

Resonate

BIBLE STUDY

**“THE TIME OF OUR LIVES:
TIME OUT”**

What does your typical week look like? Are you exhausted by just thinking about your “to do” list? Right now I have 36 items on my list and I consider that an easy week! Over the next five days we will be evaluating our schedules for the purpose of saying “no” to some things in order to say “yes” to a better system of managing our time.

DAY 1

Today's Scripture:
Colossians 3:1-2

The Word

I remember one day a third grader walked into the children's ministry area looking as if he were ill. I asked him if he was feeling alright. “I'm worn out. I had an all day soccer tournament yesterday plus I'm in baseball right now. And with school and all, I'm just tired.” I would be, too. This poor eight year old was already heading towards burn-out. Our schedules and our families' schedules are overloaded yet we cannot seem to figure out why we are exhausted. We have too much going on in our lives.

How do we break free from all the activities around us? We need to change our minds.

Colossians 3:1-2

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Verse 1-2: It is time for us to get a new perspective on life. The world around us is slipping away and yet we are investing all of our time and energy in things that will not matter one year from now much less one thousand years from now. We need to reprioritize our schedules and begin to cut things out that are draining our energy and not adding to eternal productivity.

I am not suggesting that all we need to do is to stay on our knees all day for the purpose of prayer. This is not a practical solution. We need to eat, work, go to school, and take care of ourselves and our families. What I am suggesting is putting life in proper order. Think through all of your activities and put them in line with eternity. Our schedules are not filled with wrong stuff but they may be so filled they keep us from what is right and best.

I have a dear friend who desires to be leading others in worship. She is in the process of writing new songs for a C.D. Her struggle is to find the time to play her keyboard. She is married, works full time at an office over 30 minutes from her home, takes care of a house, plays in the worship band which involves being at the church three days a week, and takes care of two cats! She is struggling with knowing what God is calling her to do and finding the time to obey.

But obey she must or she will miss out on the purpose for her life. Obedience does not flow out of a sense of legalistic duty but from our mind, emotions, and will. Read the verses for today again.

Colossians 3:1-2

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Verse 1-2: Our hearts (emotions) must be set on the Resurrected Christ. Our minds are also to be set on heavenly things. We can set our emotions and minds on eternal matters only if we engage our will in the matter. We must choose to view our schedules, our time, and our activities through a heavenly lens.

To live for eternity, we must know our place in eternity. It is time to discover your purpose so that you can drop the time drainers in your life and fully pursue your reason for living.

Up Close and Personal

Ask the Lord to help you understand His purpose for your life.

Write down the goals for your life for the next:

6 months:

1 year:

2 years:

3 years:

4 years:

5 years:

What steps do you need to take in order to achieve those goals?

What is prohibiting your growth towards these goals?

Who will you ask to hold you accountable in reaching your goals?

DAY 2

Today's Scripture:
Colossians 3:1-2

The Word

Yesterday, we looked at our long-term goals in life. But a long-term plan is achieved by day to day steps. Change happens in increments. Would you want someone to perform surgery on you who has only dreamed of being a doctor but never had been medically trained? A real doctor must endure years of scholastic training, internships, examinations, financial burdens and so much more to achieve his dreams.

The goals you want to achieve can only happen if you will honestly evaluate your schedule. Sometime this week, set aside at least an hour to go through your schedule. Look at everything you are doing. Put each minute of your day into one of three categories:

1. Priorities-these items must remain as a part of your schedule.
2. Pleasures-these activities are ones you want to keep in your schedule but they do not have to remain.
3. Pinchers-these are activities which are wasting your time. They need to be limited or eliminated from your schedule. Some of activities may be wrong. Others may not be wrong within themselves but they are pinching away pieces of your time.

Pinchers come in many different ways. (e.g. television, e-mail, surfing the net, sports, talking on the phone, shopping, sleeping, instant messaging, going out, fantasizing, driving children to multiple activities, partying, etc.) But these distractions take away from our lives' purposes. We will study tomorrow how to deal with these Pinchers. But for now identify the pinchers in your life and then rewrite your schedule without them.

After you have removed the pinchers, review your schedule with all the Pleasures you included. Are there items in the Pleasures category that can be cut at this point in time in order to make room for what is truly important?

Evaluate each Pleasure based upon Colossians 3:1-2.

Colossians 3:1-2

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Up Close and Personal

Ask the Lord to show us how to create a schedule that pleases Him.

After evaluating your schedule, write the answers here:

Priorities:

Pleasures:

Pinchers:

Are there any Pleasures that may need to be cut away from your schedule in order to better fulfill your goals in life? If so, write them here:

Now write your finalized schedule without Pinchers of time and after some of the Pleasures have been removed. The following gives you an example of how to organize it. But write it on a separate sheet for each day of the week.

Sunday	6 a.m. _____	3 p.m. _____
	7 a.m. _____	4 p.m. _____
	8 a.m. _____	5 p.m. _____
	9 a.m. _____	6 p.m. _____
	10 a.m. _____	7 p.m. _____
	11 a.m. _____	8 p.m. _____
	12 noon _____	9 p.m. _____
	1 p.m. _____	10 p.m. _____
	2 p.m. _____	11 p.m. _____

DAY 3

The Word

Today's Scripture:

Colossians 3:5-10; Hebrews 12:1

If you have followed through in writing your schedule, then you are on your way of learning to manage your time. A written schedule and a lived schedule are very different. Activities, people, deadlines, emergencies, crisis do not adhere to what we have written in our daily planner. While there are many events beyond our control, we can be responsible for our actions in life.

Colossians 3:5-10

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Verse 5-9: We need to get rid of the parts of our lives that do not reflect Christ. No more excuses, procrastination, or justification. If you have been saved by the acceptance of Christ's work on the cross, then you need to be transformed from your old self to your new self.

We discussed time pinchers earlier this week. These pinchers steal away from our time. Hopefully, you have identified the pinchers in your life. But we cannot just remove these time thieves; we must replace them with godly ways.

The list in Colossians gives us some of the time pinchers in life: sexual Immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, and lying. These sins keep us from the ways of God which in turn undermines our goals and purposes for a life of eternal impact. We must throw them off and any other sin so we may accomplish our dreams.

Hebrews 12:1

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Verse 1-3: It requires effort to radically change your life. These new habits and ways of living do not develop overnight. You must commit to running the marathon of life, not

the 50 yard dash. But once you purpose to throw off the things that are dragging you down, you will run the race to win, not just hoping to finish.

Removal of sin and the replacement of godly virtues will not take place without awareness and action. We must be aware of what should be removed and we must take action to remove it. Then, we must be aware of how to replace what has been removed. For example, my mother is a chronic worrier. She wastes a lot of time focusing on the “what ifs” in life. In recent years, she has been working to replace the worrying with praising. Her mind is going to focus on something. She can waste time worrying or she can invest in the eternal things like praising God. She is aware of what needs to be removed and she developed a plan of what to replace worry with: praise. A plan of removal and replacement will help you implement new behaviors in life.

I will be asking you to make an honest assessment of your life. I hope you are ready to look at what needs to be removed from your life. If you cannot think of anything, please ask a trusted person to guide you in this process.

Up Close and Personal

Confess your sins to the Lord.

What sins need to be removed from your life?

What godly virtues need to replace the sins that you will remove?

Who will you talk to about this decision for change in your life?

DAY
4

Today's Scripture:

Colossians 3:10; Proverbs 2:1-11

The Word

Radically changing our time management is beyond saying “no” to time pinchers. We also need to say “yes” to the priorities in life. One of the priorities is putting on the new self.

Colossians 3:10

¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Verse 10: The only one way to put on the new self is to grow in the knowledge of God. Knowledge is never “flung” upon us; instead it must to be pursued.

Proverbs 2:1-5

*¹ My son, if you accept my words
and store up my commands within you,
² turning your ear to wisdom
and applying your heart to understanding,
³ and if you call out for insight
and cry aloud for understanding,
⁴ and if you look for it as for silver
and search for it as for hidden treasure,
⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.*

Verse 1-5: Many people are stuck in the same bad habits. For years, they cannot get past their pain, their past, their addictions, or whatever else may hang them up. By the way, that past sentence relates to every one of us. All of us still have lingering effects from our sin nature as well as the effects from the sins of others. Those of you who think you have it all together, you are dealing with something worse: pride. Confess this sin and honestly evaluate yourself and let us all press forward in truth together. The truth is: we all need help, we all need growth, we all need more of Christ than what we have now. But we can only attain more life through knowledge.

Knowledge is the key to change. The more you know, the more you can make better choices in life. Many of our time problems stem from poor choices. But to go from poor choices to wise one, we must have knowledge of what would be better for our lives.

I hate to exercise yet I do it three times a week. Is it because I like to torture myself? Some days I feel like that is exactly what I am doing. But the real reason that I exercise stems from the knowledge I have about healthy living. This knowledge led me to change my sedentary lifestyle into a more active one.

If you know there are changes you need to make in life then gather knowledge on that subject. If your time is filled with work because everyone dumps on you since they know that you will never say “no”, then it is time to learn about boundaries. If you are struggling with an addiction, then get around people with more knowledge than you to help (e.g. counseling, treatment centers, AA, etc.). If overeating is your struggle, then it is time to discover what causes you to eat and how to create a plan of weight loss that works with your body type. There are diet experts who can help you do this. Stop being victimized by lack of knowledge. Pursue knowledge in your problem area through

books, friends, professionals, videos, sermons, etc. This requires time and effort but the benefits are worth it!

Proverbs 2:6-11

- ⁶ *For the LORD gives wisdom,
and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*
- ⁷ *He holds victory in store for the upright,
he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,*
- ⁸ *for he guards the course of the just
and protects the way of his faithful ones.*
- ⁹ *Then you will understand what is right and just
and fair—every good path.*
- ¹⁰ *For wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.*
- ¹¹ *Discretion will protect you,
and understanding will guard you.*

Verse 7-11: These verses tell us the benefits of knowledge: victory, protection, understanding, good decisions, wise heart, knowledge, pleasant soul, discretion. Would you desire to be victorious in life? Do you want to be protected from bad decisions? Would you like to make decisions and know that they are good and wise? All of this can happen if we pursue knowledge. It is a choice. The benefits are worth the effort.

Up Close and Personal

Praise the Lord who is the source of wisdom and knowledge.

What parts of your life do you want to change?

What knowledge would be beneficial for you to change?

How will you pursue this knowledge?



Today's Scripture:

Colossians 3:11, 1

The Word

I do not know what changes you desire to make in life. However, I hope that yesterday stirred your heart to realize the key to change is knowledge. While knowledge is the key, Christ is the power.

Colossians 3:11

¹¹Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Verse 11: The Message paraphrase of the Bible puts the verse this way:

Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ.

You are included in Christ. Your past no longer has to define you. All that matters is Christ. If you are a believer in Him, then He is your new definition in life. Before Him, you were a wretched sinner. Now the very Spirit of God lives in you. He is transforming you into the image of Christ.

Some of us are so stuck with the old labels that we cannot move forward in Christ. A label can be as small as “the one who is always late” to as harmful as “worthless”. Jesus is saying, do not let the past labels define you, let Me define you.

I want to speak honestly to those of you who have tried to change your life before but have failed. You think you will never be victorious. Brother or sister, I have been there. I had labels on me that never seemed to peel off. But God was faithful even when I was faithless. He has given me a new name, a new label: Christ Jesus. I, in myself, am not worthy of such a noble label. But you see, it's not about me. Christ called me His own. It's not about you. He has placed His name upon you. Through Him, change is available.

Colossians 3:1

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Verse 1: We have come back to the beginning. The reasons to make changes in our lives are not so that we will be happy, healthy, and holy, though these are wonderful benefits. The reason is that we have been raised with Christ. His death and resurrection has allowed us the opportunity to be transformed. It is out of our gratitude for what He did for us that we make efforts to pursue change in our lives.

In day 2, we discussed priorities in life. Christ is the ultimate priority. In response to who He is and what He has done for us, our lives cannot continue the way they have been. It is time for a change.

Up Close and Personal

Praise Jesus for raising us from the spiritual dead.

What “labels” do you wear?

How do they prevent you from being transformed into the image of Christ?

How does the death and resurrection of Christ encourage change in your life?