

5 Time Principles to Seize Your Day

An ancient mariner proverb states, “Time and tides wait for no man.”

Simply put, time continues to move on, and the opportunities in this life can be limited. For saltwater fishermen, favorable tides mean opportunity. Farmers understand this concept as well with seasons—planting and harvesting.

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. ... A time to plant and a time to harvest” (Eccl. 3:1-2, NLT).

Be discerning with the seasons of your life and our moment as a society, but do not be so cautious that you fail to plant for a future harvest.

1. **Invest time according to God’s will.** We can be busy without accomplishing what God intends for us if we don’t know His will. Our time then is spent unwisely. Paul gives a basic foundational truth in Romans 12:2 about knowing the will of God:

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” (See also 2 Cor. 3:18.)

The English word transform is from the Greek word *metamorphoō* from which the English word metamorphosis is also derived. The word means to change the essential form or nature of something. Through our union with Christ in the Spirit, our essential form and nature has—and is—being changed. We therefore have the potential to live now from the understanding of God’s will and purpose.

If we are copying the behavior and customs of this world, we won't know the will of God for our lives. Rather, we need to allow the Holy Spirit to change our thinking to align with God's Word and nature. Then, we begin to understand His will for our lives.

So, what should have the greatest effect on our thinking? The news media or secular teachers? Or should it be God's ways as revealed in Scripture? What God is saying should be the baseline of our thinking.

In other words, you must guard your heart and mind (see Prov. 4:23) to ensure that you don't squander time in wrong pursuits. God wants to do the "exceedingly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20, RGT) in your life as you embrace His revealed will.

2. Invest time in the lives of others. We are to be imitators of God. God is love; God is kind. It is easy to lose sight of the value of love and relationships. We must invest time into love and relationships.

Jesus said it was more blessed to give than to receive. Marriages, families, friendships and business relationships ... Pouring our time into kingdom relationships that build people and expand the kingdom leaves a legacy.

We also must be intentional to invest time into the lives of our children—we build in them expectation for the future. Hope is one of our greatest gifts we can give them or succeeding generations.

3. Invest time for today. Jesus said, "So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matt. 6:34a, ERV). Focus on today. Ask the Lord daily where your concentration needs to be for the day. Sometimes God will redirect.

What season are you in? An important question to ask and

understand. Yet, understand there is never the perfect moment or timing. Remember Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the wall? He sensed a moment, a divine invitation, yet naturally everything seemed contrary.

Building our new church sanctuary a few years ago—in the natural, it wasn't the right time. Most worthwhile endeavors are always challenging with obstacles. Be discerning, but act today on what God reveals.

The sons of Issachar understood the times they were in (1 Chron. 12:32). Conversely, Jerusalem didn't know her moment. Jesus said of Jerusalem, "you did not recognize the time of your [Messiah's] visitation" (Luke 19:44, NASB).

4. **Invest time for your future.** Realize that your tomorrow begins today. Life is a journey, but we must also realize that what we do today affects our tomorrow.

Have you noticed that you never stop learning in this life? Commit yourself to be open to daily growing in the Lord. Get education, get training, ask God how you can better prepare for what He has called you to or what He is bringing you into. Be intentional with your time today as you are investing into your tomorrow.

I was inspired five years ago while visiting the Key West home of 20th-century author Ernest Hemingway. I was impacted when I learned during the visit that in an 8-year span, he wrote nearly 70% of his work. He wrote daily from 6 a.m. through noon, 600-700 words a day. Later he won a Pulitzer Prize for the *Old Man and the Sea* in 1952, and in 1954 awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. As I peered into his office where he did much writing, I was challenged by the Lord to write consistently and intentionally.

5. **Invest time for eternity.** All of us are eternal beings who one day will depart from this earthly realm. Sow your life into eternal pursuits for God's kingdom.

Invest your life in the lives of others' eternal fruit. The Bible says, "he who wins souls is wise" (Prov. 11:20b, MEV). Ask yourself, "What time am I investing for God's kingdom and eternity?" Remember, we are spiritual beings having a temporary human experience!

Last Thoughts

Carpe diem—Seize the day! Your time and life matter; God has created you with your future in mind—live today as though it mattered.

Don't just let your days slip away, but ask God how you can better invest your time to fulfill your purpose and calling. Ask God to empower you to live in the fullness of each day He gives you! {eoa}

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