

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The Time of Your Life

SERMON REFERENCE: Ephesians 5:13-18

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1541

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Our God is the God of grace and forgiveness, and He's the God of a new start.
 - i) He's the God of a second chance.
- b) Many of us think that we are doing well, and we may indeed be doing well, except for this one thing: we are headed toward the wrong goal.
 - i) We may be doing well in our business, in our health and in our relationships, but we've lost sight of the right goal.
- c) We need to find God's goal for our lives, live life to its fullest, be all that we can be, and please God.
- d) Ephesians 5:13-18
 - i) In the Bible, there are two words that are translated "time."
 - (1) One of those words is the word from which we get "chronology."
 - (a) This refers to the passing of time, like so many hours and so many minutes and seconds.
 - (b) This is not the word used in this passage of Scripture.
 - ii) The word used for "time" in Ephesians 5:16 refers to "seasons of time."
 - (1) It literally means "opportunity."
 - (2) This word is also used in Galatians 6:10 as "opportunity."
 - iii) When the Bible says "Redeeming the time" in Ephesians 5:16, it speaks of the days, hours, and minutes; but more than that, it also speaks of the opportunities we have.
 - (1) We need to see time not just as something that is passing, but we need to see time as an incredible opportunity.
 - (2) When we're redeeming time, what we're really redeeming is opportunity.
 - e) Ephesians 5:16
 - i) The days are evil, so take advantage of every opportunity God has given.
 - f) Whether we have been going toward the wrong goal or sitting on the sidelines, the message today will show us from God's Word how to take time and maximize time for God's glory.

2) TIME IS A PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY (EPHESIANS 5:14)

- a) There is a day of opportunity that we dare not let pass by, and we need to awaken from our stupor.
- b) God has provided for us an opportunity.
 - i) God is the creator of time.
 - ii) God has given us two great gifts:
 - (1) Jesus
 - (2) Time
 - iii) Like any gift, how we use time is up to us.
 - iv) We need to see every day as a gift from God.
- c) Lamentations 3:22-23
 - i) For us to cease living, God would not have to take our lives; He would just have to stop giving us life.

- ii) Time is something God gives us; it is not something that we own.
 - d) We are stewards of the time God has given us, and we will one day have to answer to Him for what we did with each day that He gave us.
 - e) Each of us have 24 hours in a day.
 - i) The difference between people is not that some have more time than others, but it's how they choose to use the time God has given them.
- 3) TIME IS A PRESENT OPPORTUNITY (EPHESIANS 5:15-16)
- a) There are two days that can steal the joy and productivity from today:
 - i) Yesterday
 - ii) Tomorrow
 - b) The Bible warns us about living in yesterday.
 - i) Philippians 3:13-14
 - (1) Paul said that he forgot the past, those things which are behind.
 - ii) There were certain things the Apostle Paul had to forget:
 - (1) Past guilt
 - (a) Paul was guilty, along with others, for the stoning of Stephen.
 - (i) Acts 7:54-60
 - (b) 1 Timothy 1:15
 - (c) Paul buried that guilt in the grave of God's forgetfulness.
 - (d) The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all our sins if we will confess them.
 - (2) Past glory
 - (a) Paul was guilty as a sinner.
 - (b) Paul was also possibly the greatest Christian who ever lived, the greatest missionary and the greatest church planter.
 - (3) Past grief
 - (a) Paul suffered as few men suffer.
 - (b) 2 Corinthians 4:17
 - (c) Romans 8:18
 - (4) Past grudges
 - (a) Paul was abused, lied about, mistreated, cheated and overlooked; but Paul refused to hold a grudge.
 - iii) One thing that can take the joy out of today is yesterday, as we carry along the load from yesterday.
 - c) Tomorrow can also take the joy out of today.
 - i) Many people are not living for today because they're anticipating tomorrow.
 - (1) They are waiting for tomorrow.
 - (a) The problem with this is that tomorrow never comes.
 - (b) We're always looking forward to what's going to happen.
 - (i) So, we fail to enjoy what we have today.
 - (ii) We need to enjoy what God has given us right now.
 - (2) They are worrying about tomorrow.

- (a) Matthew 6:34
 - (i) The “evil” mentioned in this passage doesn’t mean sin; it’s like an evil smell.
 - 1. It means something bad.
 - (ii) All of us have difficulties.
 - 1. We’ve been blessed with difficulties.
 - 2. God gives us enough difficulties to cause us to come to Him.
 - a. The worst thing that could happen to us would be to not have any difficulties.
 - i. We would then never know our need for the Lord.
 - 3. God gives us enough grace to meet these difficulties each day.
 - (b) When we worry, we reach out into tomorrow and take tomorrow’s difficulty and bring it into today.
 - (i) In Matthew 6:34, God didn’t give grace for tomorrow’s difficulty.
 - 1. God gives grace for today.
 - 2. Deuteronomy 33:25
 - (ii) When we reach into tomorrow and bring tomorrow’s troubles (real or imaginary) into today, we upset God’s divine ecology.
 - (c) Worry doesn’t take the sorrow out of tomorrow; it takes the strength out of today.
 - (i) When we fight tomorrow’s battles today, we then meet tomorrow out of breath.
 - (d) Someone once said that worry pulls tomorrow’s clouds over today’s sunshine.
- d) Yesterday is a cancelled check; tomorrow is a promissory note.
 - i) Today is all of the cash that we have.
 - (1) We need to learn how to spend it wisely.
 - e) Life is today.
 - f) Ephesians 5:15-16
- 4) TIME IS A PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY (EPHESIANS 5:16)
- a) When we redeem something, we pay for it.
 - i) There is something we must give in exchange if we would live up to the opportunities that God has given us.
 - b) To waste time is to waste life.
 - i) Time is life.
 - ii) When we give our time to someone, we are giving a piece of ourselves.
 - c) Time is so valuable and important; we need to redeem the time.
 - d) The art of living is spending time wisely.
 - i) Psalm 90:12
 - e) Here are four principles to help us redeem the time:
 - i) The prayer principle
 - (1) Ephesians 5:17

- (2) It is very important that we begin the day with prayer.
 - (3) Spend enough time in prayer each morning to get God's will for your life.
 - (a) There is enough time in every day to do everything God wants you to do and to do it gracefully.
 - (b) It's an insult to God to say that you don't have enough time.
 - (c) If you don't have enough time, then you're doing something that God did not intend for you to do; either something that you've imposed upon yourself or something you've allowed others to impose upon you.
 - (4) Get quiet before the Lord each morning, and let God speak to your heart.
- ii) The priority principle
- (1) Most of the choices we have to make in life are not choices between good and bad, but between good and best.
 - (2) We need to find out what God wants us to do.
 - (3) What we do is more important than how we do it.
 - (a) We need to get our priorities correct.
 - (4) John 19:30
 - (a) Jesus lived only to the age of 33 in His humanity when He said, "It is finished."
 - (5) John 17:4
 - (a) The work referenced in this verse is the work that God gave Him to do.
 - (i) There were many villages that wanted Jesus to come and teach and to heal, but Jesus didn't do everything or go everywhere.
 - (ii) But the Lord Jesus could say at the end of His ministry that He had finished the work the Father gave Him to do.
 - (6) Many of us have a constant battle between the important and the urgent.
 - (a) One of the greatest dangers is letting the urgent things crowd out the important things.
- iii) The promptness principle
- (1) Ephesians 5:16
 - (2) This deals with the sin of procrastination.
 - (3) James 4:17
 - (a) Sin is not merely doing wrong; it is also failing to do what we ought to do.
 - (4) Procrastination and disobedience are different kinds of the same sin.
 - (5) We need to cultivate the habit of instant obedience.
 - (6) Most of us fail in the area of will power.
 - (a) It's been said, "When you have a job to do, begin this very hour. You supply the will; God supplies the power."
- iv) The power principle

- (1) Ephesians 5:18
 - (2) Do God's will in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) Most of us don't need to learn to work harder; we need to work with more power and effectiveness.
- 5) TIME IS A PASSING OPPORTUNITY (EPHESIANS 5:16)
- a) The days are evil, and time is passing away.
 - i) This day is passing, and we must give an account for this day.
 - b) Time is a strange commodity.
 - i) We can't save it.
 - ii) We can't borrow it.
 - iii) We can't loan it.
 - iv) All we can do is use it or lose it.
 - c) Time can't be stopped.
 - d) Time can't be stored.
 - e) Time can't be saved.
 - f) Time can't be shared.
 - i) I can give you part of my time; but when I do, I've not added anything to your time.
 - (1) In this sense, time can't even be shared.
 - g) What do you intend to do with your time?
 - i) Do you intend to be a soul winner?
 - ii) Will you be a good steward?
 - iii) Do you intend to make reconciliation with an estranged friend?
- 6) CONCLUSION
- a) We need to cut ourselves loose from yesterday.
 - i) Its heartaches and failures are gone.
 - ii) Forget those things which are behind, confess them to the Lord and bury them in the grave of God's forgetfulness.
 - b) We need to use the time we have wisely.
 - c) If you've not accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, now is the time to be saved.
 - i) 2 Corinthians 6:2
 - d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16