

Get Smart The “Timing of Smart” Job 14:5 & Ephesians 5:15-17)

This series is looking at the question that answers just about everything.

It’s the key to help you **Get Smart** and answer every invitation or question or choice, or bring clarity to what you face in life.

- This question can bring clarity to life’s big questions and save you frustration, heartbreak and tears, it can save you a lot of time, money and stress in life!
- If this question were applied to your greatest regret in life... you probably would have avoided that one greatest regret

What is the question: “WHAT IS THE WISE THING TO DO?”

In our 1st sermon, we broke down “The Question” into 3 parts:

- Considering my past experiences – my experiences are different from yours
 - Considering my current circumstances – What is happening in my life right now
 - And considering my future dreams and aspirations...
- **What is the wise thing for me to do?**

Not - what is legal thing to do or the least I can do... What is the wise thing to do?

- For the past 2 weeks, I asked you to ask yourself that question. Not answer it... only make it a habit to ask, “What is the wise thing to do?”

You see, you owe it to yourself to ask yourself that question! You really ought to know if you really don’t want to do the wise thing in life!

**Today we’re talking about the greatest commodity in life!
Time! The wise use of time!**

- Today’s scripture is **Job 14:5** which says, “A person’s days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.”

Theologians believe God set a time limit on our life. Whether you may or may not believe that. But there is this one truth in life – your time is running out!

Think about it, you can over-eat, you can over-spend, you can be over-your-limit!
But you can't over live! At some point, your time runs out!

So are you being wise with your time? Time is the most valuable commodity you have! Because you only have so much of it! You can make more money, you can make more friends, you can make more lunch... but you can't make more time!
So asking yourself – am I using my time wisely – is very important!

Most of us are able to look back in our life and say... man I wasted so much time!
So as you ask about your past experiences, your current situation and your future hopes and dreams... it is important for you to ask – how do you use your time?

**I am going to share 4 principles about time.
They are not surprising, but they do emphasize the importance
of using your time wisely!**

You don't have to be a Christian believe or apply these principles. They are all common sense. So it doesn't surprise me that it's foundation is found in scripture!

But if you are a Christian, this is crucial for you! Every normal week when I pray for our offerings, I always paraphrase James 1:17 where we are told, "Every good and perfect thing we receive is a gift from God our Father." **That means that everything we receive – our time and every opportunity - the believer is to be a steward or a wise manager of those things! And your time is your life!**

1)What we do with time - It all adds up!

Look behind me, you see the elephant? Did you know there are 2 different kinds of elephants? The African and the Indian elephant. While the African elephant is used for various uses including eating. The Indian elephant is used primarily for logging.

So you could ask, how do you clear a forest? One log at a time – it all adds up!
Let me give you some other examples:

- If you exercise 20 minutes a day, 4 or 5 days every week, **it all adds up!**

- If you make an effort to build relationships and love them - like your kids and your spouse! Show interest in them every day, year after year, **it all adds up!**
- Participating in your faith, spending time with God every day for 15 minutes looking into God's word and praying, going to a small group and serving God... every day, every month, year after year, **it all adds up!**

On the other hand: Going for a walk once... spending time with your someone once... going to church once... does not become life altering. But if you do these things regularly... they all add up!

- Now... while there is no benefit in doing something only once. There is no consequence in missing something once either. That's why it's so easy to talk yourself out of going for that walk, not going on that date night with your spouse, or missing church that one time.

And your right! Missing something once in a while doesn't hurt anything! Just like doing something once doesn't do anything.

- In the important areas of life, it's those consistent actions that help impact your life. They are accumulative – it all adds up!

2)What we don't do with time - It adds up!

Like an elephant clearing a forest one tree at a time – it adds up! If we decide that exercise is a waste of energy and make a point of not exercising, and not exercising every day, day after day, that adds up too!

- If you ignore your relationships, act indifferently to your spouse and your kids, or neglect your spiritual life. And make it a goal – I will not work on my life. That adds up too!
- **The big problem... indifference and being thoughtless in life is easy! But indifference and thoughtlessness in life is costly!**
- It's your small choices in the key areas of life - over time that build up and impact your life! Neglect is easy and indifference is extremely costly!

- If you are indifferent to your spiritual life... to busy for God, to busy for church, to busy to pray... and then something tragic happens in life. Then you start wondering where God is and wonder if God is even real! Indifference and neglect is very easy – but it is very costly.

3) Sporadic choices or efforts have no value!

This is important when we talking about wisely using our time. Sporadic and random choices and efforts are not helpful in the important things in life.

Think of it this way, imagine all of the important things in life that you know you ought to do – but you don't do it. Instead of going for that walk or working on that relationship; rather then working on your spiritual life, what is it that you did do?

What did you do last year instead of working on that relationship with your spouse or spending time with your kids? Did it have lasting results over the past year?

- Like spending time playing computer games or watching TV or napping. It doesn't add up to anything meaningful!
- When it comes to using our time – our life – wisely, what we do with our time it adds up. That stuff you did **instead of** improving your health, or spending time with your spouse or kids, or improving your spiritual life... what did that add up to? How did it improve your life or the lives of other?

4) In what matters most, you can't make up time spent foolishly.

A lot of things in life, you can make up. You don't do homework and goofed off. A paper is due or the finals are here... what did you do? You spend all night making up or studying. And you got a C and you passed.

There are places in life where this works. You procrastinate getting ready for a meeting or a presentation... and it works out great! Procrastination seems to work sometimes, doesn't it!

But God created the world in a way where – you cannot make up for the important things. You can't make up for a relationship gone bad by making someone sit with you and talk for 12 hours like you are cramming for an exam!

If I neglect my relationship with my wife Beth, I can't fix it by forcing her to spend 12 hours with me to fix it. You can't fix relationships by forcing someone to spend the day with you. It takes time!

You cannot cram or hurry to fix your health or your finances, or anything else in life. Time comes and time goes, you can't get time back... you can't make up for lost time in the areas of life that matter most!

In the areas that are most important in life, you cannot rush it. In your faith life, you can't rush spiritual maturity. It takes time... it all adds up.

Now, if that is the way the life works and time is accumulative and it all adds up. So what do you expect God to say to us about time?

In our first sermon, we talked about Ephesians 5:15-16 where the Apostle Paul told us what God wants us to know about time, *“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity...”*

The one thing the Apostle Paul pointed out specifically is the use of every opportunity – Some translations use the word **time... because time = life! Time is your most valuable commodity!**

- You don't get more time - when you're out of time, you're out! You can't save time for the future.
- If you are going to live wisely, you must make the most out of your life! That means you need to be careful about how you use every opportunity of life, how you use your time!
- In the little phrase “making the most” literally means: (to redeem or get full value out of) Paul is telling us to redeem our time! To consider how much time we have, and what you do with your time... make sure you are getting full value out of your time! Don't be unwise... be wise!

And Paul said this – because the days are evil! When Paul says the days are evil, today that means this – if I simply spend my time the way culture would have me spend my time or the way my desires want me to spend my time... **I will not redeem my time... but I will waste my time!**

Our culture and my desires have me focus on the **NOW**

But not what has happened in the past and it won't let me look ahead at the future. Only the right now and immediate satisfaction and that will lead to destructive habits and the loss of time and our life!

So Paul tells us to be careful how we live, not as unwise but as wise!

We don't want to look back on our lives and ask how could I have been so foolish and wasted our time!

Right now, where do you need to start making constant investments of time?

- **Considering your past experience**, the missteps and mistakes you made in the past, where do you need to start making constant investments of time?
- **Considering your current situation**, where do you need to make:
Is it your Debt? Strained or broken relationships? Focusing on your faith life? What do you need to do next that would be wise? Not all at one time...but regular daily deposits.
- **Considering your future Hopes and dreams?** Where ought you to be making regular investments of time?

Where do you need to start making consistent investments of time?

Closing Prayer

