

DEVOTING MY TIME TO JESUS

Dowlen Road, October 18, 2009 PM

Introduction:

A. Ephesians 5:15-16.

1. No part of our lives is left untouched by our decision to follow Jesus. Every part of my life falls under the authority of my Lord and His will for my life. Peter urged us to **“be holy...in all your behavior”** (I Peter 1:14). Paul told the Colossians to **“live a life worthy of the Lord”** and to **“please him in every way”** (1:10).
2. In writing to the Ephesians, Paul says that even my time is not my own, but is subject to the will of Christ. Time is a precious, fleeting commodity that must be used with wisdom. Peter told his audience that no more of our time should be wasted on wicked living (I Peter 4:3). Instead, Paul urges us to make the most of our time.
3. Time is like money. We only have so much. We need to spend it with wisdom and spent it on things that really matter. The old song we sing challenges us to think about this (Into Our Hands): “Swiftly we’re turning life’s daily pages; swiftly the hours are changing to years. How are we using God’s golden moments; shall we reap glory, shall we reap tears?” There are some thought provoking words in just this one verse. Time is getting away from us. Our time is God’s – these are His moments to be used for His glory. Nothing less than our eternal destiny hangs on the balance as we decide how to spend them. This is serious business.

B. This fall we have focused our minds on how we might be more devoted to Jesus (Luke 9:23).

1. Our point in this lesson is simple: being devoted to Jesus requires that we devote our time to Him – to our relationship with Him, His work, His people.
2. When I am devoted to Jesus and His will for my life, there are some things I will do with my time.
3. In this lesson we want to examine some of those things – the habits of people who have devoted their time to Jesus.

Habit One: Make time every day to spend quiet moments with God.

A. Solid relationships are built upon good communication.

1. You can’t have a good relationship with a spouse, your children or even a friend without spending time with each other, talking with each other.
2. The same is true of our relationship with God. If we want to be close to Him – to have a relationship with our heavenly Father that really means something and impacts our lives, then we have to communicate with Him. For that reason, we must carve out time in our busy schedules for quiet moments with God.
3. Think about David. He clearly made time for quiet moments with God.
 - a. Psalm 5:1-3, Prayer in the morning
 - b. Psalm 119:148, Meditation on the word at night
 - c. Psalm 63:6, Meditation in the evening
4. We must have those moments in our lives. Every day, I need to pause in a quiet place and pray. Every day, I need to open my Bible and let God speak to me through His word. I have to make time for that every day.

B. Some will complain that this is difficult to pull off.

1. We have busy schedules. Some will complain that they just don’t have time to add something else. But certainly King David would have understood those struggles. He was the king of a nation. And yet, he made it work; he made the time. We must do the same.
2. Let me also add that while we are complaining about our lack of time, in 2008 the average American was spending 2-3 hours every day watching TV. This does not include our time surfing the net, texting, kid’s sporting events, etc.
3. This is not about having the time; it’s about properly allocating the time we do have.
4. After all, at the end of the day, excuses are still just excuses. If I don’t communicate with God, I will not have a relationship with Him.

Habit Two: Make time to study and pray with your children.

A. What have you done for your kids this week?

1. How long is the list: got them out of bed and dressed, fixed meals, drove them to school, picked them up, grabbed a snack at Sonic, then dropped one at football practice and the other at piano lessons...
2. But what have you done for your kids that really matters? They will probably not play pro-football. If they did, it would only last for a while. Education will give them advantages in this life, but this life won’t last. Even the things we do to nurture the physical body only has a temporary benefit. The physical body will not last (**Hebrews 9:27**).
3. The only thing we have that does last is our spirit. What have we done this week to nurture our child’s spirit and help them prepare for eternity? This is the most important thing parents do (**Ephesians 6:4**).

B. We live in evil times.

1. Godly parents understand this and seize this season of life that they have with their children to teach them about the things that matter most – their relationship with God, living a godly life, going to heaven.
2. We need to carve out time to do this with our kids. Never be too busy...
 - a. To kneel beside their bed and pray with them at night
 - b. Sit at the table and read some Bible verses together
 - c. To ask if their Bible class lesson is done
 - d. To send them back in the house to get their Bible before we leave for worship

- e. To bring God's word to bear on some crisis they're facing
- 3. If I'm not doing this kind of stuff, I'm not doing the stuff that matters.
- 4. For those who would be tempted to say, "I'm too busy," remember what you DID DO for your child this week. You invested a great deal of time in something. But did you invest it in the right things; in the stuff that matters?

Habit Three: Make time for worship services.

- A. Why do we do this – gather like this for worship?
 - 1. We often cite Hebrew 10:25 to impress upon people their obligation to do this. But too often we fail to emphasize the reason the writer gives for making this a habit (**Hebrews 10:23-25**). In verse 24 he says that this gives us the opportunity to stir up each other. For those who are interested in spiritual things, this is something we don't want to miss. But there is an even more important reason (**v. 23**). Hebrews was written to disciples who were wavering. The goal of this letter is to help them hang on. Gathering with brethren served as an opportunity to encourage each other to the end that they might avoid falling away.
 - 2. Here's the point: gatherings like this have a vital purpose. They are a key part of God's plan to help me hang on and remain faithful to Him.
- B. We need to make time for this.
 - 1. I need to be at every service. This needs to be my routine – all three services on Sunday and Wednesday night too. It is appalling that we have a hundred people or more who choose not to attend our other services. It is a sign that we are not devoted to Jesus.
 - 2. I need to want to do this more than other stuff. If I would rather watch the Cowboys than do things that will help me remain faithful to God, then something is wrong with my heart.
 - 3. I need to sacrifice to be at services. I need to give up things that are important to me because these things are most important.
 - 4. I need to make sure my kids are here. I want them to know how important this is.
 - 5. I need to teach them to sacrifice to do this. Leaving a ballgame early is a great life lesson.
 - 6. I need to come to special events. Gospel meetings ought to be like a second helping of dessert without the calories. When I treat them like an unfair intrusion into my already crowded schedule, then I'm not devoting my time to Jesus like I should. It is disturbing that we have trouble turning out 250 people for a gospel meeting. This should not happen.
 - 7. I need to make sure my kids attend special events. There is stuff going on for kids all the time (Bible studies, devotions, teen weekends). And yet, we have a sizable number of our kids who never attend any of these. But some of these same kids never miss ball practice or a school event. What are we teaching them about being devoted to Jesus and seeking the kingdom first (**Matthew 6:33**)?
- C. Again, some will complain that they are simply too busy.
 - 1. But again, this is not really having time. It's about properly allocating the time we all have.
 - 2. How much time are we really talking about? If I attend every service, every class, every gospel meeting, throw in a devotion once a week and spend thirty minutes each day reading my Bible, over the course of the year I will spend about 750 hours devoted to spiritual activities. This is out of a total of 8760 hours to spend in a year (8% of my time). The average American spends twice as much time just watching TV.
 - 3. Remember that it is a choice to load ourselves up with so much stuff that we don't have time to do it all. It is also our choice in what we choose to cut out of our lives. What we must remember is that it is spiritually detrimental to constantly be cutting out the things designed to nurture the spiritual man. Can't we agree that there are certainly other things to be cut out if we find ourselves short on time?
 - 4. I need to devote my time to Jesus by gathering with His people to worship Him.

Habit Four: Make time to be on time.

- A. For a while we have joked about this. But it's not funny anymore.
 - 1. We miss important things when we show up late. I have kids who regularly walk into Bible class 10-20 minutes after we start. They not only miss the material we covered, it's almost impossible to catch up. They are missing out. We miss out on worship. We miss out on opportunities to encourage and be encouraged (**Hebrews 10:24**). We miss out on opportunities to greet and assist visitors.
 - 2. We just have a lot of important stuff that Jesus needs us to do before our service begins. If I'm devoted to Him, I will make myself available for those tasks. To be plain, Jesus needs me to be on time.
- B. It is interesting that some of us are consistent about being late – we get here exactly 10 minutes after time to start.
 - 1. This means there is an easy solution to our problem – back up everything you do 20 minutes.
 - 2. This has been a growing problem among us for several years. Where is it going? We need to change directions. Each one of us needs to make a personal commitment to help turn back this tide. Let's not be a congregation with the reputation of always being late.
 - 3. There are simply too many important things Jesus needs us to do. Let's be devoted to Him and His work.
 - 4. No facet of our life is left untouched by our decision to follow Jesus. Even in the way we spend our time, we need to be devoted to Him.

Conclusion: Is this a moment that you need to devote to Jesus?

If you have committed your life to serve Jesus but have not been truly devoted to Him, then give Him this moment. If you've never made the decision to serve Him, then give Him this moment.