

Time Well Spent

Ephesians 5:15-17

INTRO:

- *Something that I **have really come to understand** better the older I get is how **FAST** time goes by!
- *we are **1/4 way finished with 2017**
- ***6 mos.** from **5yr anniversary** here
- ***Jenna and I** will celebrate **15 yr. anniversary** this year
- ***My oldest** is only **1yr** from being a **TEENAGER!**
- ***The older I get**, the more I realize the truth of **James 4:14** "*what is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*"
- ***The older I get**, the **more I realize** that **time is short** and I need to make the most of my time.
- ***The same is true as a believer** - time is short, **our life is short**, and we need to **spend it well** for the sake of the gospel.
- *As we continue in our series on **Biblical stewardship**, **we are going to make a transition.**
- *This morning, **and for the next 3 weeks**, we are going to transition to look at how we invest the gospel we've been entrusted thru the use of our **time, talent, & treasure**.
- *We are going to start by **looking at the use of our time for the advancement of the gospel.**
- ***READ Eph. 5:15-17**

BRIDGE:

- *The book of **Eph.** Is written to the church in Ephesus & the purpose is to get them to understand **who they are as believers** and **what they have as believers** & **how they should respond to who they are** and **what they have**.
- *In **Ch. 4 & 5**, Paul tells them **how they are to walk** - **in other words** - how they should live.
- *This is dealing with **how they should spend their time** as believers.
 - ***in unity** - Ch. 4
 - ***in love** - 5:1-7
 - ***in light** - 5:8-14
 - ***in wisdom** - 5:15-21
- ***And** it is in the context of His instructions on **how to spend their time wisely** that we find this exhortation: "**walk carefully, not as fools, but as wise - redeeming the time...**"
- ***ILLUST.** Have you ever spent a lot of time on something, and then realized it was a waste of time? – **cleaning out garage just to have it filled up again!**
- ***This morning**, I want us to see **2 important truths** from our texts that teach us about spending our time **wisely** for the sake of the gospel.
- *In order for us to spend our time wisely **we 1st must**:

1. Be Wise! - v. 15,17

*The 1st step to spending our time wisely for the sake of stewardship of the gospel is to **be wise** and Paul says that wisdom is *"redeeming the time"*.

*This **Greek word** for *"redeem"* is **only used 4 times** in the N.T. & in only **2 ways**:

A. In relation to the redemption of man - work of Jesus - means *"to pay price to recover from power of others."*

B. In relation to believers & their time - and in that sense it means: *"to make wise & sacred use of every opportunity for doing good."*

*So the idea is, to be wise w/ our time, we need to make good use of it!

*Here's the **problem** - we often spend so much of our time on other things that we leave VERY LITTLE room for God or for Him to use us in His ministry.

*Let me give you something to think about:

*THE **AVG. LIFESPAN** is now **78.5** years & here is some of how that time is spent:

***26.25 years** or 229,950 hours sleeping

***9.18 years** or 80,417 hours watching TV

***6.54 years** or 57,290 hours on social media

***3.23 years** or 28,295 hours surfing the internet

***1.96 years** or 17,191 hours on sports & leisure

*NOW COMPARE THIS: The **AVG. Christian in USA**:

***178.58 DAYS** or **4, 286 minutes** on **ALL** religious activities (church, prayer, Bible study, evang.)

*The point is this: as believers we are told to "redeem our time" - to make most of it - for sake of gospel.

*YET, w/out a doubt, we spend FAR MORE TIME on other *"unnecessary things"* – **NON ETERNAL** - **than we do** on *"spiritual things"* in our lifetimes.

*FOR HEAVENS SAKE: we spend 398 days ON THE TOILET - which is **DOUBLE** what we spend our time on the gospel - either for ourselves or for others!

*So, if we are going to "use our time for the stewardship of the gospel", we **HAVE** to be wise with our time and being wise is "making the most of our time" (redeeming it!).

*BUT WHY? Leads me to **2nd thing**: **not only do we need to BE WISE, but we also must:**

2. Be Understanding – v. 16, 17

*As we get ready to close, let me share w/ you **WHY** we need to make the most of our time.

*In our text, Paul gives us **2 reasons** that will give us the understanding we need:

A. Days are Evil – v. 16

*Most of us would agree with that statement at face value - **the days are evil** - we see it everywhere!

*The word here for **"evil"** can mean **2 things** depending on **who** is being affected.

*If it is believers that are being affected (which it is in our text) it means *"full of hardships, annoyances, toils, perils, etc. that lead to pain, suffering, &/or death"*

***So for us**, we need to make the most of our time b/c of the hardships we will face that cause pain, suffering, and **even death**.

***Here is the point:** in our life as believers, **we are going to face lots of hardships** and in those hardships it is **VERY** difficult to focus on the needs of others.

***ILLUST.** Calvary, Sulphur split - called Bro. Dan, he had just resigned, and told me that he was sorry, but just didn't feel like he could be of use to me b/c of his own issues.

***SO**, we need to use our time wisely **WHEN THINGS ARE FINE!**

*We need to make **most of our time** b/c with everything we have going on around us, we **don't** have time to waste...when we have the time - **USE IT!**

***AND** - step up when others are struggling - **BRO. CHUCK** text when Jenna was in hospital

***Not only** do we need to spend time wisely b/c the days are evil, **BUT ALSO:**

B. Will of God - v. 17

***What is the will of God?**

1. To use **US** as His ambassadors of the gospel - **2 Cor. 5:18-20**

2. Save Sinners - **2 Pet. 3:9**