

# This Year I Will...

## Part 3: Make Time for Priorities

*"Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise people, but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil." Eph. 5:15-16 (NRSV)*

### Four Biblical Keys to Time Management

#### 1. \_\_\_\_\_

*"After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the time has come... I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.'" John 17:1,4*

*"...they tried to keep him from leaving them. But he said, 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.'" Luke 4:42,43*

*"People were bringing little children to Jesus... but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me...'" Mark 10:13,14*

#### 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Two keys to wise time planning:

• \_\_\_\_\_: I can't do everything. Even Jesus said "no". "Everything is permissible for me - but not everything is beneficial." 1 Cor. 6:12 (NIV)

*"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." Eccl. 3:1*

• \_\_\_\_\_: It's best to focus on one thing at a time *"An intelligent man aims at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions." Pr.17:24*

*"Martha was distracted by all the preparations ... 'Martha, Martha,' the Lord answered, 'you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed.'" Luke 10:40-42*

Plan for my \_\_\_\_\_, my \_\_\_\_\_, and my \_\_\_\_\_

Important: Before you make a time \_\_\_\_\_, find out how your time is \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. \_\_\_\_\_

*"Only someone too stupid to find his way home would wear himself out with work." Eccl. 10:15 (GN)*

*"Because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.'" Mk 6:31*

#### 4. \_\_\_\_\_

*"Reverence for God adds hours to each day" Pr. 10:27 (LB)*

*"Crowds of people came to him... But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Lk 5:16*

### Ten Tips for Getting Organized

Excerpt from: *"Finding More Time In Your Life: With Wisdom From the Bible and Tools That Fit Your Personality"* by Dru Scott Decker

#### 1. Turn your to-do list into a prayer list.

Talk to God about each item on your list. Ask Him to help you decide what to erase.

#### 2. Respect your time style.

There are two major time styles: The basically organized Category One and the need-to-concentrate-to-be-organized Category Two. Skip one-size-fits-all solutions.

#### 3. Find the time tools that fit you.

Don't load yourself down with dozens of techniques. When you find the few key time tools for your personality and priorities, you unlock the riches of more time.

#### 4. Carve out an appointment with yourself.

When you have too much to do, find some time in your to sit down to plan and prevent problems. Even ten minutes of planning can save hours of doing.

#### 5. Grab 15 minutes a day.

Pick a project that is on your mind. Then Grab 15 minutes a day for it. Even if you take off Sunday, 15 minutes a day adds up to 78 hours a year!

#### 6. Keep your stimulation and excitement quota full.

Many people who have a desire for stimulation and excitement inadvertently fill the desire with procrastination and last minute rushes. If you have a high S&EQ, keep it filled positively.

#### 7. Keep a not-to-do list.

Keep a not-to-do list of things not worthy of your time. One college student boosted her GPA by adding to her not-to-do-list: Any TV between Sunday at 5 until Friday at 5.

#### 8. Cut searching time with no "temporary parking" places.

If a document or object has an important purpose, take the time to give it a special place. It's regular parking place. It's frustrating to search for something you've put in temporary parking.

#### 9. Say "no" more frequently.

#### 10. Do it daily.

Even though your time is pressed, weave what really counts into the tapestry of your time. Do it daily.

TLC message by René Schlaepfer for January 19 & 20, 2002

## Daily Meditations

Take a few minutes every day to read Scripture, pray, and answer some thought-provoking questions pertaining to this week's topic.

This week's memory verse:

*"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." - Matt. 6:33*

### Monday

Read over the notes and verses. Which point from the message stood out to you most and why?

If you could ask God one question about your time management issues, what would it be?

Based on your knowledge of the Bible, how do you think He would respond?

Can you think of any supporting verses (perhaps in the notes)?

*Thank God today for the honest relationship you can have with Him. Thank Him for the truth of the Bible. Ask Him to help you as you honestly evaluate your life and seek His help to change.*

### Tuesday

Read Luke 4:31-43. What a busy day in Jesus' life! List the demands on Jesus' time in this one day.

- Did Jesus meet everyone's needs?
- Did everyone respect Jesus' need for private time after a long day?
- Did even Jesus hear more requests than he answered in one day?
- From the peoples' perspective, was His "work done" when he left them?
- What kind of pressure did they put on Jesus to fulfill their to-do list for Him?
- How was Jesus able to deal with all this pressure?

How is this story helpful to you?

Key to Christ's ability to say "no" was his sense of a greater purpose which took priority. *Spend time in prayer today asking God to help you see what your priorities should be, and where you are getting distracted from them.*

### Wednesday

Read Luke 10:38-42. For the next 24 hours, spend time doing something a little different: Take a *time inventory*. Jot down on a piece of paper everything you do for 24 hours, and how long it takes you. When you are done, answer these questions:

- Were you surprised in any way by your time inventory?
- Were any of your suspicions confirmed?

- What does this tell you about how you can make better use of your time?

*Ask God for wisdom. Pray that He shows you how you can "redeem the time"!*

### Thursday

Read Ps. 91:1. What does this verse say about the benefit of spending time with ("dwelling") with God?

How did Jesus put this into practice? Read Luke 5:15, 16 and Mark 1:35.

When we are busy, the idea of taking time to simply pray and meditate seems counter-intuitive, almost like a waste of time. Why is it helpful to stop and pray, especially when we are super-busy?

*Spend a little extra time in prayer today bringing God the concerns of your schedule.*

### Friday

As we head into the weekend, let's talk about the fourth point: Rest. This is a very Biblical word! The concept of rest is in over 200 verses. Read Exodus 23:12, Exodus 34:21, Lev. 23:3. God Himself is said to have rested. Rest is one of the Ten Commandments. Jesus rested, and encouraged his disciples to get away for personal rest time. Why is this so important to God?

How is our culture's approach to rest different from the Bible's?

What activities of genuine recreation would you like most to pursue?

In his book on time, Charles Hummel asks a great question: List three ways (even small ones) in which you can create and use leisure time in your life right now:

*Thank God today for His rest offered to us in Christ! Thank Him for His love for you. Ask Him to be the Lord of all your life.*

### Saturday

Spend some time talking to God about the struggles you face with time management. Ask Him to help you apply what you learned this week. Please pray for the services this weekend-- that many people will be transformed by the Good News of God's transforming grace.

### Resources

Dru Scott Decker, *Finding More Time In Your Life*

J. Grant Howard, *Balancing Life's Demands: A New Perspective on Priorities*

Charles E. Hummel, *Freedom from the Tyranny of the Urgent*

Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: How to Create the Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves You Need*