

# “Time”

BEYOND Sermon Series | Week One | Newbreak Church

May 2nd, 2021

**This week is about how we steward our time.** Whether you are a CEO of a Fortune 500 company or a mom with 4 kids, or anything else. We all have 24 hours in a day. This message answers the question: How does God call me to steward my time?

For more insights relating to this week’s sermon, see <https://newbreak.church/blog/>. We post a new blog every Sunday which coincides with the sermon passage or theme from that day.

## Start Here

- If you were stranded on a deserted island, what are 3 non-electronic items that you would bring?
- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your time management skills? Why do you give yourself the score that you do?

## Going Deeper Into the Message

Read: Matthew 6:25-34

### **Point 1 – Decide what my priorities are.**

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin ... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:28, 33, NIV)

Many of us have heard Matthew 6:33 before: “Seek first [God’s] kingdom...” But it is the context that colors the meaning of this phrase, showing it to be much more than a pithy statement out of thin air. The preceding verses, especially starting in verse 25, show us that we can make God’s kingdom our top priority because God cares and provides for our daily needs. Moving beyond the proverbial truth of it, think about how much time you spend worrying about how you will provide for your family—and we don’t mean the grand luxurious things—we mean those things basic to us like food and clothing. Think about Jesus’s audience during the Sermon on the Mount. Most of them worked jobs such as fishing, farming, or in the local marketplace. Their lives were not posh by any

means. Yet, Jesus was trying to teach them that God provided what they needed. And we do, too.

Sometimes we have to change our standard of living to see that God promises to provide the simple things. Have you ever wondered why? Perhaps it is because we tend to make life far more complicated than it needs to be. **And when we overcomplicate life, we mistake what is worthless for what is worthwhile.**

Consider the prayer of David from [Psalm 119:37 \(NLT\): Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word.](#) Worthless? We would read that verse and expect it to say “evil.” But as we grow in our faith we find that the more subtle enemy is the temptation to make what is worthless our priority—to build a kingdom that has our own ego at the center. So, Jesus challenges us to make God’s kingdom the focal point and first priority of our lives (Matt 6:33). And notice the promise that follows in the same verse: [and all these things](#) [your daily *needs*, not your daily *greeds*] [will be given to you as well.](#)

When we have our priorities aligned to God’s kingdom, we can steward our whole lives with the focus of bringing His kingdom into reality. And that is a life worth living!

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What does it look like when we prioritize God’s kingdom first in regards to stewarding our time?
- Read the humbling request of Proverbs 30:8-9 to your group. **8 First, help me never to tell a lie. Second, give me neither poverty nor riches! Give me just enough to satisfy my needs. 9 For if I grow rich, I may deny you and say, “Who is the Lord?” And if I am too poor, I may steal and thus insult God’s holy name.** How does this prayer from the book of wisdom provide insight on priorities and contentment?

#### —ADDITIONAL INSIGHT—

#### HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE FLOWERS?

*\*This is an excerpt from the Newbreak blog associated with this week. Read the full blog post by going to [newbreak.church/have-you-considered-the-flowers/](http://newbreak.church/have-you-considered-the-flowers/)*

In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus does not shy away from addressing the daily struggle of worry. In fact, **Jesus used the Greek equivalent to the word “worry” 6 times in these 9 verses!** He both begins and ends his statement on this topic with his conclusion that we can have life without anxiety ruling us. Before you stop reading this and rule out that outcome altogether, why not allow Jesus’s words to seep into your soul? Perhaps, you may even become less anxious.

From the lips of Jesus:

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not **worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by **worrying** add a single hour to your life? <sup>28</sup> “And why do you **worry** about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

<sup>31</sup> So do not **worry**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not **worry** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will **worry** about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (Matthew 6:25-34, NIV)

One of the most striking elements of this passage is that Jesus uses imperative verbs (a command or exhortation) to his listeners. Essentially, he isn’t giving a good suggestion, he is giving an impassioned invitation. “Therefore... do not worry” (verse 25).

“Therefore, do not worry” (verse 31). “Therefore, do not worry” (verse 34). One time would have been sufficient, two times is to draw emphasis. But three occurrences make it impossible to miss the precision of the point.

**Jesus’s invitation to those who follow him is to replace anxiety with trust.** In a world where we like “to-do lists” to help obtain results, Jesus’s method changes our focus. Instead of an ideology to apply, we get a person to trust.

**God is the rest for the restless, the warrior for the weary, and the anchor for the anxious.**

Our empowerment to resist anxiety doesn’t come from within. Jesus turns our way of thinking upside down and says “Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). The hustle, doing more and trying harder, doesn’t

solve your anxiety, it only feeds it. Only Jesus can provide what we need to replace our worries with trust.

**Jesus uses the birds of the air and the flowers of the fields to convince us that God is sovereignly watching over us. He makes the world our classroom and the curriculum is to learn how much the Father loves us.**

This passage of Scripture is another example of nature's proclamation of God's providence.

In light of everything that has been said, ask yourself this question as you fight for an anxiety-free life:

**Have you considered the flowers of the field today?**

## **Point 2 – Schedule my time based on my priorities, not my to-do list.**

[“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” \(Ephesians 5:15-16, ESV\)](#)

In this passage Paul challenges each of us to “look” or “watch closely” how we “walk” as Christians by wisely making the best use of our time. The term “walk” refers to the way that we live our lives on a day-to-day basis. Each of us has a finite amount of time on this earth and God wants us to live our life with urgency, purpose, and intentionality. The challenge that each of us face is deciding what to spend our time doing. We're all bombarded on a daily basis with things that use large chunks of time.

This is why **it's so important to structure our life around God's priorities**. Charles E. Hummer put it this way, “Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important.” The question begging to be asked: What are God's priorities in my life? And how does this influence “making the best use of [our] time”?

As Christians, we have to be willing to surrender our schedule and daily agenda to the Lord for Him to direct our steps. It's very easy to let our to-do list keep us busy with our own priorities and be closed off to God's agenda. Part of growing in maturity as Christians are learning to steward the time that God has given us in the way that God desires for us to live.

To summarize, the first step of our maturity is to recognize that time is valuable. The second step in our maturity is to recognize that our time belongs to Him and His priorities for our day. Am I willing to let God rework my personal mission or goals in life so I can keep in step with God's daily purposes with my time?

## Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Do I run my calendar, or does my calendar run me? Am I trying to appear busy, or does what I'm doing add value to my life?
- How much time do you allow God to speak to you about how you should prioritize your day? Do you have any daily routines before you start your day to invite God to shape your priorities?
- Read Ephesians 2:10 and answer the question below. [“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”](#) What does this verse say about what should be my goal for my life?

### —ACTIVITY—

One thing that is clear from this lesson is that we must take control of your calendar! Either you will run your calendar or your calendar will run you! So here are three ways to take action in your time management.

**1) Identify your priorities.** As we said, our goal is to align our priorities to mirror God's priorities. This ties back into Matthew 6:33 in having “His kingdom” be our top priority. Of course, this takes on greater specification as we flesh that out into all facets of our life. So, we must identify what our priorities are. Write them down even. Don't leave them to being implicit, make them explicit and plan your calendar around your priorities.

**2) Pre-determine how you will manage your schedule.** A lot of people take life as it comes. But that makes us *reactive* instead of *proactive*. Identify priorities and tasks, but then map out how your weekly or monthly schedule will make the best use of your time. We have to prioritize how we use our time based on God's calling on our lives.

**3) Assess how much energy to delegate to each task.** An important thing to remember here is that not every task that needs to get done requires an equal amount of our energy. For example, we may need to run a few errands but also may need to spend some intentional time with our kids. Out of the two tasks, which one should get more of my creative energy? Spending time with our kids. Many real-life scenarios can

be imagined. The point is to even consider how we manage—not only our time—but also the energy for each task.

By doing these things we are setting ourselves up to be more intentional and productive in how we steward our time.

### **Point 3 – Fight to stay focused.**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. **And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us** (Hebrews 12:1)

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **I press on toward the goal** to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)

We will need to fight to use our time on what's most important. Hebrews 12:1 tells us that we need to run with perseverance the race marked out for us. This requires that we sometimes need to swim against the stream of societal norms and have an eternal perspective instead of a “now” focus. After all, God's eternal purposes always draw us to the plans for our life that are beyond ourselves.

It's also important I run the race that God has given to me and not what He has given to someone else. Our purpose is what unifies us, but our calling is specific and sacred to us. We are united in purpose but unique in calling. That means we need to stay in our lane, running the race God has us on, not looking at others in the form of comparison.

As we run our race we will find that God will often draw us to invest more time into our relationships. Instead of worrying about what I need to get done, God wants me to focus on who I can minister to and encourage. Is it more important to get work done around the house, or have coffee with my friend who is struggling? Where does Christ's example to me show me where I should spend the time He's given me? These are the things we must fight to think through and fight to engage.

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- We are to fight to stay focused. So, what is distracting your focus away from God's priorities? What can you do to combat those distractions?
- How do you fight the pressure of using your time to please others rather than pleasing God (Hebrews 12:2)?

- When there are two things calling for your attention, how can you discern which is more important? Should our attention be given to what is more urgent? Or should it be given to that which has a higher priority?

### —SUMMARY—

How does God call me to steward my time?

- 1) Decide what my priorities are.
- 2) Schedule my time based on my priorities, not my to-do list.
- 3) Fight to stay focused.

### —FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

1. How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?
2. What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?
3. BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?