

## Time

Ephesians Chapter 5 can be summarized as how we should be imitators of God. The chapter can be subdivided into seven subsections: 5:1-2 which describes what is to follow based on what Paul has just shared in the prior chapter, 5:3-5 where he provides a summary of some concerns, 5:6-14 includes a warning as to negative consequences, 5:15-17 promotes wisdom, 5:18-21 how we are to interact one to another, 5:22-31 Paul uses marriage as an illustration, 5:32-33 he closes with a clarification of the prior section.

Focal Passage: Ephesians 5: 15-16 – Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise making the most of your time because the days are evil.

The Apostle Paul is promoting the importance of wisdom and the good stewardship of time .... “For the days are evil”, meaning that one could never reclaim a day that has passed, once used unwisely it had been lost to the best service for God.

Every morning we awaken with choices to make about the usage of our resources and time and at the end of every day the wise will reflect on the quality of their choices.

Be wise with your time. How do you spend your time? Does it increase your walk with God?

**First, see each day as a gift from God.** Instead of seeing each day as a burden, see it instead as another opportunity God has given you to serve Him. Time isn't inexhaustible, nor can we assume we'll always have more; someday our time on earth will end. The psalmist said, “My times are in your hands” (Psalm 31:15). The first thing we should do when we awake is thank God for the gift of another day.

**Second, commit your time to God.** God gave it to you for a reason: not to be wasted or mishandled, but to be used for His glory. We are accountable to Him for the way we use our time, and once a minute passes, it can never be reclaimed. The Bible says, “Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

How can we put this into action? It may mean asking God to help us schedule our time more wisely and efficiently. It may mean rethinking how we spend our time,

and then adjusting it to reflect God's priorities. We may also need to examine why we're so busy (or so bored). Is what we are doing really necessary – or are we simply trying to impress others? We can't do everything, and we need to say "no," if some activity isn't God's will.

**Third, set aside time for God and for others.** No Christian would say, "I'm too busy for God," but how often have you gone through a whole day without even thinking about Him (let alone praying or reading the Bible)? How often have you ignored someone who needed your encouragement or help?

Why is this? One reason is because we relegate God to our spare time – but end up never having any spare time! In other words, we mentally list everything we have to do and put God at the bottom of the list. But the opposite should be the case. Jesus said, "Seek *first* his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33, emphasis added).

**Finally, take time for your own needs.** We all need rest and recreation; God made us this way. Some people feel guilty if they take a vacation or even a few hours off, but they shouldn't. In the midst of an incredibly busy schedule, Jesus told His disciples, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31). If Jesus required times of rest, don't we also? Someone who is chronically exhausted from lack of sleep or improper eating is much more susceptible to Satan's attacks.

**WE SHOULD LIVE AS EACH MINUTE COUNTS – BECAUSE IT REALLY DOES!!!**