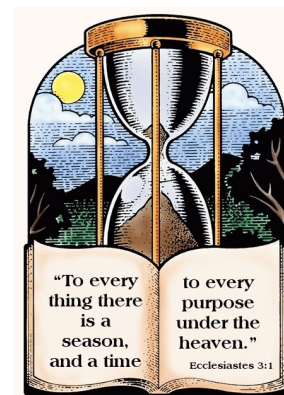


# Church of God Sunday School

## WHOLE-LIFE STEWARDSHIP #4 – TIME



### DAILY READINGS:

- Monday:** Time is described as seasons (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).
- Tuesday:** You have a limited amount of time (James 4:14; Psalm 39:4-5; Psalm 89:47).
- Wednesday:** Make good use of your time (Proverbs 6:6-9; Ephesians 5:15-17; Colossians 4:5).
- Thursday:** Ask God for wisdom to understand the times (Ecclesiastes 8:1-6; Psalm 90:9-12).
- Friday:** Beware of the danger in wasting time (Proverbs 6:9-11; Proverbs 24:30-34; Acts 24:24-25).
- Saturday:** Live with eternity in mind (Ecclesiastes 3:11 AMP; 2 Corinthians 4:18).

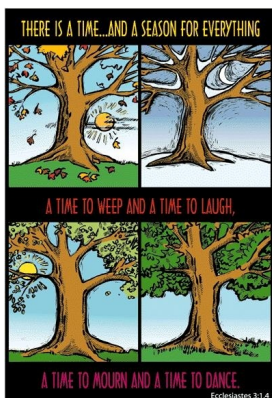
**MEMORY VERSE:** *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."*  
—Ecclesiastes 3:1

### What Is Time?

For thousands of years, time has been measured by inventions, such as the sun dial, the water clock, the candle clock, and the hourglass. Some of the early uses for timekeeping devices were to keep track of how long a ship was at sea, to let people know when it was time for daily prayers, and to determine seasons. Today you can find out exactly what time it is by looking at a watch, cell phone, computer, or wall clock. Much of our day is governed by what time it is: time to get up, time for school to start and end, time to be at work, time for appointments, and so on. In one book, the main character looked at his pocket watch continually and said that he never did anything without first consulting it. The natives who lived where he had been shipwrecked thought the pocket watch was the man's god.

Time is a precious resource given to us by God, and we are to manage it as good stewards. We can *waste* time, we can *spend* time, or we can *invest* time. We are each given the same twenty-four hours each day. Have you ever noticed that some people get much more accomplished than others in the same time period? Consider people who have changed history, such as Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, Abraham Lincoln, and the greatest of all—Jesus Christ. What made those people different was not how much time they had, but how they managed that time. It has been said that some people create, invent, explore, and build while other people just watch a lot of television. True stewardship is using all our resources (gifts, talents, money, and so on) in the way that is pleasing to God during the time He has given us.

### "A Time to Every Purpose"



Hours, days, clocks, and calendars are not the only way to keep track of time. Solomon spoke of time as a "season" (Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3). This might be times of opportunity or times of preparation. Consider the life of David. He was the youngest son, and it was his responsibility to care for the sheep. Undoubtedly, he had no idea that protecting and caring for a flock of sheep was preparing him to one day be Israel's king. Many times young people cannot wait until they are older, but the teen years are a time of preparation, a time to learn discipline and good work habits. Every season of your life has a purpose. Look at the different times described in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Each event has its proper time in your life. Yet, it is human nature to wish for something else, to say, "Is it time yet?" but often God is saying, "Not yet." Ask God to help you understand the times (seasons) of your life. Do not waste these times by continually wishing away the season that you are in. Ask God to help you be a good

steward during your years of youth. God has a specific purpose for this time. Ask God for wisdom to discern "both time and judgment [know how to make the most of these opportunities]" (Ecclesiastes 8:5).

### Good Time Management

In *Poor Richard's Almanac*, Benjamin Franklin wrote: "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time; for that's the stuff life is made of." It is so easy to waste an hour here and an hour there, but wasted hours soon add up to days, months, and years. Proverbs 6:6-9 tells the one who is lazy to consider the ways of the ant. Being a good steward is making good use of your time—not being lazy or using all of your time for you. However, you cannot be a good manager on your own; you must have guidance from the Owner. This requires a relationship with Him. God has a specific purpose for you. Your "times are in [His] hand" (Psalm 31:15). He has given you the right amount of time to accomplish His purpose. Seek His will through prayer and Bible reading. Beware of the dangers of "killing time."

Solomon wrote that God has "planted eternity in the human heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11 AMP). This means that we need to live with an awareness that we have a limited amount of time. As God reveals His purpose for your life, keep that in mind. The enemy is doing everything he can to distract you. Good time management includes keeping the goal in mind, and that is managing all our resources to God's glory and purpose, remembering that our "life" is only a "vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Psalm 90:12 encourages us to "number our days." In other words, live your life with eternity in view.



### Wasted Time

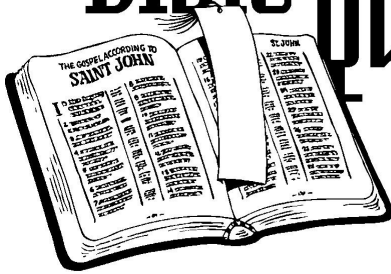
Have you ever said, "I don't have enough time"? People always make time for what is important to them. It is not a matter of enough time, but it is about having your priorities straight. Just as it is important to budget our money, so we should budget the use of our time. Too often we do not have enough time because we have wasted it. One way many young people waste time is failing to get saved at a young age. Too many believe the devil's lie that they have plenty of time, that they can get saved when they are older, after they have had a good time during their youth. They spend a "season" enjoying the "pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25). While some do find God in later years (and many do not), consider all the wasted years when they could have been fulfilling God's purpose for their life. Now they have much less time to accomplish that task.

During your early years, it probably seems like time is dragging. It seems like forever until you can drive a car or until you graduate. Yet, Job 14:1 describes life as just a "few days." It will not be long until you will agree with a famous author, who wrote: "My goodness how the time has flown. How did it get so late so soon?" (Theodor Seuss Geisel). Right now, it seems like you have plenty of time to do whatever you want or to just do nothing at all. Consider the third servant in *The Parable of the Talents*. He was not judged for doing something wrong, but for simply doing nothing. Ephesians 5:16 challenges us to redeem the time, in other words, use your time well.

### What to Do With Free Time?

In 2 Samuel 11:1 you can read about King David staying home "at the time when kings go forth to battle." Failing to manage his time as he should created an opportunity for David to be tempted. Many young people who are bored, lonely, procrastinating, or just wasting time are perfect targets for the devil to send strong temptations. Some people say, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." When you have "idle hands" (not doing anything), often you are tempted to mindlessly surf the internet, watch questionable movies or TV shows, send inappropriate messages, and go to places a Christian should not be. First Timothy 5:13 warns of other dangers that can happen when you are "idle." Because free time can easily become a dangerous time, you must guard it. This does not mean that every minute of your life should be spent working or studying or being productive. God realizes that you need downtime to relax and rest (mentally and physically). In Exodus 34:21 Israel was told to work "six days" and "on the seventh day" to "rest." Jesus also told His disciples to rest (Matthew 26:45; Mark 6:31). However, be careful that rest time (or free time) does not have a larger part than it should or that it is spent on things that could cause you to fall into temptation. God is the owner of all your time, and that includes your free time. Ask Him how you can spend this time in a way that is pleasing to Him. How are you managing the God-given resource called TIME?

# Bible Quiz



1. What are some reasons timekeeping devices were invented?

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2. In the same amount of time, what might be the reason why some people get much more accomplished than others? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How could time also be a "season"? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is one way you can waste the season you are in? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What does Proverbs 6:6-9 tell one who is lazy to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What must you have to be a good steward of your time? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What does Ecclesiastes 3:11 AMP mean when it says that God has "planted eternity in the human heart"?

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8. How is failing to get saved at a young age a waste of time? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. What does Ephesians 5:16 mean when it says to redeem the time? \_\_\_\_\_

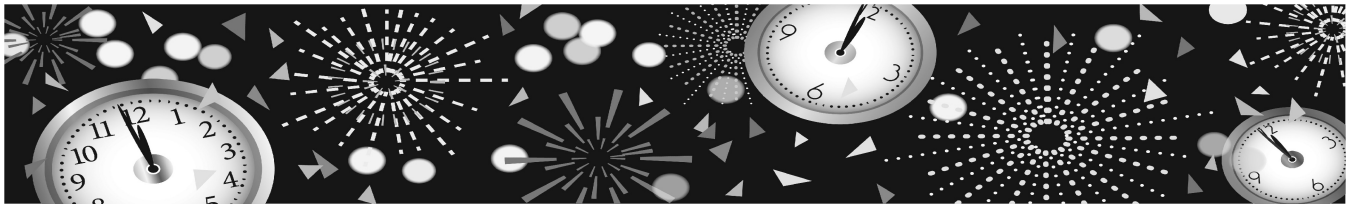
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10. Why is idle time possibly dangerous? \_\_\_\_\_

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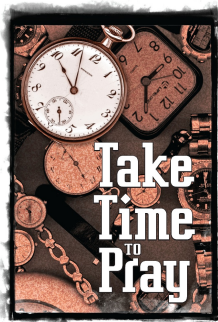
11. Look up 1 Timothy 5:13 (KJV and AMP). What are the dangers warned about when ones are idle?

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# Create a Time Budget

(How much time do you spend on each of these in a typical day? What areas of your life should you decrease time spent? Are there other areas where you should increase the time?)



The Bible

- \_\_\_\_\_ Sleep
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting Dressed
- \_\_\_\_\_ School
- \_\_\_\_\_ Homework
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chores
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Church Services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Travel
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prayer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bible Reading/Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ On Phone
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Media
- \_\_\_\_\_ Playing Sports
- \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer Work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Free Time