

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH when it comes to our TIME?

Do you ever feel like you never have enough time? Does your day sometimes feel like your money in that you never seem to have enough? You come to the end of your day and you're like, **“Where did the day go?”** As a believer do you ever feel the heaviness or the weight of knowing that you need to do more for God, yet becoming overwhelmed with anxiety thinking to yourself, **“I can't possibly add another thing to my already busy schedule? Where will I find the time to pray more, read my Bible more, attend a Vgroup or to serve?”**

Well, welcome to **Week 2** of **“How Much Is Enough!”** We are on a three week journey where we are diving into the question of **“How Much is Enough”** when it comes to our TIME, TALENT and TREASURE? Last week we took a look at “How Much is Enough” when it comes to our TREASURE and today, we are going to take a look at “How Much is Enough” when it comes to our TIME.

We said last week that God has given all of us the resources of time, talent, and treasure so that we may be stewards of life on this earth. Ultimately, our lives should bring Him glory where we are to take our resources and use them to make the earth a glorious place to live reflecting the very glory of the one who made us and gave life to us! Our theme verse for this series is **1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

You see, when God established mankind on earth it wasn't so we could live as we please utilizing and taking advantage of all that God has given us for our own vain pleasure, but so that we could love one another and care for one another on the earth being faithful stewards of the various forms of God's grace. When we ask the question, **“How Much is Enough?”**, if we are honest with ourselves we ask a question that at its root comes from a place of selfishness. We ask How Much is Enough because we want to be able to use the rest for ourselves.

Next to our money, time is one of our most valuable resources we have. In fact, our time is what we give in most cases to earn money. Have you ever made the statement – **“I wish I had more time”**? Here is the reality: we all have the same amount of time. We may not have equal amounts of money and we may not have the same talents and abilities, but we all have the same amount of time in a day.

There are only **168 hrs. in a week**. If you sleep an average of 8 hours a night we spend **56 of those hours in the bed**. If you work the average work day you spend **40 to 50 of those hours working or preparing for work**. Our bodies obviously need food so we spend on average approximately **18 hours a week eating or preparing to eat**. If you do the math that leaves us with **44 hours or approximately 1.8 days a week for everything else**. As you can see, TIME is very precious and it is gone before you know it! If we are not careful we will allow the cares of this world and the selfishness of our own heart's to rock us to sleep causing us to miss the time we are given and the opportunities we have to leverage our limited time for God's glory.

(Jelly bean video illustration of life) or (Pie chart illustration here?)

So, how do we keep the right perspective and establish the right priorities so as not to waste the limited time we are given and how can we leverage what we do have for God's glory? Well, if you have your portion of God's word, turn with me to **Romans 13** and let's see what Paul challenges us with regarding the time we have.

Before we look at our text let me set the context for our passage. Paul is writing to the Christians in Rome. The cultural climate in Roman society was very similar to our society today. There was all kinds of immorality and ungodliness that was very much accepted. These fleshly pursuits were considered normal and just part of everyday life. As a result, Christians were considered outcasts because of their moral stance and way of living. Paul is warning the Christians at Rome to be aware of spiritual laziness and to not be lulled to sleep by the cultural acceptance of those things thus giving in and ruining their witness for Jesus. Paul was very much concerned about spiritual laziness because it always leads to unresponsiveness towards God. All throughout his letter to the Romans Paul hi-lights the sins that can occupy our time and that become a huge distraction from what is most needful in our life. **The very essence of these things result in a pursuit of temporary distractions to hide permanent problems.** We could call this the drowning of sorrows with the endless pursuit being that of the ultimate pleasure for ourselves. At the very heart of this pursuit is Idol worship where we will make ourselves the idol and we seek to serve only ourselves.

In an effort to head this off, Paul reminds the Christians in Rome of two important keys to making sure we keep the right priorities regarding our lives and our time.

Key #1 - It is TIME to WAKE UP

Romans 13:11 (NIV) 11 And do this, understanding the present time: The Greek word here for time is that word we looked at a few weeks ago **KAIROS!** It is not a reference to the chronology of time but instead a moment in time. A period in time. As we have said before **a moment where conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment.** God has established our lives as a "Kairos" moment that appears within the chronology of time. **How are we going to use our moment in time for His glory?**

11 And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to **WAKE UP from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.** Each day that passes, or we could say, "as the chronology of time ticks on", we get closer to the moment of Jesus and His return. Paul encourages us to take note of that and to wake up so that we don't miss the opportunities and the time we do have.

3 reasons why we must WAKE UP and continue to be alert and attentive!

Reason #1 - The Day is Evil

Ephesians 5:14-15 (NIV) This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." 15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,

"In fact, our days are days of active evil. There are great thieves of time that are minions of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. They may range in form from high-tech, socially acceptable preoccupations to simple, idle talk or ungoverned thoughts. But the natural course of our minds, our bodies, our world, and our days leads us toward evil, not toward Christlikeness." - **Gospel**

Coalition

Paul goes on! **Romans 13:12 (NIV)** *The night is nearly over*; this is a reference to man's depravity and the dominion of Satan over life on earth. The brokenness and pain of life as we know it. Btw, we all feel that brokenness and I believe our insatiable appetite for the pursuit of the pleasures of our flesh is a desire we all have to escape the difficulties and pain of everyday life, even if temporarily. The problem is these pursuits are just that, temporary. They serve only as a distraction and a counterfeit to the real deliverance that Jesus offers us through His salvation and they also rob us of precious time as we spend our time in pursuit of these things only to never really solve our problem. So Paul pleads with us to WAKE UP and to not be lulled to sleep with the ways of the world. Which brings us to our second and third reason why we need to WAKE UP and be alert and attentive.

Reason #2 - Your Heart is Deceitful: **Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV)** *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?* It's not just the world around us that is deceitful..but the heart within us is also. We often don't know what is best. We crave and desire the wrong things. So wake up to the deceitfulness of your own heart! Let's not allow our heart to be convinced to settle for things which are worthless.

Reason #3 - The Devil is Lurking: **1 Peter 5:8 (NIV)** *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

We need to Wake up because the devil is awake. The devil is never sleeping..why are you. The devil is looking for someone to devour. Btw, do you know when lions do most of their hunting? They do it at night! Dawn or dusk. Before animals get up....or when they go to sleep.

Romans 13:12 (NIV) *12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.* It may not feel like it but there is coming a day, and very soon, when the pain of this life will end. There is a day coming when all things will be made right and new! Where sin and death are destroyed and pain and sorrow will be no more. The day when Jesus will rightfully rule and reign over all the earth

Jesus is returning. The night is nearly over! The King is Coming? Are you expecting Him?

Key #1 - It is TIME to WAKE UP

Key #2- It is TIME to GET DRESSED

Paul continues**Romans 13:12-13 (NIV)** *12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.* The later part of verse 13 is what selfish living looks like. This is what we resort to when we look for our own way out of the pain and difficulties of life.

Instead Paul tells it's TIME TO GET DRESSED, let's put on the armor of light!! This is a reference to the investment of our time in righteous pursuits. Whether that be an investment in the things that bring righteousness to bear on our lives such as time in God's word, prayer, worship and serving others. Or in the investments we make into the Kingdom of God and in the advancement of the Good News of Jesus and His cross in the world. **If you have a choice, which will you spend your time doing? Will it be wasting your time carrying out the deeds of darkness in pursuits of satisfying your selfish flesh or will it be investing your time in the pursuit of the armor of light and the pursuits of God's Kingdom?** Paul clarifies what exactly he means by putting on the armor of light when he says this...**Romans 13:14 (NIV)** **Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.**

This last verse is the key to making sure we prioritize our time and to making sure we use the KAIROS moment of our life for God's glory. So much of the stress in our lives could be eliminated if we would just WAKE UP and GET DRESSED by **clothing ourselves with JESUS** and prevent our flesh from hijacking our focus and our time away from God.

What does it mean to clothe ourselves with JESUS? And how do we practically do that?

First of all, to CLOTHING OURSELVES WITH CHRIST means to be completely set apart to being Christlike. It is where we go from receiving Christ and His salvation to allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us into the likeness and image of Christ. Where we love like Christ and we think like Christ. As Jesus carried Himself we seek to live the same way. We are in essence putting Christ onto our lives in order to live as He lived. When we do this our priorities will be the Kingdom of God. We will see all of life as an opportunity to be about our Father's business as Jesus does. He is never hurried or distracted because His heartbeat was His Father's heartbeat. This is what it means to be CLOTHED WITH CHRIST.

How much of our TIME issues would be solved if only we PUT ON CHRIST? First of all, we should not be distracted by selfish living thus getting out of whack in our relationship with the Father or in regard to our priorities. How much time pressure could we eliminate by having good priorities and staying on task? Secondly, we should trust our situations into the Father's hands and into the Father's timing. When we do, time limits do not become a concern because we know our Father is in control. How much anxiety do we deal with regarding time demands and deadlines? Let us WAKE UP and GET DRESSED by CLOTHING OURSELVES WITH JESUS!

But how do we do that? What does this look like practically? Let me share with you two key ACTIONS we must take in order to PUT ON CHRIST.

ACTION #1 - We must adopt The MIND OF CHRIST!

Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV) **5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a**

servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

We must be willing to empty ourselves of any privileges we think we are deserving of so that we can serve others and ultimately serve God the Father! This is what Jesus did. He emptied Himself of His divine privileges to serve us by taking our place on the cross. Jesus emptied Himself to serve the Father's good pleasure. Do you consider your time God's TIME or is it YOUR TIME? If we are going to PUT ON CHRIST we have to THINK like Christ! The only way we think like Christ is we have to let His word transform our minds.

Romans 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

What time are you giving to the process of letting God transform your mind? We have a part to play in this process. God does the transforming of our mind through His word but we have to put in the time to allow HIM to do it. We say it all the time but how much time do we devote to God's Word.

This is where we **Fellowship** with God

John 8:31-32 (ESV) 31 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

You will think like those you spend time with!! Who do you spend time with? How much time do we spend with God in His word?

This is where we allow Him to **Nourish** our Soul

Deuteronomy 8:3 (ESV) 3 And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Our soul left to itself will starve and seek other things to satisfy its cravings. Only God's word will truly nourish and satisfy our souls.

This is what **Empowers** our lives

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

God's word is powerful! It heals! It restores! It shines light on the darkness and it gives life! If we submit ourselves to it, it will transform the way we think!! If we are going to PUT ON CHRIST we must receive THE MIND OF CHRIST!!

ACTION #2 - We must adopt The PURPOSE of CHRIST!

John 4:34 (NIV) "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

John 6: 38-40 (NIV) For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. **39** And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. **40** For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

Jesus set the priority for His life around His purpose! In fact, He incorporated that purpose into everything He did. He did nothing that was not working toward that purpose. What if we lived our life this way? Instead of this being something we add to or tack onto our life, what if it actually became the center upon which our life is built and exists. What if everything we do in life is to bring people to Jesus? Guess what, it is and as a follower of Jesus it should be! We looked at this verse last week but I want us to revisit it again.

1 Corinthians 10:31-33 (NIV) So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. **32** Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—**33** even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

If this really was our purpose, how would it impact the way we work, the way we play, the way we live in our neighborhood, the way we shop at the grocery store? How would this impact our time and how we set our schedule or plan our week? You see, Jesus isn't calling us to add something else to our already busy lives, He is calling us to surrender our lives fully to His purpose! He is calling us to think about life from a Kingdom perspective where we empty ourselves to Him and allow Him to use us for His glory and for the benefit of those who need to be saved. If you will take these two actions and invest your time in these two pursuits you will have no problem setting your priorities on the right course and giving the proper amount of time to God!!!

What determines your priorities?

What is grabbing the majority of your time?

What kind of plans are you making for your time tomorrow?

The problem isn't that Christians aren't where they are supposed to be, but that Christians aren't being who they are called to be where they are currently.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV) 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." -

Invitation :

Are you surrendered in your time to God's Word so that He can transform your mind?

Is your life ordered around the purpose of Christ? If not, are you a disciple?

Do you need to place your life in line with what you say you believe?

Are you distracted by seeking temporary fixes to permanent problems (or) do you desire the ultimate pleasure but it always leads to heartache & disappointment?

Aren't you tired of being sick and tired?

Will you PUT ON CHRIST (His MIND and His PURPOSE)!!