

Introduction: Pg. _____

“Managing Time” Matthew 5:13-16

Last week we kicked off our series on time, by arguing that time is the greatest currency of our culture. I believe that is true from a sociological and theological perspective. As Psalm 90:12 says: “So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”

Today we are going to look at what it looks like to manage the invaluable time that God gives us.

Sometimes in life, we learn lessons we do not even realize we are learning. Looking back, I can see how I caught some principles on time management from my dad.

When it comes to HS basketball, my dad is a living legend in the state of Kentucky. 600+ wins. Multiple trips to the state tournament. Many assistants who went on to become head coaches. That’s all common knowledge. What most people don’t know are the things that I know about my dad that propelled him to such a successful career. For example, only his players and coaches could tell you that every single practice, my dad had a practice plan in his pocket that detailed, literally minute by minute what he wanted to accomplish that day with his players.

{PIC of Practice Card}

Check this out... 1st Practice of my Junior Year of High School. Shelby County Rockets, Preseason Top 20... 3:25 Talk to Group; 3:30 Loosen up/ Line Drills; 3:35 Rim Touches; 3:37 Layups off the pass; 4:03 Defensive zig-zag (head on the ball); 4:35 4-man break drill; 4:45 2on2on2; 5:55 Full Ct. Tip Drill; 6:00 Go In.

My dad was so prepared, he told each one of his teams for the 30 years he coached, that if they ever caught him without a Practice Plan that they could go home and would not have to practice! Guess what? That never happened.

Why did he do that? Goal - Win games. You play to win the game. But how could he win games? Practice in such a way that he could get every ounce of potential and improvement out of his players.

BUT HOW? Manage it.

We may not do what we do to win basketball games, but managing time in this thing we call life is worth far more than a few trophies on the shelves. That is why we should strive to allow God to get every ounce of potential out of our lives. And I believe we do that in the daily grind of life by...

The Point: Manage[ing] time to shine forth God’s glory through a life of good works.

CONTEXT:

In Matthew 5, we have the longest recorded sermon of Jesus. It details what life looks like in God’s kingdom. Essentially Jesus says, “If you want to follow me and be a part of the massive

transformation I am bringing to the world (where deaf people hear, hateful people love, and a child is never forsaken), listen up because I'm going to tell you what it looks like and how you can have it."

We are going to zoom in on vv. 5:13-16 (read).

These verses tell us to...

I. Shine light through a life of good works.

For Starters, Jesus says: 13 "You are the salt of the earth..."

- Salt functions as a preservative... (it "delays decay."). Those who follow Jesus should have this effect on the world.
- *Illus*: Extreme Ninja... On my way to grab some donuts for our girls (and maybe a couple for me)...
- Salt also is a source of flavor... it adds taste to that which is otherwise a little bland.
- We flavor the world... arrogance? NO. Because we have Jesus. SO what does that tell us about him? He makes life enjoyable. He makes life exciting. Adds some punch. Fullness. Etc... Expound?
- If something is no longer good, it gets tossed... I have this thing with expiration dates... I'm a risk taker, but not when it comes to food expiration dates (I call my mom! Haha)

T: But then he continues and says: "14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." Let's ask five questions to help us understand these words...

What is light? Truth, purity, life.

How are we light? We have Jesus' light.

- John 8:12 says, "Jesus is the light." And we certainly know that our lives are not filled with truth, purity, and life, because there are many times that we display darkness rather than light.
- We are light because God has deposited his light in us, so we shine as we reflect his light to the world.

How do we shine light? Through good works.

- This is where Jesus really drives the metaphor home by giving us the answer in verse 16... All who follow him show they follow him by their "good works."
- **That's our job! SHINE. Light up the world with the light of Christ. This is an overwhelming responsibility, but also an overwhelming privilege and joy.**
 - **This should suck the boredom out of your worship experience (if any currently exists). How can we go through the motions when Jesus who is reordering and renewing this entire world, brings his renewal to us and then uses us as agents of that same renewal. WOW!**
- The call to engage in good works is all over the Scripture...
 - **"Always seek to do good to one another and to everyone." (1 Thess. 5: 15)**
 - **"Always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).**

- **Be “zealous for good works.” (Titus 2:14)**
- Ok Tanner...
 - That’s my whole problem. I’m not that good, and I could never be good enough.
 - Not salvation by works..
 - Ok Tanner, but if we are to always be doing good works, what is a good work? I love how Matt Perman answers this question: **“Good works are not simply the rare, special, extraordinary, or super spiritual things we do. Rather, they are *anything* we do in faith.”**
 - ANYTHING...
 - Any word, any deed... honestly, if you are making a *pot of coffee* as an act of faith... good work. If you are *driving with consideration* for others on the road, that’s a good work.
 - If you are a willing to *work a little* late so that someone else on your shift can go home early, that’s obviously a good work.
 - Listen, it’s not just walking an old lady across the street, although that is a good work. :)
 - Our entire lives should be given to good works. (not overstated).
 - From the time we rise to the time we sleep, our day should be FULL of good works.
- As **John Wesley** said, **“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.”**
- This could revolutionize your LIFE! JESUS just got all up in your business, which if that is the case, means your biz, just got good. Know what I’m sayin’...

What is the purpose of shining light? Glory to God

- SO THAT... People may congratulate us. You’re so bright. Look at your wattage man; you’re awesome! YOU are so lit, that YOU light me up.
- No. Jesus hates that. Pharisees (mt 6). You have received your reward... Heart. Heart.
- Verse 16, one more time... “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works *and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*” (2x/3x)
- So... People see light in us and then come to understand that we are who we are and do what we do because of who God is and what he has done for us in Jesus.
- Maybe you would not consider yourself a Christian, but you are friends with some people who claim to be all about following Jesus, and just watching the quality of their lives, how they love and serve others, is undeniably attractive to you. [That’s what should be happening.]

What’s the secret [to doing this effectively]? Being Leads to Doing

- Shining flows from being. WE do because of who we are.
- Matthew 5:3-12... poverty in spirit, meekness, hunger, mercy, purity, peace pursuers...

Trans: As we are we who are and do what we do, God makes us shine.

- Here’s the madness of the city and the lamp... It’s impossible for a city on a hill or a lamp on stand to be hidden.

- If you are in Christ, you will shine. It is inevitable. Just position yourself in his light so that you keep that dimmer switch on full bright... because the light we shine can vary in intensity. [Luke 11:33-36]
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Now, what does this have to do with managing time? We must...

II. Manage time to maximize good works

How can we engage in good works with maximum effectiveness? After all, we only have one life, time is precious, more precious than millions of dollars... The answer? MANAGE IT WELL...

Many of the insights will come from 3 great resources:

What's Best Next? - Matt Perman

Do More Better - Tim Challies

"Biblical Productivity" - C.J. Mahaney

Which lean, at a foundational level, in large part on **Getting Things Done by David Allen**

We want to be "productive" (to produce good works) in a God-centered, gospel-motivated way. **Tim Challies defines productivity as "effectively stewarding my gifts, talents, time, energy, and enthusiasm for the good of others and the glory of God."**

There are literally, millions of good things, perhaps great things, perhaps fabulous things we could do in the course of our lifetime. We will not be able to do all that we could do, so how do we determine what we should do?

I want to use a little framework from C.J. Mahaney's series of blogs on "Biblical Productivity." He says: **"our biblical productivity depends on a schedule, which depends upon clear goals, which depends on clearly defined roles."**

T: so let's work backwards: roles, goals, schedule... for a life of good works.

1) Determine your God-given Roles

- What are our roles?
 - Christian
 - Single man/woman
 - Husband/Wife
 - Father/Mother/Child
 - Church Member
 - Friend
 - Employee... Pastor/Church Planter (not a carpenter - I'm improving and my confidence is growing, so I go to put up these blinds for the girls room...
 - "I'm the man, I'm the man.." (I'm actually singing that... but in the back of my mind I'm thinking - dude you still might screw this up...)
 - I lower the blinds and they are 1" too short... With no time to hide the evidence from Marsha, my wife, she sees it, gets that look in her eye, and I immediately start thinking about what I shouldn't say in defense of myself in preparation what I think is about to come out of her mouth, and I won't tell

you how the story unfolded. I'll leave that to your imagination. I can promise you that we are still happily married this morning!

- **Citizen of Medford, MASS**

- These roles make up my God-given assignments. These are my vocations, my callings. I am called by God, assigned by God, to be the best follower of Jesus I can be, the best husband, father, church member, friend, Pastor, citizen I can be.
- So two simple questions to discern your primary roles are these: (Gene Veith) -
 - Where has God placed me?
 - Where am I positioned to serve others?
- What are your roles? Identify them and then fulfill them with everything you've got, which leads us to #2.

2) Let your Roles set your Priorities & Goals

- Time will escape us. We had plans to get this, this, and this done but we look back and got 1 out of the 5 things done around the house.
- If we do not allow our roles to inform our goals, we will be driven by the urgent, not the important.
- **THE CORE PRINCIPLE OF PRODUCTIVITY** Here it is: **Know what's most important and put it first.**
- We can't do it all! There is so much freedom in Galatians 6:10: "as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone."
- That's why we "[We] need to do the best thing (good to others) for the best goal (the glory of God)." But it's not simple; it's a struggle.
 - Discipline and Desire to do that! We need grace every day. We are not MACHINES. You can't just push play...
- How can you prioritize?
 - At some point at the beginning of your week and the beginning of your day, I believe it is critical to practice the Discipline of **Weekly and Daily Review**.
 - To simplify this concept: It is simply **taking inventory of roles and responsibilities** and then simply **determining the most important tasks** that need to be done first. **Schedule them for execution. (What's best next?)**
 - If not, what is important will be overtaken by what is urgent.
 - This means we are going to need to say NO to a lot of great things, so that we can say YES to what is best.
 - It's hard to say No.. Good hearts... Servants. People Pleasers...
 - We need to engage in what Randy Alcorn calls "planned neglect."

T: Determine your roles, let your roles set your priorities & goals, and then...

3) Let your Priorities & Goals set your Plans

- Just like we need to have a budget for our money, we also need to have a budget for our time.
- To do this: You need a task manager (APP - To-Do List), and a Calendar.
- When you think of something you need to do, write it down. When someone delegates a task to you, write it down. When that task is time sensitive, put a due date and/or put it on your calendar.

- Seth Godin, a blogger... says the fundamental secret for effectiveness is not more time, just decision. And we come to wise decisions based on the wise application of knowing our roles, goals, and priorities.
- It's all about asking: What's Best Next?
- What is the next best thing you can do for your family?
 - Finish reading *Dangerous Journey* with my girls by September 30.
- What is the next best thing you can do as a Christian/for your spiritual family the church?
 - Connect with a Group
 - Serve with a Team:
 - TEAMS: One Sunday a month. Who can do that? I'd venture to guess, any and all of us.
 - SERVANTS make CHURCHES great.
 - One of my favorite people in the world is a man named: Chip Brown... meek dude. Unassuming. Humble. No spotlight... Never on a stage. When I think about Chip I think about Jesus.
 - The work of God's mission advances because of people like Chip.
- What is the next best thing you can do as an employee?
- God-centered GTD
 - Prayer: depend on God's strength. ("I always feel it well," he wrote, "to put a few words of prayer between everything I do.") Someone yells from the other room. PAUSE the music. Pause the TV. That's what I'm talking about here. Quick prayers. God-directed. Undercuts self-sufficiency, enhances focus, increases pleasure(?)
 - And Providence (God's control over our Time)
 - In your planning, leave room for others... and specifically - Room for "interruptions."??
 - Show me a time when Jesus was in a hurry.
 - Show me a time when Jesus was interrupted
 - In your planning, leave room for God's sovereignty...
 - But the eternal God stands over time and over our times too
 - He holds each in his sacred hands; and he makes them count ???

Conclusion:

We can alter decades by how we grind today. What step will you take today to prioritize and plan, so that you can shine the light of Christ through your good works?

It may not seem like you're changing the world with one simple good work after the other, but in the words of **C.S. Lewis:**

"Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is different."

Let's pray.