



## REDEEMING THE TIME

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*“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” – Ephesians 5: 14-17 (KJV)*

Although the expression, ‘Redeeming the time’ may no longer be common in modern use of English, it is however important and relevant to the life of a believer. To redeem the time simply means to save time. The challenge of modern life is to save as much time as possible. This is why man by science and technology keeps devising new and faster means of doing things all the time. But it was God Himself that first challenged us in His word to redeem our time.

To redeem the time also means to invest our time wisely. God is a good businessman and life itself is all about doing His business and having profits to declare at the end of it. The parable of the talents and unprofitable servant in Scripture (Matthew 25: 14-30) supports this assertion. If we all see life from this perspective therefore we would take good care of every moment of our lifetime to ensure that they are wisely invested in programmes and projects with eternal value. A man who redeems his time is the one who makes the best use of the seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years of his life. He spends his time productively and is set to make maximum impact for God in a lifetime.

Part of the medical procedures when a baby is born is to record the precise time he comes out. Doctors record also the exact time a man breathes his last and dies. It is therefore possible and quite easy to calculate with these records on hand not just the number of years a man lives for but also his total number of months, weeks, days, hours, minutes and even seconds. A man then who does not learn to manage his seconds would waste his minutes. By wasting his minutes, he would waste his hours. Waste of hours would result in waste of days, weeks and months and before you know it an entire lifetime is gone. To redeem our time then, we should all learn not just how to make good use of our time but much more how to do the right thing at the right time. This is the only way to make maximum impact in life for God and make our years count. It is a major challenge for us all.

A lot of the times we are tempted to think that life is long but this is not necessarily so. Our psychology and perception of life as long or short depends to a great extent on our changing feelings, circumstances and experiences. Whereas we assume life is long at certain times the reverse is the case some other times. Whereas a prisoner or sick person feels the time is slow and long, a debtor doesn't seem to feel the same. He wishes he could hold on to prolong time. The truth however is that our times are not in our hands to control.

How long is life? Man started out in the book of Genesis by living for over seven, eight and nine hundred years. Later, God reduced the age of man to a hundred and twenty years after He destroyed the world at the time of Noah because of sin.

***“And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.”***  
***Genesis 6: 3 (KJV)***

And by the time of David the Psalmist, it was already affirmed that the age of man would now be a meagre seventy years yet, there is no guarantee (except God's grace) that we would all reach that seventy. The Psalmist says:

***“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” Psalm 90: 10 (KJV)***

Only those who are extra-strong live to exceed that boundary. If now, we think those who live for seventy, eighty, ninety or hundred years have lived long, what then are we going to think of men in the generation of Adam who lived up to well over seven, eight and nine centuries. Really, life now is so short!

Life is like an examination in that it is timed. Again, life is unlike an examination in that every examination paper has its time limit printed in black and white for the student to see, but we do not usually know when we would die. Although, we are all on the queue of life, we do not know our number or position on that queue. We do not know when it would be our turn to answer the last call. We don't know also where, how and what the cause of death would be. This then calls for extreme caution and wisdom from us mortal men to redeem our time and live well. Hence, David's prayer:

***“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”***

***Psalm 90: 12 (KJV)***

But not many of us are conscious of this or that cautious with life.

The Apostle Paul also warned the believer not to be so engrossed or absorbed in the affairs of this life because the time is so short. He says:

***“But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.”***

***1Corinthians 7: 29-30 (KJV)***

We should never be disillusioned. The Bible clearly declares that life is short! It seems as if God chose to reduce the age of man as man has chosen to increase his pace. Or can't you see? A man of forty in our generation seems to have achieved what a man of three or four hundred could not achieve in the time of Adam. And even if you have the choice of living for a hundred and fifty or two hundred years, soon it would end and you'll fly away. So, we should redeem our time because it is really short.

The Bible also declares that we are in the end time and the days are evil.

*“This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”*

**2Timothy 3: 1-5 (KJV)**

It is as a direct result of the evil times that the Bible predicts in Matthew 24: 12 that the love of many shall wax cold. And that is already happening. Many Christians in this generation are only Christians in names and not in deeds. Many now struggle to pray, study the scriptures, fellowship with brethren, evangelise and maintain a steadfast walk with God. What a pity? We are therefore enjoined to wake up!

*“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 25: 13 (KJV)*

*“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

**1Thessalonians 5: 6-9 (KJV)**

The main question and concern of every believer now therefore should be how to redeem our time. This has to do with knowing how to make our lives meaningful by investing them for God and making maximum impact in a lifetime. To do this, we must:

**1. Know God Intimately - Ps. 111: 10; Ps. 127: 1-2; Jer. 29: 13.**

This requires some efforts as God has already promised to reveal Himself only to  
those who seek Him diligently with all their heart.

**2. Avoid Sin – Ezek. 33: 13; Eph. 5: 3-5.**

The repercussion and punishment of sin takes men backwards each time. Sin wastes both time and life.

**3. Have A Vision & A Plan – Prov. 29: 18.**

He who fails to plan no doubt is planning to fail. We should be able to break down our plans into smaller units of realistic, measurable and achievable goals.

**4. Keep Focused & Avoid Distraction – Ps. 16: 8; Heb. 12: 2.**

There are too many distractions in this world! Un-forgiveness is a major distraction in life. Why sulk over the offences of others while your life dreams and projects are rotting away? Why not forgive? Forgiveness is one major key to progress in life.

**5. Recover Fast After Every Success Or Failure – Lk. 12: 16-20.**

Elijah caved in just after the victory at Carmel. He couldn't manage his success. Peter betrayed Christ in a worse way than Judas yet; he recovered fast and turned again to Christ. Judas however couldn't forgive himself and so committed suicide. Learn from them.

**6. Know Your Resources & Put Them To Good & Effective Use –  
1Cor. 12: 4 – 11; 1Cor. 2: 12.**

The greatest discovery in all the worlds is self-discovery. All God's children

are gifted. Don't waste away, you are gifted; you are great. Just discover your  
gifts and grace from God and use them.

**7. Avoid Laziness. Work hard – Prov. 13: 4; John 5: 17; 12: 24.**

Hard work is a major missing virtue of our time. Hard work is doing as much as you can; Laziness is doing as little as you can. Hard work pays!

**8. Don't Procrastinate; Don't Postpone Till Tomorrow What You  
Can Do Today – Mk. 14: 3-9; Mk. 16: 1-7.**

Procrastination is a thief of time and regret it's only fruit. Many who keep their alabaster oil until the resurrection morning to anoint Christ's body only live to regret they had done it earlier. There comes a time when certain things in life become too late. So, live each day as if it would be the last.

**9. Do The Right Thing At The Right Time – Jn. 9: 4.**

Knowing to do the right thing at the right time is the principal key to using discretion and initiative. Both are needed for a successful and meaningful life.

**10. Have Good Priority. Avoid Irrelevancies – Rom. 13: 11-14.**

Not all things that appear good are relevant to God's call, plan and purpose for your life. Being good is not enough. Priority defines much more what is relevant and necessary.

**11. Be Strong, Bold & Courageous – Josh. 1: 1-9; 2Tim. 1: 7.**

Whereas fear and timidity bring men into defeat and failure, success comes quite naturally to the strong, bold and courageous.

**12. Mind your Company – 1Cor. 15: 33.**

We all influence people as we are influenced by others. There are too many loafers in the world who are going nowhere. Don't join their company.