

Wisely choosing among competing time demands

October 23, 2021

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"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:15-16 (NKJV)

- A. What is of eternal value?
- B. My life's purpose: "My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever-increasing depth and to make disciples and develop laborers at all times, under any conditions, in every place I go."
- C. Five categories of ways to invest our time:
 1. That which is **essential**: That which will last for eternity and is on God's heart
 - a. **The Word of God**:
 - i. 1 Peter 1:23-25: "having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because 'All flesh [is] as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the LORD endures forever.' Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."
 - ii. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."
 - b. **The souls of men and women**:
 - i. 1 John 2:17: "And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever"
 - ii. 2 Tim. 2:2: 2Ti 2:2 NKJV - "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
 2. That which is **necessary**: That which we must do in the culture and environment we find ourselves
 - a. **Work**: 1 Timothy 5:8: But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
 - b. Taking care of our "things"
 - c. Physical fitness

3. That which is **good**: That which helps others or gives us refreshment
 - a. Clubs, organizations
 - b. Travel
 - c. Hobbies
 - d. Church activities

4. That which we can **delegate**: That which can be done by someone else

5. That which we must **eliminate**: That which is not helpful
 - a. 1 John 2:15-16: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that [is] in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world."
 - b. May vary for each person

- D. Practical ideas coming out of these truths:
 1. Ask yourself, "How does this activity help me in my goal: My objective: To know Christ, etc." OR "Does this free time activity help me meet my goal in life?"
 2. How does this activity help me love Jesus more, make Him known more, help my family more, etc?
 3. When deciding on saying "yes" or "no" to something, remember to pray about it, take your time in answering the person and seek to see how it impacts your goals in life.
 4. When considering employment, ask, "Will this job interfere with my 'essential or necessary activities?" If so, question if it's the right thing to do.
 5. Is there a way I can delegate some of the things I am currently assuming responsibility for? Do I need to humble myself to realize that someone else can do ...?
 6. What do I need to eliminate from my life? What is distracting me from knowing Jesus better or from making Him known better?
 7. Am I sold out to the truth that the "essential" – investing in knowing Jesus through His Word and investing in the souls of men and women – is what I need to invest my time in?
 8. Do I need to limit the "necessary" to make room for the "essential"?
 9. Labeling something as "good" helps us understand that there are separate, more important, "essential" things.
 10. It may be costly to make time for the essential, but it is worth it!

Finally, we must remember there will be an accounting some day for how we invested our time and lives. Have we been faithful with the resources and opportunities God has given us in this life?

2 Cor 5:9-10 "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
(NKJV)