

## "Your Time"

Time passes by quickly, and we often miss opportunities to do good. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." We need to wake up and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. God created time in the beginning, and since the first day we've been keeping time. God promised Noah in Genesis 8:22, that "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." God has kept that promise for thousands of years, just as He always keeps His promises. Time is precious and keeps moving, and we must not presume that we'll always have time. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

Dr. Benjamin Mays wrote a poem that reminds us of the time that we have. "I have only just a minute, Only sixty seconds in it. Forced upon me, can't refuse it. Didn't seek it, didn't choose it. But it's up to me to use it. I must suffer if I lose it. Give account if I abuse it. Just a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it." We can fool ourselves into thinking a little thing doesn't matter. A minute of temptation can ruin a life. An angry minute can lead to a terrible conflict. A careless minute can cost a life. Instead, a loving minute can restore a friendship. A minute of joy can renew the spirit. A minute of prayer can focus our hearts on God. A patient minute can help us see things in a better light. A minute of Scripture can keep us from falling to temptation.

Some people claim they never have enough time, yet they spend enormous chunks of time doing trivial things. Use your time wisely. Because once spent, you cannot replace time. Are you closer to God today than you were a year ago, or are you farther away? How will you use your time?

This is an important study on time, and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org), or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org) and on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Romans 13:11 to 14, and explore how important using our time wisely truly is.

Our reading today comes from Romans chapter 13, verses 11 to 14. "Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts." That's a reading from God's holy word.

Let's pray together. "Oh Father, help us to awaken, and help us to realize that our time on this earth is short. Help us to live for You and to serve You and to please You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen."

We live our lives watching the clock. Our watches, our telephones, our cars, our rooms, our computers all have clocks and calendars reminding us that time is passing. Virgil Trout once said that we live in a "clock-eyed world." We are constantly looking at the clock, thinking about time to do something: time to get up, time to eat, time to go to work, time to come home, and time to sleep.

Day and night never cease. Since time is so much a part of our lives, we need to treasure what we have. And I think here are some important lessons about time:

First, I must learn that my days are measured. I won't live forever on this earth. Death comes to us all. David said in Psalm 139:16 when he was speaking about God's knowledge about our lives, but he says even before our birth, David says "Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."

David could say in Psalm 39:4 to 5, "LORD, make me to know my end, And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am. Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere breath."

Moses wrote in Psalm 90 verse 12, "So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom." Again, Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 32 and verse 29, "If they were wise, they would understand this; they would discern their latter end!" Hebrews 9:27 clarifies this: there the Hebrew writer says "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." Death is real, and so is the judgment that follows death. Yes, one day your time on earth will be no more.

Second, I must learn to take care of myself physically and spiritually. Moses wrote in Psalm 90 verse 10, "As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away." Since life is brief, we must take time seriously. Romans 13:11 says, "Do this, knowing the time, that it's already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed." I tell you, you're getting older and you are closer to salvation or closer to judgment than you have ever been.

The Lord Jesus said in Luke 12:35 to 40, "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third (that's way late in the night), and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Third, I must learn to make the most of my time. You see, the time we possess today is so precious that we must not waste it on things that don't matter. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:15 to 17, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." You see, the Lord doesn't want us to waste our souls on evil things that may ruin us. He wants us to know His will and to do it, so that we may please Him in everything.

Paul wrote in Colossians 3:23 to 24, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve." If I belong to the Lord, I must give myself to His service instead of living for my own pleasures. If I belong to the Lord, I need to give Him my all and serve Him with all my heart and strength. We must surrender ourselves completely to God; and that includes our time, our energy, our hearts, our money, and our strength. We must not spend our time ignoring Him or fighting with Him.

The Lord Jesus said in John 9 and verse 4, that "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is today; night is coming when no one can work." The Lord knew that His time on earth was limited, and He wanted to make the most of the time that He possessed. So should we! We're all limited in time. Have you considered how you use your time? Much time is wasted, not in hours but in

minutes. You know, a bucket with a small hole in the bottom will become just as empty as the bucket that someone deliberately kicks over.

You need to use your time to think about making memories, memories that You're making, make sure that they're good ones, happy ones. Few things sting as badly as a memory of some sin, some misspoken word, or some hateful act. You see, you're trading a day of your life today for good, or for evil, maybe you're trading it for nothing of value. How you live today will be remembered by someone somewhere tomorrow. What will they think of you? Will they see Christ dwelling in you? We wouldn't want to spend our lives building a reputation of evil.

Luke 12, verse 16 to 21 says: That someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But Jesus said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?" Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a very rich man was very productive. "And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'

Then he said, 'This is what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to my soul,' "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." ' "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Fourth, I must learn not to put off until tomorrow the things I should do today. Oh I can plan for tomorrow, but I will never possess tomorrow until tomorrow comes. If you waste time, you may be sacrificing your eternity. If you waste time, you're wasting opportunities to be right with God. All I can give to God is myself, my abilities, and my time. If I fail to give Him my time, I'll fail to give Him myself. And so, let's invest our time in God for good.

In Hebrews 3:7 to 14 we read: Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they've not known my ways.' As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.' Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it's called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share (he says) in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end." The Lord doesn't want anyone's heart to harden in sin or for anyone to lose their soul.

We must take advantage of our opportunities. James 4:13-17 written to some merchants says, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we're going to go into such and such a town and we're going to spend a year there and trade and make a profit'— yet you do not know what your tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you're a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. And instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.' And as it is, you boast in your arrogance. And all such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." Life is indeed uncertain, and we can't presume that we have lots of time to do as we please. Proverbs 27 and verse 1 says, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you don't know what a day may bring."

And this is the reason getting right with God is vitally important! Time is short and how long we have is uncertain. We need to act with wisdom and to act soon. Paul wrote in the book of Corinthians,

2 Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 2, "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

The Lord Jesus, in Matthew 25 verses 1 to 12 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' And then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." Are you prepared for the Lord's coming? Is your heart right with God?

I've talked with people about their souls, and they tell me, "Well, I'm thinking about it." My friend, don't think so long that you fail to follow Christ. It's tragic to think of a soul who died thinking about becoming a Christian and never got around to doing it. It's also heartbreaking to hear of a Christian who thinks one day he'll repent but never begins to do it. Don't die thinking about it; get right with God. 2 Peter 3 and verse 9 says, "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." My friend, do you need to get right with God. Today is the best day for you to do that.

Let's pray. "Father we're thankful that each day You give us an opportunity to get right with You, to serve You, to love You and to rejoice in all Your blessings. Father help us to give our hearts and our lives to you every single day. And Help us to do Your will, and to please You. In Jesus name we pray, Amen."

David said in Psalm 31:14 to 15, "But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in Your hand." God has your yesterdays, your todays, and your tomorrows. You've just one life to give to God. How you spend your time is how you live your life. Your time is what you make it. God blesses those who make the most of their time. David said in Psalm 31:19, "Oh, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind!"

Romans 13:11, "Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed." Are you nearer salvation or nearer regret? What is your life saying about how you think of God? Does your life say that you love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength?

To become a Christian, lovingly place your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and believe the good news, the gospel, of His death, burial, and resurrection. Turn from sin to righteousness. Confess Jesus Christ as God's Son and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. While you believe, and while you repent, and while you confess Christ, being baptized means someone else is acting upon you. Physically it's another person who baptizes you, and spiritually God is active in saving you, forgiving your sins, burying and raising you with Christ, adding you to the church, causing you to be born again,

and making you His child. In baptism God acts upon you. Let God give you newness of life when you trust and obey Him.

Well we hope today's study about time has stirred you consider your need to be right with the Lord, and to think about how short time really is. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's also a schedule of our programs, there's a map with the location of churches that are in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org), look them up and see if there's a church near you. You can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Just go to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." And be sure to like the programs; because when you like them, what that does is it helps spread the program to other people. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses that you will enjoy, so why not ask us for one. But if you get a hold of us, don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. Everybody needs that time, Sunday after Sunday, after Sunday, the Lord's Day, to give themselves to the Lord and to serve Him. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.