

Bible Doctrine of Time

God is life and His life is eternal life [Jeremiah 10:10, 1 Thessalonians 1:19]. There never was a time when God did not live. The eternal God is the cause and origin of time. He invented time for man, but He is not subject to time. God is outside time and space.

Time is finite, consisting of duration and succession. Eternity is infinite consisting only of duration without succession. Eternity is only infinite duration because God is infinite and has duration only. Man is finite, having duration and succession while in the world. The human life is but a temporal duration and succession. God transcends time as well as all creation.

God always accomplishes in time what has to be done in time as part of the plan of grace. There is nothing to add or subtract from the plan of God. The plan of God for man in time includes the variations of blessings and adversity. Time is a line of procedure as far as man's perspective is concerned. Eternity is beyond human natural perception, since God is not the subject of time [Deuteronomy 32:40, Psalm 90:2, 102:27, 1 Corinthians 2:7]. God uses time for the benefit and advantage of the believers in the world.

Our eternal life has two phases:

- Eternal life in time. God gives us one day at a time to live. A portion of which belongs to Him for our learning of His Word.
- Eternal life in heaven. By the effects of ultimate sanctification all believers will receive their glorified resurrection bodies designed for eternal fellowship with God.

5 Reasons why God created time for man:

- For our orderly systematic existence in the world.
- For our convenience and comfortable existence.
- So that God could manifest His eternal life to us.
- For believers to exercise their royal priesthood and royal ambassador functions in Christ.
- For believers to reach spiritual maturity and become qualified to receive blessings in time and eternity and thereby glorify God by receiving such blessing.

The believer must walk as a wise man and make use of their time by the consistent study of Bible doctrine [Ephesians 5:15-16]. Basic giving is giving of time, worship, service, prayer, grace giving and in others expression of worship. Since the generosity and faithfulness of God is giving us time, therefore we must give time back to God.

Redeeming the time or making the most of your time is a mental attitude of the believer dominantly occupied with the person of Jesus Christ. It is using God's given time to know God through His Bible doctrine. It is the intrinsic ability of the soul saturated with Bible doctrine to keep focus on Christ.

It is not from the natural determination or human will or sincerity to know God but the over-flowing virtue personal love toward God. Redeeming the time is a choice between enjoying the pleasure of the world [miseries] and the pleasure of knowing Christ [Ephesians 5:16a and Colossians 4:5b].

The Bible presents a distinctive conception of time, reflected especially by its peculiar use of the terms *kairos* and *aion*. Instead of viewing time abstractly as a problem, it regards time as a created sphere in which God's redemptive plan is actualized. In the usual secular sense, *kairos* refers to a definite point of time especially appropriate for a given undertaking (Acts 24:25), *aion* to an extent of time (stipulated or unstipulated).

The New Testament (NT) builds on this usage with a special eye to redemptive history (John 7:6), in which divine determination (Acts 1:7), not human deliberation, constitutes a given moment or age the appropriate time of God's working in relation to human history. The Lord Jesus Christ controls human history.

Because the divine plan of salvation is bound to such time points or *kairoi* chosen by God, it is redemptive history. Not all fragments of ongoing time constitute redemptive history in the narrower sense, but rather these *kairoi* singled out from time as a whole. While the NT gives prominent scope to the future *kairoi* associated with the eschatological drama, its central *kairos* is the life and death and resurrection of the incarnate Christ, which is decisively significant for the kingdom of God.

The terms "day [of the Lord]" and "hour," "now," and "today" likewise gain dramatic significance in the NT context whenever the eternal order and redemptive history impinges upon the sweep of ordinary events. The interconnected redemptive *kairoi* supply the thread line of salvation history.

Yet the divine *kairoi* at the same time secretly enfolds the entire secular movement of time (Acts 17:26) for the fulfillment of God's ultimate purposes. The *kairos* is a decisive momentary unveiling of the eternal, so the *aion* discloses the Lord of ages who divides the long sweep of time according to his own purposes. The *kairoi* are decisive turning points within the larger *aiona*.

The Bible brackets history with an eye on three ages: the age of promise, the age of fulfillment, and the age to come. Man's transition to the eternal order will not involve him in the super session of temporal experience since, although redeemed, he remains a creature (Rev. 10:6, because the phrase "there will be no more time," teaches not the cessation of time, but the expiration of opportunity for those in time.

God designated the best things for man not in time but in eternity. But the greater things of eternity depend on the response of man on God's grace while in time. The purpose of time is for man to accept the free gift of salvation and to live under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Time, therefore is a duration and succession of events where every person has the opportunity to make decisions that determines his eternal destiny. Time is not designed for man to enjoy the pleasures of the cosmic system but to seek his Creator.

Nowhere does the importance of time come into view as in biblical teaching. While time is not ultimate, it is the divinely created sphere of God's preserving and redemptive work, and the arena of man's decision on his way to an eternal destiny.

History moves toward a divine goal involving the redemption of the elect by the Creator and Lord of the universe.

Within this historical matrix, every thought, word, and deed has repercussions in the eternal moral order. History has a beginning in God; it has its center in Christ and its end in the final consummation and the Last Judgment.

Time management under biblical point of view is the Christian ability to use his time with Christ as the top priority of his life. Time management is not the ability to compress endless activities into daily routine but the quality time for studying, learning, thinking, and applying Bible doctrine.

The opposite of time management is hectically busy. Satan has mastered the art of keeping people busy for anything that has no eternal value. Christians are occupied with the nonessentials. The details of life barred their momentum and growth toward spiritual maturity.

Others are entrapped by the television set and robbed with his precious time. There is no considerable excuse for being late for Bible study or worship service because God has given us the ability to manage time properly. Some can literally waste time by daydreaming or sleeping the whole day.

Good time management is punctuality. Punctuality is arriving promptly or on time before the pastor or Bible teacher begins his lecture. Habitual lateness is a symptom of spiritual malady which silently conveys the negative status of your Christian life. Coming to Bible study on time or late is a matter of free will decision.

The human spirit is very much enthusiastic to come on time but the old sin nature will always give heed to the nonessentials. Whether you are late or on time, you have exercised your free will. The believer must learn to control his situation before it controls him.

Satan can use anything or anyone to distract the believer from coming on time. The believer must use his discernment to evaluate not what is happening rather why such thing is happening. If you are late because of unavoidable reasons, observe the following: enter silently, avoid creating any distraction, refrain from talking or greeting others, respect the volition of others.

Many people react in crazy ways when they realize the time is short, as Satan does here. However, with the right lifestyle, you have control of your life in living or in dying, even though you know the time is short. Whatever you are, when you come to a pressure period in your life, all your virtue or all your evil comes out. Consider the fool who ignores the fact that the time may be short; his testimony is given in Luke 12:13-21.

How would you live if you believed the time was short? The viewpoint we need is given in James 4:13-14, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away."

There is nothing wrong with having much; our Lord never attacks having much, but He does attack motives, and He warns the wealthy about being blinded by how much they have, when in reality the time could be short. We are to enjoy our health, our children, our mate, and all our blessings because the time may be short for us to enjoy them.

"This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?" Death has a way of correcting our perspective. When we view life in the long haul and realize we all wind up in the grave, it does wonders for our greed in the passing of time. There are many forms of greed, and those who have little can be just as greedy as those who have much. There is nothing wrong with owning things; however, something is wrong when those things own us.



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