

“Redeeming the Times”

Ephesians 5:1-16

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Time is a valuable resource. We can spend it, save it, and redeem it. 2024 is ending, but it isn't over yet. Don't wait until 2025 to do something God is telling you to do now, do it now.

The Bible talks about time, A LOT!

- **Psalm 39:4-5** ⁴ “Lord, make me to know my end, and what *is* the measure of my days, *that* I may know how frail I *am*. ⁵ Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age *is* as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state *is* but vapor.”
- **Psalm 90:12** “So teach *us* to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

1. By Imitating God

Ephesians 5:1-2 ¹ Therefore be imitators of God *as dear children*. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

- *Therefore* –
 - **Ephesians 4:25-32** ²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, “*Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,*” for we are members of one another. ²⁶ “*Be angry, and do not sin*”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give place to the devil. ²⁸ Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”
 - Because whether you realize it or not, “*we are members of one another.*”
 - **Therefore**
 - Do not lie!
 - Do not allow problems to go unresolved!
 - Do not use bad words!

- Do use words that edify others!
- Do not grieve the Holy Spirit!
- Do put away, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking (gossip)!
- Do be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving to one another!
 - *Tenderhearted* –
 - In Ephesians 4:32, the word translated as “tenderhearted” is an idiom literally meaning “much bowels.” In the original language, one’s ability to empathize or feel compassion for others was conceived as having the internal feature of ample-sized bowels. A tenderhearted person is easily moved to love, sorrow, and sympathy. Peter uses the same term when he encourages all believers to “sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude” (1 Peter 3:8, NLT).

How can we avoid these problems?

- *By being imitators* –
 - To do something that is seen to be done by someone else.
 - *Imitate God as little children imitate their parents*

“Children have never been good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”

- Jesus told the disciples to follow him, which means that they would be willing to go where He went and to do what He did.
 - **1 Corinthians 11:1** “Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.”
 - **Hebrews 6:12b** “...imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”
 - **3 John 11** “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.”
- **1 John 2:3-6** “³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶ He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

- *Walk* –
 - To live or behave in a customary manner, with possible focus upon continuity of action—‘to live, to behave, to go about doing.’

- *Love* –
 - *As Christ* – Jesus’ death on the cross is the highest expression of God’s love for us, God has showed us real love and wants us to love as He loves.
 - That is like God’s love...
 - **John 15:9** “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you.”
 - That is sacrificial...
 - **Philippians 2:3-4** “³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”
 - **1 John 3:16-18** “¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”

2. By Avoiding Evil

Ephesians 5:3-5 “³ But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ⁴ neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

- *Fornication* – Porneia (pornography) to engage in sexual immorality of any kind.
- *Uncleanness* – Moral impurity in regard to sexual sin. This covers your mental sin, it’s how you think about sex.
 - **Matthew 5:28** “...whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
- *Covetousness* – a strong desire to acquire more and more material possessions or to possess more things than other people have, all irrespective of need.
- *Filthiness* – to act in defiance of social and moral standards, with resulting disgrace, embarrassment, and shame—‘to act shamefully, indecent behavior, shameful deed. (Translated as ‘Obscene or Obscenity)
- *Foolish talking* – Morologia “Moronic Logic” Talk which is both foolish and stupid—‘foolish talk, stupid talk. Indecent, foolish or dirty words

- *Coarse jesting* – Vulgar expressions and indecent content—‘vulgar speech, indecent talk. Any speech that is obscene and degrading or foolish and dirty, as well as suggestive and immoral.

3. By Staying in the Light

Ephesians 5:6-9 “⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)...”

- *You Were* –

- *Darkness* – you were once without spiritual understanding, but God has revealed Himself. You no longer are in darkness.

- You used to live that way...
- **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** “⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

- *You Are* –

- *Light in the Lord* –

- **Matthew 5:14a** "You are the light of the world."
- **John 3:20-21** “²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

- *Fruit* –

- Evidence of a true believer
 - **Galatians 5:19-24** “¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

4. By Exposing Evil

Ephesians 5:10-14 ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

- *Light and Darkness are opposed to each other.*
 - **2 Corinthians 6:14-16** ¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God."

5. By Careful Living

Ephesians 5:15-16 "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

- *Circumspectly* – Circumspect comes from two Latin words which mean "looking around." The Greek word carries the idea of precision and accuracy. "See that you walk carefully, with exactness" is the meaning
- **Hebrews 2:1-3** ¹ Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we **drift away**. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we **neglect** so great a salvation,"
 - Notice the progression from drifting to outright neglect.
- *Fool vs. Wise* –
 - A fool doesn't care about the things of God, nor does he consider the consequences of his sin.
 - **1 Corinthians 2:14** "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
- *Redeem* –
 - To buy up for oneself, turning each minute into the best advantage.
 - *Our English word opportunity comes from the Latin and means "toward the port." It suggests a slip taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of the opportunities God gives us.*

The use of cell phones alone consumes a significant amount of time.

- Most mobile phone users **check their phones** up to **58 times daily**.
- Americans spend an average screen time of **5 hours and 25 minutes** on their mobile phones daily.
- There will be over **311.53 million smartphone users** in America by 2025.
- Social media accounts for **2 hours and 24 minutes** of global internet time spent by an average user daily.
- On average, **26% of Gen Zer's spend over 9 hours** on their phones daily.
- **Baby Boomers** spend **5 hours** using their phones.
- **Millennials** spend **48 minutes** texting every day.

<https://techjury.net/blog/how-much-time-does-the-average-american-spend-on-their-phone/>

- **Colossians 4:5-6** ⁵ Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”

*“We master our minutes, or we become slaves to them;
we use time, or time uses us.”*

Source Unknown.

“More time is wasted not in hours but in minutes. A bucket with a small hole in the bottom gets just as empty as a bucket that is deliberately kicked over.”

Source Unknown.