

# Be Watchful and Wise Concerning Time

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Let's go to Ephesians this morning. Now, if you're a guest, the mainstay of our pulpit is expositional preaching verse by verse, chapter by chapter through books of the Bible but we're in between on Sunday morning and we've been going through Ephesians on Sunday night, for the next couple of weeks I may just go to Ephesians on Sunday morning, and we come to an exceedingly practical truth and that's what this is, it's just a very practical exhortation. Now listen, listen, listen: everything in the practical back end of this epistle wholly depends upon you standing on and having experienced the rich doctrine of the first part of the epistle. Those great statements in chapter 1 and 2 and part of chapter 3 where he just truth by truth, precept by precept, unfolds the glorious doctrine of salvation, the glorious truths of Christ seeking us and saving us and shedding his blood for us; the glorious truths that are mysteries we can't quite comprehend but they're Bible truths of calling and election and predestination; the glorious truth of spiritual new birth where he says in chapter 2 that we are made alive in Christ. All that has to be there. You see, you can't just teach people practical things if they haven't experienced the great doctrine of salvation. Everything depends upon the new birth. Everything depends upon having a changed heart. We don't want to just teach people to have a better life and a more successful life, we want to disciple people who have been transformed so that their life is better but that because of that, God gets the glory. It's all centered in him. It's all about him.

So Paul is now giving them practical exhortations. He goes from one area of life to another area of life and says, "Okay now, since the glorious truths of salvation are true in you as individuals and as a collective local church, now live it out this way." Now we come to Ephesians 5:16 and very simply he says here,

16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Another way you could translate that is redeem the time because the days are evil. I've entitled this and this is a continuation from where we were last time we were in Ephesians on Sunday night, that is to "Be Watchful and Wise Concerning Time." T-i-m-e. Time. Be watchful and wise concerning time.

Just about every one of us knows the name Kate Spade. Kate Spade was a fabulous world-renowned fashion designer. She designed the kind of fashions your wife and your

daughters wished they could buy. I don't know that any lady in my family has ever owned a Kate Spade anything. Now sometimes at Christmas I'll splurge and get one of those kind of things that you don't buy regularly and if you ever happen to be in New York, you can go down to that Chinese area where they make the counterfeits and buy some of it, but other than that, not many of us carry a Kate Spade and if any of you guys carry a Kate Spade, we'll see you after the service this morning. We're not into that around here. We want our men to be men, amen? We're not into the effeminate movement. I'm against it. We're against it. I shall not go there any further.

But tragically and on a serious note, Kate Spade took one of her scarfs, I assume it's a scarf she designed, and she hung herself. She committed suicide just recently. She left a 13 year old daughter. If you asked Kate Spade about what her life was about and what she wants to be remembered for, she did say this not too long ago. She said, "I hope that people remember me not just as a good businesswoman but as a great friend and a heck of a lot of fun." Nothing wrong with that but I ask, "Is that it?" A great businesswoman, a good friend and a heck of a lot of fun. There are fewer things when you think about leaving this life that seem more devoid of hope. She had reached the pinnacle but she was empty. Something radical was missing.

Anthony Bourdain was a world-renowned celebrity chef. Anthony Bourdain had a television show that was very popular in that venue and he just a few days ago in a five star hotel in I think it was London, Paris maybe. I think it was Paris, took the belt off of a bathrobe and he hung himself and killed himself. He left behind an 11 year old daughter. Now Anthony Bourdain was quite outspoken about his secularism. He had no faith to speak of in God, much less Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, he said this not long ago, Anthony Bourdain said, "Life is complicated. Life is filled with nuance. Life is unsatisfying." He says, "If I have believed in anything, it's in doubt. The root cause of all of life is looking for a simple -blank- answer," expletive left out. Again, that's life? I just live as a skeptic? My life's unsatisfying? Wait, he's at the pinnacle of his career. As a celebrity chef, he was at the top. A multimillionaire but he had no hope. Life for him had no meaning. He didn't want to live.

He also said this, Anthony Bourdain said, "Your body is not a temple." Well, the Bible says it is. The Bible says your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit but he said, "Your body is not a temple, it's an amusement park. Enjoy the ride." In other words, you're all there is to your existence. Your lusts, your desires, the pleasures you seek, that's all that life is. So a man whose life was filled without hope takes his life by suicide.

Now when we're talking about time, when you look at a Kate Spade or when you look at an Anthony Bourdain, you see two people who were diligent and very disciplined in their use of time. As a matter of fact, though they were unbelievers by all accounts, nevertheless there are things about their life and work that would be good for all of us to look at. Good examples. But the problem is though they were diligent and disciplined in their use of time, their purpose in life was flawed. The motive behind the use of time was not truth and this is where we're going as a culture and I think we're already there as a culture. We're not God-centered. We're not God-anchored. There's nothing outside of us.

There is no accountability. There is no one to please and honor and glorify outside of us. We've become our own god. As the Scripture says, "Professing to be wise, they become as fools."

That's where our culture is and not to get on the horse and ride it too far this morning, but when we see these trends in Baptist life, we see these trends in church life where – listen – more and more and more accommodate and bring in the world "under the guise of trying to reach them for Christ." Listen to me, you do not reach people for Christ by accommodating the world. The church must not become worldly to reach men for Christ, it must become more holy to reach men for Christ and that's why we see millions and millions and millions – no exaggeration – of converts and church members who don't even come to church and don't even act like converts because they're not. They jumped through some hoops, they went through some motions, they found some "church" that fit them and made them comfortable. If a church fits a sinner who's unrepentant, it's not a church. We're saved out of that with new desires, new joys and new loves. And that's where we are as a culture.

But let's get to our main point and that is the use of time. These people managed time for their pursuit but ultimately greatly misused the time God gave them. Let's remind ourselves that Jesus created time. He's the Creator of all things. Time is a precious gift. Time is a treasure and by the way, he holds us accountable for how we use it. Think about that: time is a creation of God, time is a gift to us, and we are held accountable for how we use time.

Time is like the wealth of a wicked, wealthy, old man who used his money only for himself, for sin and for excess but the wicked, wealthy, old man died and he left his fortune with a godly son. Now the son redeems the wealth from being used for sin and excess and now this godly son uses that wealth for righteousness and goodness. The wealthy, wicked, old man, that's a picture of sin in the flesh, and the godly son, that's a picture of a new believer and that's what has happened, when you're converted, you are now able to redeem time back from its misuse, from an inappropriate dispensing of it, from a waste, from neglect. Now as converts, now as believers in Jesus Christ, as those who have had a spiritual new birth, now we have the capacity to require time to yield to us as our servant and not be a runaway slave.

He says here in verse 16, "make the most of your time." Christ has saved you. Everything is new. The Bible says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. The old things have passed away, new things have come." And one of old things that has passed away is your purpose for and your use of the gift of time. You now can begin to learn to use time in a right and proper way. You can redeem it back from an evil wasteful expenditure. We can redeem it. We can make the most of it now.

Now a couple of subpoints here. These will not be on the screen but they're simple. We can now reclaim the treasure of time because we are saved from blindness. We can now reclaim the treasure that time is because in our conversion, in our salvation we now see, I mean spiritually see. We see and we say, "Oh, now we see." Don't you wish somebody

had shared with Anthony Bourdain so that when he's saying life is unsatisfying, we're just looking for some answer, don't you wish somebody had shown him Christ? Perhaps they did and he rejected it and that's usually the case. So that he could say, "Oh, that's what I'm here for." Being a celebrity chef is good and fine but that's not the final purpose. That's not the foundation stone of my life. That may come and go, Christ never changes.

So all things are new for us. Revelation 3:17 reminds us, "Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." This is the wealthy farmer and he just kept getting more wealth and more wealth and he built more barns and more barns. Is wealth sin or evil? No, but if your purpose behind wealth is yourself, if your purpose behind wealth is only for self-gratification and excess and sin, then that is wrong. It's wrong use. You're blind to the truth but we're not blind anymore as believers. So Paul is exhorting these converted Ephesians, converted out of a coarse, perverse, immoral, Gentile culture, he says, "Now you will do something different than your time, than your friends and coworkers and even family members who are still out in the pagan Gentile world." You can redeem it. You now see. You've been saved from blindness.

Luke 4:18 about Jesus, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden." Now this doesn't mean just healing physical blindness, Jesus did a lot of that, it means more than that. It's the spiritual blindness of the heart. We can finally see what matters. We can finally see the truth and we may not see it as clearly as we'd like, we're not glorified yet, but we are beginning to see what matters. Basically what Paul is saying to these Ephesian believers is, "You can now see better so now start acting better. You see what life's purpose really is now, so now act like you see it. Make better use of time. Redeem it, don't waste it."

That's I.: we can reclaim the treasure of time because we are saved from blindness. II. We can reclaim the treasure of time because we are saved from wastefulness. Wastefulness. You know, before you're converted the only thing you can do is waste your life, waste your talents, waste your investments, your wealth, and waste your time, but once we're converted, we can redeem it back. We can bring it out of that and put it to something that's truly useful. So we use the treasure of time. Once we did it for sin and only for the pleasures of this world but now we use it for God.

1 John 2:15, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I think the key word here is love. What it means is the core of your being, the depth of your life goes no further than this world. What does this world offer me? What pleasures? What enjoyments? What power? What prestige? What popularity can I gain? If that's the final denominator in your heart, you're a lover of the world. This verse is not saying that it's wrong to enjoy things in this world but once you're saved, the things of the world begin to lose some of their sparkle.

I enjoy a lot of things. I enjoy outdoor things. I enjoy hunting and there's nothing wrong with enjoying the things of the world but they're not my greatest enjoyment anymore.

They're not the end of my hope. They're not the end of my life anymore. I can now take my mind off of those things and my heart off of those things and press my heart toward things that really matter for time and for eternity.

Titus 3:3 tells us, "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." But for us this world, the sparkle has faded and we have learned that there is a greater treasure than this world can offer. What an enormous and wonderful gift it was for Jeff Noblit when God began to open my eyes to the pleasures and the treasures of Jesus Christ because there are so many times when we get worried or we get anxious that this may happen or that may happen, this terrible thing may happen and that terrible thing may happen, and by the way, in this fallen world terrible things happen, but at the end of it all, you can never ever ever remove from me the treasure of Jesus Christ. It can't be taken away.

So God does not want us to avoid wholesome pleasures that happen to be in this world. By the way, he gave us these common grace pleasures that are in the world. But here are three thoughts about it. Here are three thoughts as we go out and we use our time enjoying pleasures in the world. 1. We should always praise him for it. Does not as you got out and do some things, I was on a tractor yesterday and I was praising the Lord for the joy of being on a tractor. Now that may not do something for some of y'all but you're just not with it yet. You haven't arrived yet. It just happens to be one of the things that I just enjoy. There's something about the noise and the racket and being able to meditate on things while I'm driving that tractor. It's just so rich and I just started thanking God. "God, thank you for this gift." Praise him for it. Glorify God in it for his goodness to you.

Scholars as I've told you before, record that 11 times the Gospels record Jesus retreated from ministry for some down-time, for some rest, and he would pray to his Father during those times. So there's nothing wrong with down-time. There's nothing wrong with enjoying the common graces but make sure God's in the center of it. Thank him for it. And you know, every time we thank God for the good grace that he gives us in these so-called common graces, it always points our hearts to the great grace of redeeming grace. Redemptive grace is infinitely greater than the common graces of this world's pleasures and those should always connect for us. Praise him for them.

Secondly, of course, thank him for them. Just thank him for them. Now I've had a pattern that I've tried to follow for many years and I try not to let many days go before I do this and I do this not because I'm strong, I do this because I'm weak, and that is I start naming the nice things God's let me enjoy in this life and I thank him for them and I give them to him, and I almost feel like God chuckles as if, "Don't you know I own them already?" But the Lord knows I need to give them to him for me, for my sake. "Lord, thank you for this car. Thank you for this tractor. Thank you for this house. Thank you for this land. And I know it's yours. I give it afresh to you. And though I enjoy some of these things, I want to say again, God, that I'm grateful for them and they're not my final joy. They're not my greatest treasure." When Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain came to that pinnacle in their lives and it was almost like they said, "Is this it? It's not enough. It's not

satisfying." Anthony Bourdain said so. "It's hollow." That's because he didn't have the anchor of Christ. That's at the end of it all.

Praise him for it, thank him for it, and as we enjoy the common graces of the pleasures of this world, make sure you are striving to use them in appropriate measure. Use the pleasures of the world in appropriate measure. Pull yourself back some. I remember John MacArthur writing that sometimes he has the possibility to eat a nice steak at a fine restaurant and he decides, "I'm not going to do it. I'm not going to let my body get to thinking it gets everything it wants." Now he's not saying that's the rule for everybody, he's just saying, "For me, I do that from time to time, just to show my body and my lust, you're not God. You're not Lord, Jesus is."

Now Grace Life Church, you're a very mature church, at least relatively speaking you are, that is compared to others, and we don't judge each other on this stuff. We don't go down those roads. "Well, he got to enjoy this. I didn't get to enjoy that." That's the worldly concept. We don't go there because as a matter of fact, sometimes when we see a brother or sister getting a lot of things in the world, we pity them because we're fearful this may make them lose the great treasure of Jesus because too much stuff can do that sometimes. So we're not judging each other here. No condemnation here but I do want to charge you and exhort you as Paul exhorts the Ephesians, redeem this time. Make good use of it.

The third subpoint about using the common graces of this world that give us pleasure, is use them in appropriate measure. The Bible does tell us there's a time for rest and relaxation but there's also a time for work and for labor and we glorify and praise God for both. But you know, it could be that the greatest sin in the professing church today is the misuse of the treasure of time? I believe if we could go back three or four generations, they wouldn't be able to believe the things we spend our time on from the internet and computers, to television, to hobbies, to vacations, to radio, to music, to children's extracurricular activities. I mean, just since my girls were in grade school and high school, the amount of stuff the world tells you you must do with your children has exploded. I'm going to say this very plainly, very clearly: some of you young couples will likely be tempted to look for a new church because you need a church that's going to fit the kind of external activities you want to be involved in and by the way, that's what most people do. They try to find a church that fits them and what they want to do versus, "I've pledged allegiance to Jesus Christ and to his church. I can do some other things, perhaps lots of other things but that's my order and that's where I want to be."

I don't think too many believers walk in real victory over the sin of wasting time because it's a subtle and manipulative temptation. I'm going to be a little personal this morning because I want to share this to hopefully encourage and give guidance to some of our younger couples and in sharing this, I want you to know that the Noblit family doesn't get all A's all the time and we've had to repent at times and get back in line with the right priorities but I want to share this as an encouragement. I want to say a word or two about travel ball or it could be travel band or travel music or travel whatever. You know that my daughters, all three of them were good athletes but the middle one and the littlest one were better athletes perhaps, and my Anaclaire played college ball. Let me tell you kind

of how that unfolded. When Anaclaire was real little, we began to learn that if your child is going to have any future in athletics, you've got to do travel ball because that's about the only place that coaches see kids anymore, and so when she was pretty little, we met with a coach that coached a travel ball team. We're talking I guess junior high age at this point and they just traveled locally and it included no Sundays and we thought, "Well, that's a good thing."

Then some time went on and some people began to tell us that, "You know, Anaclaire probably could play college. She could probably play at the NAIA level or maybe Division II, small college perhaps." So we had the opportunity to join a different kind of travel team and it was a travel team where you would get some college coaches to look at you and so I talked to the coach of this travel team and told him upfront, I said, "We're Christians. In fact, I'm a pastor and I know your tournaments go over on Sunday and I have some Sundays I can miss, we have a generous personal leave or vacation policy, but there will be some Sundays when we will leave on Saturday from the tournaments and we'll be back at church on Sunday." And we found that that coach said, "Absolutely. I want Anaclaire on my team. That's fine. That's good. You can do that."

We were up north of Knoxville, TN at a tournament. I don't know, Anaclaire is a sophomore or something at this time, and we had already committed, "We're leaving on Saturday. We've got to be back at church on Sunday. We're not going to miss this Sunday." And that Saturday afternoon before we left, her coach came and said, "There are two college coaches who have called me. They're coming tomorrow to see Anaclaire play." Testing time. Now if you've raised kids and God's given them some abilities, that's exciting for parents, is it not? It was for us, exciting for all of us. I thought for a minute. I prayed in my heart and I said, "No. We've said we're going to be back on Sunday and we're leaving this afternoon. We won't be here and she won't see those coaches." And you know, I remember in the car coming back to Muscle Shoals, I don't remember Pam, I don't remember Anaclaire, and I certainly didn't say anything in the way of, "Oh, that was awful." We'd been hoping that we would get this kind of attention or get these offers and we get the very first ones and we decide to leave and I thought, "No, we've decided that we would not miss so many Sundays and tomorrow is a Sunday and we need to be back for."

I'm convinced that was a test because Anaclaire kind of had a dream early on. She would say one way or another, "Dad, if it's possible, I don't know but if it's possible, I want to play at the highest level. If it's possible, I want to play Division I ball and play in the biggest arenas in America. And I don't know if God will do that but I want to try to do that." When we came back home and some things fell in place and we got a phone call and it was a coach with the Nike elite program and he asked if Anaclaire could join his team. Now if you get to play in Nike elite ball, practically every child on every team gets a Division I scholarship. It's just that clear cut so we thought, "Wow, that's an opportunity." Then he told me something else and he said, "By the way, our tournaments are only in July." I'm never here in July. Now that just happened by coincidence, didn't it? I'm convinced when we told the coaches upfront, "We might miss a Sunday or two with a vacation but we have to be back at church on Sunday," and they affirmed that and

even the Nike coach said he would honor that, but then when they said, "We only play in July," I thought, "Well, we're gone in July anyway."

Anaclaire had some of her best games and she no longer was getting NAIA or Division II offers, she was getting a lot of Division I offers and when Tennessee Chattanooga offered her a scholarship, she looked that they were often ranked in the top 25 and they played the top teams in the nation, she said, "That's the experience I was looking for anyway." And so she goes there. She got to play at Tennessee, Mississippi State, Yukon, Notre Dame, Stanford, the leading programs in the nation and it was fun to go and see 7-10,000 people there and go out there and run on the court but here's what I'm saying to you: there's nothing wrong with experiencing that dream but let God make it happen. Don't cross the lines into compromise to make it happen, then you've got a testimony. Not that you're just that good but that God is that faithful.

He likes to do good things for his children but also there's curve balls. She ends her sophomore season, has a terrible back injury. You just can't believe the number of tests and treatments she went through. It's amazing how much they'll do to you when the tax payers are paying for it and she finds out that her back is like her daddy's back, she has a congenital weakness in her lower back and that level of stress in competition, it's just going to go out and go into spasms and there was just no way to overcome it. Finally the doctor says, "I can't release you to play. You might further damage it. It's over." So right when she was getting to where she really would see some significant time perhaps, God shut it all down. Just in the last day or so she and I were talking and she said, "Dad, but you know something? I saw three of my teammates come to know Christ and I got to be a witness for Christ and I met my future husband who loves Christ, is a member of our church here now." And the Lord did a lot of good stuff.

Now the balance in all of that is be – look – take the initiative. Tell these folks where your loyalty is. Don't be haughty. Don't be arrogant. Don't be demeaning or condescending in spirit but sit down with these coaches and say, "This is our commitment. Can you work with that?" I'm not saying you have to do it exactly the way we did it, and like I said, we fell at times and had to get back in line but be proactive. You have made a commitment to Jesus Christ and his church. While we're not going to judge each other and I'll be the first to reprove you if you start judging another family, however I challenge you the world is banging our door saying, "Give us your children," and what you need to say, "There are some things we can do, there are some pleasures of the world we will enjoy, but we have priorities and there are some lines we are not going to cross."

The last thought. Time is God's and we will give an account. Time is God's and we will give an account. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. I'll just read this. "There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven-- A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance. A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing. A time to search and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away. A time to tear apart and a time to sew



together; A time to be silent and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace." God's given us time for everything but he will require us to give an account of our time.

Ecclesiastes 3:18 reminds us, "I said to myself concerning the sons of men, 'God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts.'" Do you know what a beast is? A beast just responds to the next instinct or lust. Let this world know, let this world know that your house, your little kingdom, your children are not their playthings. We have a God, we have a Lord, we have a commitment. We may do a lot of things but then again we may not. We're not just beasts that respond because the next guy came by and said, "This is a fun thing. Y'all chase it." No, it might be fine to go after it, but you pull back and you say, "Lord, is this right for us? What does this require? Do I dishonor my Lord and my commitment to my church by doing this?"

1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." God will judge us for the use of our time. We're saved from blindness, we now see what really matters, we're saved from its enslavement to the flesh so that we don't just give our lives wholly to wastefulness, he has enlightened us so that we can see and be God-centered, he's empowered us so that we can perform as if Christ is our true treasure and the time he's given us is a gift from him that is a stewardship.

It's like your life is a stack of \$20 bills and every time a day goes by you throw another one out. What are you getting in exchange for your life? If you raise your children or you make some longterm endeavor and you give yourself to it, give yourself, give yourself to it, and then it's over, can you say at the end of it, "But it was still good because Christ is still here. I still got to serve him." Because stuff comes and goes but Christ doesn't.

Don't lose him in these things and trust me, and I feel for young married couples. Women have never been bombarded with the hell they're getting bombarded with today. Listen to me: the Jezebel spirit is a live and well in this world and it's become alive and well in the professing church of Jesus Christ and all of these voices about all the things your children should do, you know there was a time in my girls' lives where I said most particularly with Anaclaire, "We're gonna play basketball. We're not going to play softball. We're not going to play volleyball because that's enough." That may not be right for you but you've got to do some things like that from time to time. What I'm doing as a disciple of Jesus Christ, I'm giving you permission to sometimes tell the world, "No." We might want to go fishing some Saturdays and do you know what, just to be honest? I went to a lot of gyms, boy did I do a lot of rebounding, and that's okay. That was good. That was time with my daughter but I really wish we'd spent more time fishing and goofing off. I don't know that it was sin. Just reflections from an old guy who tried perhaps did some things right, but perhaps didn't do it all right.

Stay in the fight. When the world comes knocking and says, "This is what you've got to do. You've got to do this and you've got to do this and you've got to be involved in this and you've got to be on this, you've got to be on that," when the world comes knocking say, "Time out. I've pledged myself to somebody already. I may can do some of that,

some of it we may not can do." "Yeah, but my little baby might not be king of the world." Yeah, but they may grow up and find a godly spouse and honor and love Jesus Christ.

I believe with all of my heart and my girls will tell you in a split second, "My daddy loves sports." I was an all state athlete. Did you know that? I told Anaclaire that one day. I said, "Anaclaire, I was an all state athlete." She said, "Daddy, I was all state, first team. Player of the year twice." I said, "Alright, alright, hush. Give me one moment of glory here."

Stay in the fight but I think my girls would tell you, "No matter what daddy did, no matter how excited he got, we knew our love for Jesus was more than our love for being a success in athletics." Make sure, moms and dads. Look, I want your children to be exemplary musicians. I want them to be the most fantastic athletes but I want them to know, "I know my pastor and I know my mom and dad, I know the people that love me want me to love Jesus more than this success." We can do both, amen? But it's a matter of I now see and I now have the capacity not to let this get out of bounds.

Now look, here's what you're going to do, instead of going on just a good trajectory steadily being...you're going to have some of this right here. Here's what I'm saying, don't quit. Some of you are right here right now and you need to get back control of your household and say, "As for me and my house, we decided we're going to serve the Lord and, sweetheart, just go ahead and get ready to bounce off the walls and have a hissy fit but we're quitting this, or you choose between this and this. We're not doing this, this, this, this and this because we belong to Jesus."

Stay in the fight. Here's a salient point and I'll be through. James 1:17 reminds us, "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights," and time is a good gift. Now can I say this in closing? Let me say two quick things in closing. I don't want to leave the senior adults out. I've been challenging our young people but I hope you understand it's my heart, it's my heart of love for you. I want you to end up well. Senior adults can waste time. You just wouldn't believe that the whole senior adult service to Christ in a lot of churches is going to see the leaves change up in the mountains in the fall and going to the beach some other times. Yes, when you retire I want you to have some good times but are you serving Christ? Are you staying faithful to your Lord that you're committed to and to his church? They always go together.

Remember that time is not your time, it is God's time. He created it, he gives it to you that it might bless you but that you might use it for him. It's the Lord's and it will be accounted for. Paul says to the Ephesians, "Now that you're born again, now that you see, now that you've got the power of the Holy Spirit, don't be like the rest of the Gentile culture. Use your time wisely. Redeem the time because the days are evil," and we'll talk about that next time, Lord willing.