



The Practice of Time

Based on last week's Practice

1. What ways did you use God's gifts to bless others and share the Gospel this past week?
2. What steps did you take to cultivate contentment with what God has given you?

Overview

Before long we will all chart a course for the new year. We are only weeks away from being in the best shape of our lives! We get lots of advice: get proper sleep, organize your day, get exercise, watch your diet, keep a calendar, review each day, set goals. say no to good things, detach from screens, but what lacks from this advice is to ask if God has anything to say about our time. When we turn to God's book we find a better way because God's way is a gift to us.

God would counsel us to make the best use of our time: to navigate this life to the fullest, to use our time most wisely. To do this we must be aware of the setting of our lives this side of eternity. To know how to live we must know when we live. To know that we live in "evil days" and that God has a purpose for the time He has given us.

At the end of Schindler's List, as the title character flees his home after helping over a thousand Jews escape from Nazi deathcamps, the surviving Jews thank him for all the tireless labor and sacrifice he endured on their behalf. His response is chilling, "I could have got more out. . . ."

Schindler did not lament that he didn't watch more television or exercise more or keep boundaries on his email — he regretted not making the best use of the time, not doing what he could to save lives during his evil days. How many of us will come to our end and say, This television series — could this have been ten more lives? Who else might have heard and believed?

Scripture

Ephesians 5:15-16

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe your relationship with time and how you use it?
2. We describe our use of time as time management. What shapes the way you manage your time?
3. How do you think God views the time He has given you? Is using your time for pleasure wrong?

Community Practice (tonight!) + Individual Practice (throughout the week)

As a Community share the struggles and successes you have with time management. Discuss how this management affects your ability to live life to the fullest, to use your time wisely.

Discuss as a Community and as an individual how you manage your time to the fullest this Advent Season. See examples below and add to this list:

- Thank God for giving you the time you have. List ways you could better manage your time this season.
- Limit your time on media and entertainment platforms this season.
- Reflect on where you spend your time during the holidays. What things prevent you from spending more time with Jesus and sharing Him with others?

God gives us time to share the love and good news of Jesus, but we must recognize that this time is limited. That how we use our time is a matter of life and death for those who don't know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Discuss the five points below from Ephesians and how they should impact the way you manage your time during Advent and every season.

- Look carefully - how you watch closely, consider, and take inventory of your time.
- How you walk - how you live, where you place your feet, where your steps lead in a timely manner.
- Not as unwise but as wise - how you make the time to listen to and obey God's voice.
- Making the best use of time - how you spend your time, not in idleness, and purposelessness, but with direction and purpose.
- Because the days are evil - how do you ensure that you are aware of the setting of your life.

Closing Questions

1. In what ways will you use your time to bless others? How will you use it to share the love of Jesus and the Gospel?
2. What activities or behaviors will you change to achieve a Biblical time management mindset?
3. What practical steps can you take to make the best use of your time this Advent season because the days are evil?