THE PROBLEM OF TIME - Overcoming Life’s Problems

Intro:
A. In 1967, in testimony before a Senate subcommittee, futurist predicted that one of the greatest problems to effect the next generation, (our generation) would be determining what to do with all the free time –
   1. They estimated that the average American would:
      a. Work an average of 22 hours per week –
      b. Work only 27 weeks a year –
      c. Retire at the age of 38
   2. A Harris poll a few years back indicated that on average our work week has increased 6 hours – and that we have 37% less leisure time.
   3. Most of us are very busy – (Do you wear business as a badge of honor? – You see if we are busy then we must be important!!)
B. Has your life become hurried and hectic – Out of control? How
   1. Our work – we tend to take on more and more responsibility – “One more won’t hurt!”
      a. The time restraint under which we all live becomes more like a vice – with each new duty, the handle gets turned another notch – The pressure is increased.
      b. With every added responsibility there is more expectation – “IS THERE A LIMIT?”
   2. Our time off – Finally – a day to relax – Mow the yard – fix the dryer – and the fence – Take the kids to a birthday party – Go to Wal Mart – pay bills – clean the house - wash clothes - wash the car and the truck - Pick up the kids from the birthday party – Bible study
   3. The days are evil – Matthew 6:34 (NKJV)  Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
C. Many live over-committed, out of balance, and out of control lives!
   1. Does This Kind of Lifestyle Harm Us? – Certainly it does!
      a. It takes a toll on our familial relationships –
         (1) Our children need us most during our most productive years!
         (2) If we lose these years parents WE WILL NEVER GET THEM BACK!!
      b. Marriages are solidified or destroyed in direct relationship to the amount of time and effort we put in, or fail to put into them!
         (1) Doctor James Dobson in his book – straight talk says, “Over-Commitment is the number one marriage killer.”
         (2) Husbands – when was the last time you took your wife out on a date?
         (3) Wives – when is the last time you accepted?
      c. It takes a toll on our body –
         (1) Some believe that if they can gulp down enough supplements they can go 1,000 mph . . . 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 12 months out of the year and it not harm them . . . The end result is that we wear down our body and become stressed to the max –
         (2) BE HONEST!!
      d. It takes a toll on our spiritual life!! –
         (1) Do you TAKE time to read and meditate on the Bible?
         (2) What about hospitality? –
         (3) Is your worship often sacrificed upon the alter of extra work?
            (a) How many POTENTIAL leaders of God’s people, (elders - preachers – deacons – Bible class teachers – personal workers) have been weakened or lost altogether
because they spent their formidable years spending their time and energy chasing the material rainbow? (Jobs or recreation)

(b) Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of. (Benjamin Franklin)

(c) “All that is not eternal is eternally useless” – C.S. Lewis

2. How much of our time & energy is consumed focusing on temporary crowns?????

D. Are we Successful:
1. Business Man –
2. Popular –
3. Prestigious –
4. But A Failure:
   a. As a husband –
   b. As a father –
   c. As a Christian?

5. **Matthew 13:22** (NKJV) ---- Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

6. **Matthew 16:26** (NKJV) ---- For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

E. We are stewards of the time we have been given — **John 9:4; Col 4:5**
1. Time is limited! – **Job 14:1,2; Ps 96:12**
2. Time cannot be suspended or controlled – **Ps 90:10,12**
3. Time can be wasted! – **1 Tim. 5:13**
4. Time can be redeemed - **Eph. 5:16**

F. This Morning we are going to discuss the Three Chapters of Time:
1. The Past . . .
2. The Present . . .
3. The Future . . .

II. **Dealing with the PAST ....** (that happenings of yesterday can’t be changed)

A. Remembering the past – **Phil 1:3; Eph 2:11**
1. Learning from history - **1 Cor. 10:1-13; Rom. 15:4;**
2. Learning from past lessons – **2 Thes 2:5; 2 Tim 1:5; 3:14,15; 2 Pet 1:12-15; 3:1**
3. Learning from personal experiences – **Heb 10:32**

B. Forgetting the past – **Phil 3:13 (NKJV)** ---- Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,” ; **Luke 9:62**
1. We cannot live in the past!! – **Eccl. 7:10 (NKJV)** ---- Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?" For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.

C. We cannot allow past decisions, mistakes, failures, tragedies, & sins to keep us from serving God in the future!!! – **Acts 26:10-12; Gal. 1:13**

D. Nor can we rest on our past accomplishments!!! – **Heb 6:1**

III. **Dealing With The PRESENT ...**(This is the only time we have control over)

A. God Emphasizes TODAY!!
1. “Choose you this day . . .” – **Josh. 24:15**
2. “Today if you will hear his voice . . .” – **Heb. 3:7**
3. “Today is the day of salvation…” - 2 Cor. 6:2
4. “Exhort one another while it is called today…” - Heb. 8:13
5. “I must work while it is day…” - John 9:4
6. “…You know not what shall be on the morrow…” - James 4:13,14

B. Some Ways That We Can Waste Time!!
1. Unwholesome Recreation – (2 Thes 3:4)
2. Unimportant Studies – (Acts 17:21)
3. Being a busybody!! – (2 Thes 3:11; 1 Tim 5:13)
4. Useless arguments!!! – (2 Tim 2:16,17)
5. Holding a grudge!!! – (Eph 4:31)
6. Dwelling on past mistakes!! – (Heb 8:12)
7. Worrying about the future!! – (Mat 6:25-34)
8. Being disorganized!! – (Eph 5:15,16)
   b. Proverbs 10:4 (NKJV) ---- He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
   c. Proverbs 12:11 (NKJV) ---- He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.
   d. Proverbs 13:4 (NKJV) ---- The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.
   e. Proverbs 19:15 (NKJV) ---- Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, And an idle person will suffer hunger.
   f. Proverbs 24:30-34 (NKJV) ---- I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; [31] And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down. [32] When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: 33] A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest; [34] So shall your poverty come like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.
   g. Romans 12:11 (NKJV) ---- not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

C. Time Management Tools
1. Recognizing the need – with time being at a premium, and so many things competing for our time – we MUST learn how to use it wisely!
2. Examine current habits - Check how you really spend your time - Activity Logs
3. Decide Priorities - Making sure you concentrate on the right things -Tackling the right tasks first -
4. Budget your time – develop and stick to a schedule
5. Overcome Procrastination - Get things done -Start today

D. Be Aware – Time is easily wasted –
1. Budget – Time is limited
2. Prioritize – Time is valuable!
   a. God - Worship - Spiritual Growth
   b. Family – Parents need to parent – husbands need to be husbands – wives need to be wives!
c. Work – A means to an end –  
d. Rest & Renewal – Not Laziness but rejuvenation

3. Start Today!!!! – To develop good time management habits requires commitment –  
determination & ACTION!!

IV. **Dealing With The Future .... -** (Eternity is long if we have not placed the correct emphasis on the present....)

A. Many live in fear of what MIGHT happen . . . (Mat 6:25-34 NKJV) ---- Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

B. Many are discontent – (Phili 4:11; Rom 8:28-38)

C. Many fail to prepare for the future!! – (Mat 6:33; 25:1-12; Acts 24:25; 2 Thes 1:7-9)

D. Time will be swallowed up in eternity – (Phili 3:13,14; Heb 11:13-16; 2 Peter 3:10-14)

V. **In Conclusion:**

A. The past is getting longer . . . (1 Peter 4:3)

B. The present is now . . . (2 Cor. 6:2)

C. The future between NOW & Eternity is growing shorter (Rom 13:11) ---- Please don’t me wrong but as a Christian - “I Long for death” ---- Truly come quickly should be our manner of life.

   1. Remember this quote from last week ---- “Our daily activities should not be “expenditures of time; they should be investments.” (Kenneth J. Lodi, “Tapping Your Potential” pg. 28)

   2. Ephes. 5:15-16 (NKJV) ---- See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, [16] redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

   3. 2 Peter 3:11,14 (NKJV) ---- [11] Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

      a. 2 Peter 3:14 (NKJV) ---- [14] Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

   4. 2 Cor. 6:2 (NKJV) ---- For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

D. “All that is not eternal is eternally useless” – C.S. Lewis

   1. Today Is The Day of Salvation ---- (not yesterday, or tomorrow)

   2. Won’t you come to Jesus Today ----

   3. Closing Song - Oh Why Not Today