the birds of other countries. By the instinct of nature, knowing the days in that climate to be very short, they therefore make more haste to their nests. The consideration of short abode here, will make us avoid delays and fly faster to heaven upon the wing of repentance.

ANSWER 4. Meditation on the shortness of time would give us an antidote against the TEMPTATIONS of Satan. Temptation is Satan's eldest daughter, who woos for him. Satan does more mischief by his wiles—than his darts. He knows how to suit his temptation, as the farmer knows what seed is proper for such a soil. Satan tempted Achan with a wedge of gold; and David with beauty. It is hard to keep up the banks of grace against the sea of temptation. I know no better remedy against Satan's immodest solicitations than this text: "the time is short."

"What, Satan, do you tempt me to vanity—when I am going to give up my accounts at the judgment? Shall I now be sinning—when tomorrow I may be dying! How shall I look my judge in the face!" Christian, when Satan sets sinful pleasure before you, show him a death's-head. This will make temptations vanish.

ANSWER 5. The consideration of the shortness of our stay in the world would be a help to TEMPERANCE. It would make us sober and moderate in the use of worldly comforts. By excess, we turn lawful things into sinful things. The bee may suck a little honey from the flower—but put it into a barrel of honey—and it is drowned. We may with Jonathan dip the end of the rod in honey—but not thrust it in too far. The flesh, when pampered, rebels. The best preservative against intemperance is this—the time is short!

The Egyptians at their great banquets, used to bring in the image of a dead man, and say to their guests, "Look upon this—and

proceed in your banquet." An excellent antidote against excess. Joseph of Arimathea erected a sepulcher in his garden—to spice his flowery delights with the thoughts of death.

ANSWER 6. Meditation on the shortness of time would much mitigate our grief for the loss of dear RELATIONS. It is observable that when the Apostle said, "The time is short," he immediately added. "Let those who weep be as if they wept not."

No doubt the loss of relations is grievous to the fleshly part. It is like pulling a limb from the body. When God strikes us in our right eye—we weep. It is lawful to give vent to our grief. Joseph wept over his dead father. But though true religion does not banish grief, it bounds it. We must weep—as if we wept not. Rachel's sin was that she refused to be comforted (Matthew 2:18). If anything can stop the issue of sorrow, at least assuage it, it is this, "The time is short." We shall shortly have our losses made up and enjoy our godly relations again in heaven!

ANSWER 7. Meditation on the shortness of time would make us highly value GRACE. Time is short—but grace is forever. 1 John 2:27: "The anointing which you have received from Him abides in you." Grace is a blossom of eternity; it is an immortal seed (1 John 3:9). Grace is not blasted by death—but transplanted into a better soil. Grace is not a lease which soon expires—but an inheritance entailed forever. He who has true grace can no more lose it—than the angels can, who are fixed in their heavenly orb. Grace shall outlast time—and run parallel with eternity.

BRANCH 2. If time is so short and winged, take heed of MISSPENDING this short time. To misspend time, is the worse wastefulness.

1. Take heed of spending time UNPROFITABLY. Domitian wasted much of his time in catching flies. Many live merely to cumber the ground. Judges 10:4: "Jair had thirty sons who rode around on thirty donkeys" and they died. So it may be said, such a one was born in the reign of such a king and he possessed such an estate—and he died. His life was scarcely worth a prayer—or his death worth a tear. An idle person is a cipher in the world—and God writes down no ciphers in the Book of Life. Many are like the wood of the vine—useless. Ezekiel 15:3: "Will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?"

Too many resemble the lilies which do not toil, neither do they spin. They spend their time as the emperor Caligula. He was at a great expense to provide a navy, and when it was provided he sent his mariners to sea to gather cockle-shells, and so they sailed home again. God has furnished men with precious time wherein they may work out salvation—and they employ it in foolish vanities. What reward can be expected—when there is no work done? Who is crowned as a conqueror—who never fights? Matthew 25:30: "Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness!"

2. Take heed of spending time VICIOUSLY. Many spend their short time in drinking, gaming, and whoring. Esau lost the blessing, while he was hunting. Many lose heaven, while they hunt after sinful pleasures. Sin is boiled to a great height in this age. Men count it a shame, not to be vile. They are steeped and boiled in wickedness! They live in the world to infect others—as the cockatrice with its breath poisons the herbs. What a dreadful account will they have to give, who have nothing to show God but their sins!

BRANCH 3. If the time of life is so short, let us IMPROVE it. Ephesians 5:16: "Redeeming the time." If a man had but a short time on a farm, he would make the best improvement of it and get as good a crop as he could out of it before he left it. The thoughts of our short stay here on earth, should make us improve this little inch of time.'

That we may do this better, remember we are accountable to God for our time. God will say, "What have you done with your time?" If a master entrusts his steward with money and goods—he expects that he should give him an account of what he has done with them—and how he has employed them. All of us are stewards, and God will call us to a reckoning and say, "What have you done with the talent of time which I entrusted you with?"

QUESTION: How should we improve this short time?

ANSWER: In general, mind salvation work (Philippians 2:12). He who lays up gold and silver is wise for his children—but he who gets salvation is wise for himself.

Especially, improve this short time by a serious examination. Examine how the case stands between God and your souls. 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves." Examine yourselves—as the goldsmith does his gold. Time is short, and what if God should say this night, "Give an account of your stewardship!"

Reckon with yourselves about your debts. Are your debts paid—and your sins pardoned? Reckon with yourselves about making your will. Time is short; you may die before night. Have you made your will? I mean, in a spiritual sense, have you given up your will to God and, by solemn vow—set seal to the will? They are most fit to resign their souls to God—who have resigned their wills to Him.

Call yourselves to account about your evidences for heaven. Are your evidences ready? Your desires are your evidences. Do you

desire Christ for Himself—as beauty is loved for itself? Can nothing quench your thirst but Christ's blood? Is your desire quickened into endeavor? This is a blessed sign.

For lack of this self-examination, many who are well known to others—are unknown to themselves. They know not where they shall go when they die—or to what coast they shall sail—to hell or to heaven.

Improve this short time, by laying hold of all the seasons and opportunities for your souls. The mariner takes the fittest season; he sets to sea while the wind blows. Time is short, and opportunity (which is the cream of time) is shorter. Let not the seasons of mercy slip away unimproved.

While God's Spirit strives with you, nourish His sweet whispers and motions. When the dove came flying to the windows of the ark, Noah reached out his hand and pulled it into the ark. So when God's Spirit (this blessed dove) comes to you, entertain and welcome Him into the ark of your souls. If you repulse the Spirit, He may refuse to strive any more. Gospel seasons, though they are sweet, are swift.

While God's ministers are with you, make use of them. Zechariah 1:5: "The prophets, do they live forever?" Their time (by reason of their labors) is scarcely so long as others. We read of lamps within the pitchers in judges 7:16. Ministers are lamps—but these lamps are in earthen pitchers, which soon break. Though ministers carry the word of life in their mouths—yet they carry death in their faces! Improve their labors while you have them. They thirst for your happiness and, as so many bells—would chime in your souls to Christ.

Improve this short time by keeping up a close communion with God. 1 John 1:3: "Our communion is with the Father." This sweet communion with God is kept up by holy meditation. Genesis 24:63: "Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening." Meditation cements divine truths into the mind. It brings God and the soul together. Meditation is the bellows of the affections. It gives a sight and a taste of invisible glory. Psalm 104:34: "My meditation of Him shall be sweet."

Communion with God is kept up by prayer. Praying days are ascension days. Caligula placed his effigies in the capitol, whispering in Jupiter's ears. Prayer whispers in God's ears. It is a secret parley and conversation with God. On this mount of prayer, the soul has many sweet transfigurations.

Improve this short time by doing all the service you can for God. Wisdom may be learned from an enemy. Satan is more fierce because he knows his time is short (Revelation 12:12). We would act more vigorously for God seeing our time is short. Our lives should be as jewels—though little in quantity yet great in value. Paul knew his stay in the world was short, therefore, how zealous and active was he for God while he lived! 1 Corinthians 15:10: "I labored more abundantly than they all." Paul's obedience did not move as slowly as the sun on the dial—but as swift as the sun in the sky. Is time short? Let us be "God-exalters." Let us bring glory to God in doing good to others. As aromatic trees sweat out their precious oils, so should we lay out our strength for the good of others.

Let us do good to their souls and convince the ignorant, strengthen the weak, and bring back the wandering. A good Christian is both a diamond and a lodestone—a diamond sparkling in sanctity; and a lodestone for his attractive virtue in drawing others to Christ.

Let us do good to their bodies. Many at this day say to their sorrows, "You are our companions." Let our fingers drop with the myrrh of liberality. Hebrews 13:16: "Don't forget to do good and to share what you have with those in need, for such sacrifices are very pleasing to God." Let us feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and be temporal saviors to others.

Could we thus improve our time—our lives, though short, would be sweet. This would be the way to cast abroad a fragrant, redolent smell in God's church, like the orange trees which perfume the air where they grow.

Could we thus improve our time, we might have our consciences drawing up a certificate for us, as in 2 Corinthians 1:12. Then it does not matter if the world censures—as long as conscience acquits; it does not matter how cross the wheels go—if the clock strikes rightly.

Could we thus improve our time, we might have an easy and joyful passage out of the world. This was Hezekiah's comfort when he thought he was lying on his deathbed. 2 Kings 20:3: "I beseech You, O Lord, remember how I have done that which is good in Your sight." To improve time aright answers God's cost, credits true religion, and saves the soul.

USE 3. Let this strike terror into every wicked person who exhausts his strength in sin; his time is short—and then begins his hell. He spends his life in a frolic. He takes the timbrel and harp and rejoices at the sound of the organ (Job 21:12). But the time is shortly coming, when all his mirth shall cease. Revelation 18:22, "Never again will the sound of music be heard there—no more harps, songs, flutes, or trumpets." "All the fancy things you loved so much are gone. The luxuries and splendor that you prized so much will never be yours again. They are gone forever." Revelation 18:14. The grave buries all a sinner's joy. When a wicked man dies—the

devil gets a windfall.

Satan (in Samuel's shape) said to Saul, 1 Samuel 28:19, "You shall be with me tomorrow." The sinner has his lusts today—and may be with the devil tomorrow! Who would envy the wicked their honor or pleasure? They must pay dearly for it! They have a short feast—but a long reckoning! For a drop of mirth, they must drink a sea of wrath! And who knows the power of that wrath? Bellarmine said that if a man had a sight of hell—it would be enough to make a drunken person sober.

Hell is the epitome of torment. The sacrifice of jealousy was to have no oil nor frankincense put to it (Numbers 5:15). In hell, there is no oil of mercy put to the torments of the wicked to assuage them; nor is there any incense of prayer to appease God's wrath. Oh, that sinners would in time break off their iniquities! What has become of their intellect—have they sinned away reason as well as conscience? The time of life is short—but the torments of hell are lengthened out! Revelation 14:11: "The smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever!"

USE 4. Here is a light side of the text to the godly. They may be glad that their time here is short. They cannot really live—but by dying. Behold, there is honey at the end of the rod.

The time being short, their sinning time cannot be long. Sin is a troublesome inmate. Romans 7:24 says that Paul, that bird of paradise, sighed and groaned under corruption. A child of God mingles sin with his duties. He cannot write a copy of holiness, without blotting. There's a part of a regenerate heart that sides with Satan. But be of good comfort, the time is short. It is but for a short while, Christians, that you shall be combating a proud, unbelieving heart. The year of release is coming. Death does to the godly as the angel did to Peter—it smites them, and makes their chains of sin fall off!

The time being short, their working time cannot be long. In this life, much work is cut out. There is the work of the hand, as the artificer works in his trade (Proverbs 10:4). There is the work of the head. Notions are the children of the brain, and there is labor in bringing them forth. There is the work of the heart, which is the hardest work—to search, cleanse, and watch the heart. As a clock sometimes goes faster, sometimes slower, so the heart sometimes goes faster in sin, sometimes slower in duty. But here is the saint's comfort—their working time is short. Revelation 14:13: "They will rest from their labors." When their bodies return to dust—their souls return to rest.

The time being short, their suffering time cannot be long. Life is laden with trouble, "How frail is humanity! How short is life, and how full of trouble!" Job 14:1. You may as well separate weight from lead—as trouble from a man's life. We come into the world with a cry—and go out with a groan! Everyone has his yoke, and it is well if there is not a nail in it. Though the cross is heavy—we have but a little way to carry it. Death will give the godly a writ of ease. Job 3:17: "There (in the grave) the wicked cease from troubling."

The time being short, their waiting time cannot be long. The godly shall not be long out of heaven. While the blessed angels see the orient beauties which shine in God's face, believers live far from court, being imprisoned in the body. Here they rather desire God—than enjoy Him. But the time is short, perhaps a few days or hours—and the saints shall be solacing themselves in the light of God's countenance. They shall leave their pillow of thorns—and lay their head on Christ's bosom! Faith gives a propriety in God; death gives a possession. The wagons and chariots came rattling to old Jacob—but they were to carry him to his son, Joseph. Death's chariot wheels may come rattling to a believer—but it is to carry him home to his Father's house!

In that paradise of God, a Christian shall have more than he can ever imagine (Ephesians 3:20). He can imagine, "What if every mountain were a pearl, every flower a ruby, every sand in the sea a diamond, the whole globe a shining gem?" But all his thoughts are too low and dwarf-like to reach the glory of the celestial pyramids. The heavenly reward (as Augustine said) exceeds faith—and, as the time is short, a Christian shall be in heaven before he is aware. Then he shall bathe his soul in those perfumed pleasures of paradise, which run at God's right hand forevermore!

I am done with the text. Let me speak to the occasion. We are meeting here to commemorate the death of an eminent minister in this city, Mr. John Wells. I am sorry I am the actor in this mournful scene. But being requested by him in his life (in case I survived), I was willing to do this last office of love.

There has been a great mortality of ministers lately. The men of the world need not be so fierce against God's ministers; they will not trouble them long. God's taking away His ministers so fast (two in a day) bodes much evil. It presages the fall of a house—when the pillars are removed.

Concerning this reverend brother deceased, it is not my purpose to use any exaggerated eulogies; only give me permission to strew a few flowers upon his casket.

Our worthy friend was endued with learning and volubleness of speech. He could rightly divide the Word as a workman who needed not to be ashamed. He had seals to his ministry. Some of his hearers might call him their spiritual father.

Regarding his piety, he was not only a follower of that which was good—but a leader. He said not long before his death, that he was

sure that he loved God. He was fixed to his principles. Though he is by death a fallen star, he was not a wandering star.

His disposition was not morose—but affable. He was a man of candor and courtesy. He obliged and won the affections of many to him. When grace and sweetness of nature meet—it is like a diamond in a gold ring.

Regarding his preaching, he preached intelligibly to the capacity of his assembly of hearers, because he was sure that a minister would never touch the hearts of his hearers if he shot over their heads. Ministers should be stars to give light, not clouds to darken the truth. Clearness is the grace of speech. Gregory Nazianzen preached plainly to the ignorant—yet was admired by the learned.

He was conscientious and painstaking in his work. Sloth in a minister, is as bad as sleep in a sentinel. He would not offer that to God, that which cost him nothing. Christ bled for souls; well may we sweat. This good man, like a candle, consumed himself while he gave light to others.

He was a man of a forgiving spirit. He was not troubled with the overflowing of gall. Kindnesses he wrote in marble; injuries he forgot. He was very charitable. The backs and bellies of the poor, were the furrows where he sowed the seeds of his liberality. But though his charity shone, he did not care that it might blaze. He is now taken from the evil to come.

For you who sat under his ministry, let me tell you that you have lost a friend and a guide. You have cause to be dear mourners. Let me request only this of you, that you would remember the many good instructions given you. Though he is dead, let not his sermons die, too—but labor to copy them in your lives.

POST FOR 2016 - DUPLICATES MUCH OF WHAT IS WRITTEN ABOVE…

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE – What does 2016 hold for each of us beloved? Our Father knows (best). We do not. G Campbell Morgan wisely said therefore "Let the year be given to God in its every moment! The year is made up of minutes: let these be watched as having been dedicated to God! It is in the sanctification of the small that hallowing of the large is secure."

"Time that is past we can never recall.

Of time to come, we are not sure at all.

Only the present is now in our power,

Therefore, redeem and improve every hour." -Anonymous

Time is a strange commodity -- we cannot save it, retrieve it, relive it, stretch it, borrow it, loan it, stop it or store it , but can only use it or lose it. We can't call "time out" in the game of life and there are no "instant replays" as in the game of football. Job in the midst of the trial of his life was very sensitive to the brevity of life declaring "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle…my life is but breath… my days are swifter than a runner. They flee away. They slip by like reed boats, like an eagle that swoops on its prey. Man, who is born of woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. Like a flower he comes forth and withers. He flees like a shadow and does not remain." (Job 7:6-7, 9:25-26, 14:1-2) A poet phrased it well -- "When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept. When as a youth I dreamed and talked, time walked. When I became a full grown man, time ran. When older still I daily grew, time flew. Soon I shall find in traveling on, time gone." And so while we cannot control the length of our days, yet by God's grace we can control their depth, for we know that our Redeemer lives (Job 19:25) and that He is on our side (Ps 124:1-2-note, cf Ro 8:31-32-note).

Our vigor is fleeting, our best years are brief,

Our youth passes quickly—time's ever a thief;

But hope yet becomes us—death's sting holds no power;

We have a Redeemer—an unfailing Tower. —Gustafson

James wrote you "do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." (James 4:15) When the great artist Raphael died at the early age of 37, friends and relatives carried his marvelous but unfinished painting The Transfiguration in the funeral procession. His family felt that because of the limited time he was allotted to use his creative genius, the painting was an appropriate symbol of his unfulfilled earthly aspirations. That half-completed picture has another meaning--a message that should impress itself on all of us: Life is fleeting and death may come unexpectedly. We should treasure each hour as a gift of great value and use it to the best advantage. And so we do well to pray the prayer of Moses the man of God "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born, or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God…. Our lives last seventy years or, if we are strong, eighty years. Even the best of them are struggle and sorrow; indeed, they pass quickly and we fly away….SO TEACH US to number our DAYS, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom." (Ps 90:1-2, 10, 12-note) The root meaning of the verb translated

"NUMBER" is "to weigh" or "to measure." We are to place each DAY in the divine balance so that it tips the scales in such a way that will bring glory to God and blessing to the lives of others. Remember that there is no time after time, but there is an eternity. Indeed, time is but the fringe of eternity!

Reflect for a moment what time of day it would be today if Moses' normal life span of "70 years" were were squeezed into a single 24-hour day. For example, if you are 59, the time is approximately 8:30pm. For me as I approach my 70th birthday, it would be near midnight! In fact, this Christmas I considered asking my children for a watch called the "Tikker" which not only tells time but calculates your estimated life span, and displays a running countdown of your remaining time! It is advertised as the watch "that counts down your life, just so you can make every second count!" That's not a bad tagline Biblically speaking! So the question is…

How much time? We are never sure,

But at least we have today

To seek to do the Master's will,

In all we do and say. —Fitzhugh

David a man after God's own heart echoed a prayer similar to Moses -- "LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my DAYS are numbered--how fleeting my life is." (Ps 39:4, NLT) Did you notice that the prayers of both men specify "DAYS" not years? Most men number their life in years, but wise men number their lives in DAYS. David goes on to write "BEHOLD, Thou hast made my DAYS as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Thy sight. Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. Selah…. And now Lord what do I wait for? My hope is in You" (Ps 39:5,7-note) For what are you waiting? And how can you be sure that what you're waiting for is going to come to pass? In light of the brevity of life, David's HOPE was in Jehovah. Biblical hope is not "hope so," but "hope sure," a mindset that gives us an absolute assurance that God will do good to us in the future. The "Tikker" is ticking. Today is the DAY for us to seek God's presence and power to enable us to be the people He wants us to be. And finding HOPE in our eternal God gives meaning for our daily lives however long or short. As Spurgeon explains "a handbreadth is one of the shortest natural measures, being the breadth of four fingers; such is the brevity of life, by divine appointment; God hath made it so, fixing the period in wisdom. David's "BEHOLD" calls us to attention. To some the thoughts of life's hastiness will bring the most acute pain, but to others the most solemn earnestness. How well should those live who are to live so little! Is my earthly pilgrimage so brief? Then let me watch every step of it, that in the little time there may be much of grace. Selah – Pause and reflect on these things remembering that it is not HOW LONG you live that counts, but HOW WELL you live. Don't spend time. Invest it! Don't spend it on futility. Invest it in eternity! "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Eccl 9:10).

One life for Christ is all I have,

One life for Him so dear;

One life for doing all I can

With every passing year. —Brandt

Moses and David were both seeking God's wisdom to live in the eternal now, to live in light of eternity, knowing that TODAY is the only DAY of which one can be certain. We need to give God our days, confident that He will take care of our tomorrows. "Yesterday is but a cancelled check. Tomorrow is a promissory note. Today is all of the cash that you have. Spend it wisely." Indeed, we are stewards of every God-given DAY. DAYS wasted can never be recovered. No man ever possessed the same moment twice! One DAY we will all give an account for the opportunities God gave us each day of our life (2Cor 5:10-note). We have all been allotted the same amount of time each day. May God grant that we learn to view every minute as precious, seeking to use it for His glory, for as the poet put it "I have only just a minute - only 60 seconds in it./ Forced upon me - can't refuse it/ But it's up to me just how I use it; I must suffer if I lose it./ Give account if I abuse it./ Just a tiny little minute - but eternity is in it." Amen

SO THE QUESTION IS "AM I REDEEMING THE TIME OF MY LIFE?" To help answer that question ask yourself what do you really value most in life? Undoubtedly God, Jesus, family, etc are at the top of your list. But did you remember to include "TIME?" Ephesians 5:15-16-note has been called the Bible's key to TIME MANAGEMENT. In these passages Paul commands all believers "Therefore (because we have been awakened from spiritual stupor and spiritual death and have the light of Christ – Eph 5:14-note) **BE CAREFUL** (a command to continually take heed, be alert, be vigilant, to discern with Spirit enabled vision) how you walk, not as unwise men (foolishly), but as wise, **MAKING THE MOST OF** (**REDEEMING**) THE OPPORTUNITY (Kairos) because the days are evil." (Eph 5:16) Notice that the evil of our day should motivate us to redeem the time each day. C H Spurgeon paraphrases Eph 5:16-note-- "See then that ye walk circumspectly (being careful to consider all circumstances and all possible consequences), not carelessly, not thinking that it is of no importance how you live; but looking all round you, "walk circumspectly," watching lest even in seeking one good thing you spoil another." In other words, if we walk wisely, we will be careful not to let the good steal God's best!

Charles Hummel, author of "Tyranny of the Urgent," wrote that our "greatest danger is letting the urgent (secular, temporal) things crowd out the important (divine, eternal things)." Our problem is that too often we live by life's demands, instead of by God's priorities. Remember that life is too short for us to do everything we want to do, but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do.

Paul gives a parallel command in Colossians to "Conduct (command to make this your habitual practice enabled by the Spirit) yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, **MAKING THE MOST OF** (same verb as Eph 5:16) the **OPPORTUNITY** (KAIROS). Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." (Col 4:5-6-note) The verb **MAKING THE MOST OF** (**REDEEMING**) (Eph 5:16, Col 4:5) literally means to "buy out of the market place" as would a wise merchant diligently seeking the best bargains, taking care not to miss the fleeting "opportunities!" MAKING THE MOST OF is in the present tense which calls for us to make redemption of time our daily practice, buying up the strategic opportunities which God providentially places in our path. If we are walking wisely (Eph 5:15-note), filled with (continually controlled and enabled by) God's Spirit (Eph 5:18-note), we will be spiritually alert to divine OPPORTUNITIES and will begin to view people and circumstances not simply as encounters (or irritations) but as opportunities (and "invitations") to impact eternity, as we learn to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2Cor 4:18-note).

Think of redeeming the time this way – If each day someone gave you $1440 (the number of minutes in a day) and said spend it or lose it, most of us would be quite motivated to wisely spend every dollar! A survey asked "What do you have to live for?" to which 94% answered they were just enduring today and living for tomorrow. That is living unwisely (Eph 5:15-note). Too many people miss TODAY because they are worrying about TOMORROW (cf Jesus' words in Mt 6:34-note). Adrian Rogers said "We face the future out of breath, because we have been fighting tomorrow's battles today!" Instead of killing time, redeem it. Instead of counting the days, make your days count. "ETERNITY will be appreciated only in the measure that we have rightly handled TIME!" Spurgeon said "'NOW' should be the watchword of the wise." LATER may be too late! Right NOW counts for eternity. To make our life count for eternity, we must be wise in how we spend our time today. What will your eternal harvest be? A popular slogan says, "Life Is Short—Party Hard." But God, Who gives us eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, reminds us that "Life Is Short—Live It Well!" It's not how long you live that counts, but how well you live, for a life lived for God will count for eternity. To make the most of our earthly existence, we must lose ourselves in the will of God, living "the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God." (1Pe 4:2-note).

I do not ask for honor, fame

While life's short race I run,

But for a will to do Thy will

And then Thy glad "Well done." —Meadows

In Ephesians 5:16 the word **TIME** is the Greek word **KAIROS** which can also be translated as OPPORTUNITY (as in Col 4:5) or SEASON (Ps 1:3 in the Lxx). In ancient Greece "Kairos" was a mythological character who had a forelock by which you could seize him when you met him, but who was bald in the back, so once he had sped past (his statute had wings on his feet), he could not be seized again. And so kairos refers to a fixed and definite period of time during which something can be accomplished that cannot be accomplished after the time has passed. The idea of kairos is not "clock time" (Gk – chronos) but what one writer refers to as "kingdom opportunities." The time/opportunity for bringing forth fruit is the spring SEASON in which the tree bears fruit (Ps 1:3). Once the season has passed, there is no fruit. And so in a spiritual sense kairos is the time which God allots to each believer to bring forth "spiritual fruit." Therefore it behooves us, enabled by the Spirit, to "Seize the Day" (Carpe diem) because Tempus fugit (Time flies)! Kill time and you murder opportunity. History records that when Hannibal could have taken Rome he did not, and when he later sought to he could not. As Horace Mann put it "Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever." Kairos represents the best time to do something, the moment when circumstances are most suitable. Kairos can be a moment or a season, but always refers to specific times in which opportunity is "ripe", so that when the time passes, so does the opportunity.

Our English word **OPPORTUNITY** is derived from the Latin "ob portu." In ancient times before modern harbors, ships had to wait for the timing of the tide before they could make it safely to port. Thus "OB PORTU," described the ship waiting "FOR PORT," ready to seize the crucial moment when it could ride the tide into safe harbor. The captain knew that if he missed the passing tide, the ship would have to wait for another tide to come in. God gives each of us many "ob portu's", but we must be spiritually wise and Spirit filled in order to see and seize them. As Charles Swindoll said "We are all faced with a series of great opportunities (ob portu's) brilliantly disguised as impossible situations." Shakespeare's famous line from Julius Caesar conveys the same thought: "There is a tide in the affairs of men (an "ob portu"), Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life Is bound in shallows and in miseries." Napoleon said, "There is in the midst of every great battle a ten to fifteen minute period that is the

crucial point (kairos). Take that period and you win the battle; lose it and you will be defeated." In short, KAIROS conveys the sense of an "opportune time," a "window of opportunity". "Opportunity is the flower of time which blooms for a moment and is gone for ever." (G Barlow) John Broadus said "Opportunity is like a fleet horse that pauses for a moment at one's side. If you fail to mount him in that moment, you can hear the clatter of his hoofs down the corridors of time. That opportunity is gone forever." Jonathan Edwards America's greatest theologian understood Paul's charge to REDEEM THE TIME and as a young man wrote "Resolved: Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can. Resolved: to live with all my might while I do live."

A farmer's clock ran amuck one morning and struck seventeen. The man of the house jumped up and ran all over the place, saying, "Get up, it's later than it ever has been before!" It is later than it ever has been by God's eternal timepiece. It is later than you think! Today you are as young as you will ever be. Don't vacillate! Don't hesitate! Don't procrastinate! Time is loaned to us and, as good stewards of Christ, enabled by His Spirit we must use it wisely. Let us each redeem the golden moments of opportunity while we still can! "Man is like a mere breath; His days are like a passing shadow." (Ps 144:4) As Spurgeon (who went home at age 59) said "A short life should be wisely spent. We have not enough time at our disposal to justify us in misspending a single quarter of an hour!" Spurgeon in fact reduced our lives to four words "Sown, groan, blown, gone!" As Larry Moyer said "Decide now what you want written on your tombstone, then live your life backward from there." Stated another way, instead of counting your days, make your days count! Ask yourself what would you change if this day were your last? In fact, we should live every day as if it might be our last, for one of these days we will be right!

Now is the only time we own
To do His precious will,
Do not wait until tomorrow;
For the clock may then be still.

John Piper reiterates that the "OPPORTUNITY will never come again. The days are evil; opposition is great; be wise as serpents (Mt 10:16). Understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph 5:17-note)…These words ring with a sense of urgency. They are like the words of a platoon leader addressing his unit just before they enter combat. The air is tense and your heart is beating fast and, even if you love battle, your hands are sweaty. "Watch your step; be smart; don't miss your opportunity; keep yourself lean for the battle!"…In other words, the Christian life is a vigilant life, defensively guarding itself from the subtleties of the evil days and offensively redeeming the time to strike for love and righteousness again and again. We are a vigilant people at war with unbelief and evil. O to be a faithful steward of the breath God has given me…Surely God means for our minutes on earth to count for something significant. Paul said, "In the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain" (Php 2:16-note). In the same way, I have good hope from the Lord that my "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1Cor 15:58note). And I commend this promise to you. No minute need be lived in vain. Eternity will render it significant if lived in faith for the glory of God. In the end we rest in this: "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15-note).

Adoniram Judson a famous missionary to Burma wrote that "A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated throughout eternity. The same may be said of each DAY. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever. Each DAY will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny. How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness! It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, (enabled by God's Spirit) resolve to send the DAY into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more DAY is irrevocably gone, indelibly (forever) marked." Eternity will reveal whether we have made the right use of time for what we weave in time we will wear in eternity. David Brainerd whose candle burned so brightly that God brought him home at the relatively young age of 29 wrote in his diary "Oh, how precious is time; and how guilty it makes me feel when I think I have trifled away and misemployed it or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty to the utmost of my ability and capacity. Oh, that I might not loiter on my heavenly journey!" It's too late to redeem the time that is past, but not the time that is passing! Clocks don't move backwards! So don't replay those old tapes of failures of unfaithfulness. The hands of the time of your life that count are the ones moving "clockwise!" So enabled by God's Spirit and His Word, make every second count for eternity!

Time that is past you can never recall,
Of time to come, you are not sure at all;
Only the present is now in your power,
Therefore, redeem and improve every hour.
—Unknown

Adrian Rogers offers some practical thoughts on redeeming the time: (1) Learn to live in the eternal now. Today is the only day you have. Redeem the time. (2) Stop saying, "If I had time." You do have time. (3) Stop worrying about tomorrow, and stop waiting for tomorrow. Give God today, and He will take care of tomorrow. (4) Don't let yesterday use up too much of today. Cut yourself loose from the past. Bury your failure in the grave of God's forgetfulness (read Micah 7:18-19, Isaiah 43:25, 44:22), and let Him give you a

brand new day. (5) If you have not accepted Christ, now is the time "for He says, "At the acceptable time (kairos = the opportune time!) I listened to you and on the day of salvation I helped you"; behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME (kairos)," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION" (2Cor 6:2)

THOUGHT - **Let us pray like the old Puritans in Valley of Vision --**

> "Turn my heart from vanity, from dissatisfactions, from uncertainties of the present state, to an eternal interest in Christ. Let me remember that life is short and unforeseen, and is only an opportunity for usefulness; GIVE ME A HOLY AVARICE TO REDEEM THE TIME, to awake at every call to charity (love) and piety (godliness), so that I may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, instruct the ignorant, reclaim the vicious, forgive the offender, diffuse the Gospel, show neighborly love to all. Let me live a life of self-distrust, dependence on Thyself (Thy Spirit), mortification, crucifixion, prayer." Amen
>
> Dear reader, may God by His Spirit cause each of us to so order our steps that when that great day comes we might hear those glorious words "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful in a few things, I will put your in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your Master." (Mt 25:21) "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom." (Ps 90:12-note)

Now take a moment, as you ponder the moments of your life which remain and the poignant words of Robin Mark's song…

When It's All Been Said and Done

When it's all been said and done
There is just one thing that matters
Did I do my best to live for truth
Did I live my life for you

When it's all been said and done
All my treasures will mean nothing
Only what I've done for love's reward
Will stand the test of time

Lord your mercy is so great
That you look beyond our weakness
And find purest gold in miry clay
Making sinners into saints

I will always sing your praise
Here on earth and ever after
For you've shown me Heaven's my true home
When it's all been said and done
You're my life when life is gone

When it's all been said and done
There is just one thing that matters
Did I do my best to live for truth
Did I live my life for you
Lord I'll live my life for you