

# Life Coach: Time Management

## The Time of Your Life, Part 3

Introduction: Having established a general list of priorities (last lesson), time-conscious Christians develop habits that maximize the effectiveness of prioritizing. In other words, the priority list provides a framework for the specific allocation of time, and the habits apply time practically. Most people who fail at time management do so because they fail to develop habits that support priorities.

- I. Practice Biblical Principles of Time Management (continued)
  - A. Set Biblical PRIORITIES (Mt. 6:33)—previous lesson
  - B. Learn to PLAN ahead (Luke 14:28-30)
    1. Planning requires time, but it ultimately saves time.
      - a. Major yearly events should be recorded in a calendar. Big events should never “sneak up” on you.
      - b. Things such as birthdays, vacations, holidays, church events, and periods of heavier workload require planning. Using a calendar gives you a bird’s-eye view of the month and year.
        - 1) When a major event appears on the calendar, do not schedule lesser, competing events at the same time.
        - 2) Always leave yourself some down time.
        - 3) Schedule family events as you would work events and do not deviate from your plan unless a genuine emergency arises. (Note, this allows you to prioritize your family.)
      - c. Conduct a weekly planning meeting with yourself.
        - 1) Look over the events of the coming week at the start of the week.
        - 2) Check text messages and email that may be require time allotment.
        - 3) Write out a “to do” list for the week and break it down by days.
      - d. Remember, by planning ahead you won’t get behind!
    2. Planning relieves stress.
      - a. Planning eliminates surprises that shouldn’t be surprises.
      - b. Planning gives clear direction, aiding in efficient accomplishment.
      - c. Planning requires thinking ahead, allowing you to review—rather than invent—the mental aspect of the task.
      - d. Planning allows you to mesh similar tasks efficiently. For example, if you need to go to the store, planning helps you remember that the post office is nearby and two trips can be accomplished in one.
      - e. Planning combats procrastination—a major cause of stress.
    3. Planning must include a definite plan.
      - a. Once your day is planned, prioritize a list of necessary tasks.

- b. Always do the “hard thing” first. The hard thing may be the least desirable, most time consuming, or most complicated. Accomplish that first, and the rest of the day seems easy.
  - c. For complicated or long term tasks, break the responsibility down into steps. This allows you to think several steps ahead as you accomplish your task.
  - d. When interruptions come or you reach a roadblock (for example, you don’t have something you need to accomplish the task), choose lesser tasks that can be accomplished in your down time. Return to the main task as soon as possible.
  - e. Stay on top of details—returning calls and emails, etc.—without allowing them to sidetrack you from major tasks. For example, driving is an excellent time to return phone calls.
- C. Make PREPARATION to accomplish your priorities (Luke 15:8-10)
1. Organize your resources.
    - a. In the parable of the lost coin, the woman who lost her coin was organized enough to have a candle at hand.
      - 1) Always prepare for the inevitable (night—she had a candle).
      - 2) Also prepare for the possible (lost coin—she had a candle).
    - b. Keep necessary resources orderly and handy so you don’t waste time looking for them.
      - 1) Have a place for everything. Return resources to their place.
      - 2) Gather necessary resources before you begin a task. This saves time and frustration.
      - 3) Learn to discard unused and unnecessary items. This is difficult for some people! De-cluttering saves time and spares frustration.
  2. Organize your trips.
    - a. Maximize time by combining as many trips as possible—store, post office, chiropractor, etc.
    - b. Keep a list—written or digital—to keep you on top of what you need.
  3. Organize your people.
    - a. Husbands and wives should work in tandem and harmony in accomplishing tasks.
    - b. Communication is the key. If you know each other’s schedules, you can delegate tasks efficiently.
    - c. Look for opportunities to give and receive help. If I’m going to the office supply store, I might ask if anyone on staff needs anything.
    - d. Engage the help of experts. Yes, I might be able to figure out a computer problem, but the guy down the hall can do it in a fraction of the time and he enjoys it! If you know you will need help on a given task, don’t start it until help is nearby.