

Redeeming the time requires single-eyed devotion. We must give ourselves to it, be passionate about it, and make it the central part of our soul. Strait or narrow, doesn't allow wide. It is restricted (Matt. 7:13-14). That says we can't wonder all over creation, doing good and well what we please. We have to bring all our energies, intellect, and skills, and straighten them in one single direction. It's the power that can be resolved in a day. Every bit of our energy is directly, wholly, and absolutely in the direction of His will.

Yes, it may be fun to walk all over the road, wonder here and there. There will be many companions. But a little boy lost in the woods doesn't enjoy looking at the flowers. Redeeming the time requires a commitment, a purpose to set our heart on one thing: pleasing Him by doing His will. That is something all of us can do, if we will.

"I find that doing of the will of God leaves me no time for disputing about His plans." (George MacDonald)

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Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

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Ignoring Satan's Call

For the disciple of Christ, the most dangerous enemy we face is one that is physically unseen, but always present. He is called the "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2.2). He is large, and walks around with confidence, always looking for people to ensnare. Peter wrote of this enemy he "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5.8). This enemy of course is Satan himself. Satan's goal is to pull as many people away from God as possible. He is crafty and will target us where we are the weakest. What are some things that will aide us to ignore Satan's call.

It begins by knowing the will of God. The adage "knowledge is power" applies to knowing the word of God, and His will for all mankind. "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119.11). The more we study God's word, the more we learn about God Himself, and the more we grow closer to Him. Knowing the will of God is a continual process and requires our full dedication. "With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! ... I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways" (Psalm 119.10, 15). When we keep our eyes fixed on God's will it leaves no room for the devil. An inattentiveness to knowing more about God's will gives the devil more opportunity to get his foot in the door. The word of God needs to fill every fiber of our being and should always be in the forefront of our minds.

The next key to ignoring Satan's call is to simply resist. This may sound obvious, but it really is that simple. While simple this can be the most difficult part. Sin is sin because it can be pleasurable. If it were not pleasurable, we wouldn't be tempted to do it. Satan will attack us in areas we find most alluring. We don't have to say yes to sin, we are in control of our actions, therefore we must find the strength to resist. James 4.7 says "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When temptation comes, we need to run to God and away from the devil. "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it (1 Corinthians 10.13). The temptations we face are not new to mankind, and God will not allow us to be tempted beyond that which we can resist. God has provided the way of escape; we just have to look for it.

What will help us resist is having the proper focus. If our focus is solely on the things of the flesh and our selfish desire for their momentary pleasures, then we should not be surprised when we are constantly falling victim to the devil's call. God made us for a higher purpose and a higher calling. Instead, our constant focus must be on heaven, and the eternal home. It can be hard to think about the future when the present is before us, but our actions show us where our heart is. A heart that has a desire for heaven, is a heart that has a desire to please God and will do whatever is necessary to do so. (Galatians 5.16-25). When our focus is set to the eternal prize, the temporal pleasures will seem as nothing.

Finally, once we have set out minds on going to heaven, we must then surround ourselves with people who share the same focus. Proverbs 27.17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." Surrounding ourselves with likeminded individuals allows us to strengthen and encourage one another in the faith, and to keep up the fight against the devil. Not only that but it will keep us away from compromising situations. 1 Corinthians 15.33 says, "Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." If we choose to be around people of the world instead, they might encourage us to partake in activities that we want no part of. ...

Many will also speak and behave in a way that a disciple of Christ would discourage. If our focus is on heaven, why would we willingly subject ourselves to such influences that might draw our focus away from our goal. We should never think we are immune from the influences of worldly people, even the strongest of Christians can fall prey to the thinking of worldly-minded people. Let's instead seek out and be-friend those whose focus and goal is heavenward, so that we can help each other achieve our ultimate goal.

Written by: Derek Steen

Tracking Time

"See...that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16).

Would you agree we waste a lot of time? Usually, we point our finger at those who procrastinate to do the things for which they are responsible. We tell them, "Stop wasting time. Get to it!" However, an equally insidious way in which we waste time, and probably far more common, is investing our energy and pursuits in things that really don't matter in the long run.

We waste time by pursuing a path of selfish goals with the aim of getting to the top and running over anyone who gets in our way. We waste time worrying too much about what others think of us. We relive past conversations because we're afraid we said the wrong thing and may project future fears. Also, we waste time when we measure our lives by how busy our schedule is instead of the richness of our relationship.

Paul reminds us that every moment counts. We are in a visible struggle between forces of good and evil. Time is our greatest resource in our fight. It allows us to connect with Our Commander. It allows us to carry out His directions. Far too often, we don't think we have the time.

Our goal is not to just be busy. We redeem time by seeing every moment as a gift from God to be used to glorify and honor Him. Our every pursuit is with a view to honoring Him. Our every purpose is to bring Him glory. In order to have a positive impact on those we love, we strive to use every moment of every day for the good of others. —>