

Devoting My Time

Message 04 of 04 in the series: "Devoted 2022"

A. Our time in this world is very short.

"Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is. You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath." Psalm 39:4-5 (NLT) (See also Psalm 103:15-16 & James 4:14)

"Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures... Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalms 90:10a & 12 (NIV)

B. Therefore, we need to devote our time to doing things that really matter.

"We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work." John 9:4 (NLT)

1. Devoted people spend time with God every day so they can know His Word, His will, and His ways.

"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38 (NLT)

"As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, 'Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.' But the Lord said to her, 'My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! **There is only one thing worth being concerned about.** Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.'" Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)

"So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. **Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.** Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do." Ephesians 5:15-17 (NLT)

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. **Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you,** because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'" Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

Note: Developing a deep, personal, loving relationship with God takes time.

2. Devoted people spend time with other believers worshiping, fellowshiping, serving, praying, teaching, learning, growing, etc.

"A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:39 (NLT)

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10 (NIV)

"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2 (NLT)

"Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives." Titus 3:14 (NIV)

"Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." 1 Timothy 4:13 (NIV)

"All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved."

Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

Note: Developing deep, personal, loving relationships with other believers takes time.

3. Devoted people spend time telling people everywhere the Good News of Jesus and making disciples.

"Therefore, go and **make disciples** of all the nations..." Matthew 28:19a (NLT)

"Go into all the world and **preach the Good News to everyone**." Mark 16:15 (NLT)

"...repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to **all nations**..." Luke 24:47 (NIV)

"...As the Father has sent me, so **I am sending you**." John 20:21b (NLT)

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And **you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere..." Acts 1:8a (NLT)

"After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be **our proud reward and crown** as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! Yes, you are our pride and joy." 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 (NLT)

Note: Telling people everywhere the Good News of Jesus and making disciples takes time.

C. As a church, we are devoted to helping each other do things that really matter.

"And let us consider how we may **spur one another on toward love and good deeds**, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but **encouraging one another**—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. How well do you manage time? What activities in your life are tempting timewasters?

2. What do the following passages teach us about time management?

- Ephesians 5:15-17
- Psalm 90:10-12 & 103:15-16
- James 4:14

3. Discuss the following song lyrics:

"If I could save time in a bottle the first thing that I'd like to do is to save every day 'til eternity passes away just to spend them with you... But there never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do, once you find them. I've looked around enough to know that you're the one I want to go through time with."

Time in a Bottle by Jim Croce

"I've long since retired, my son's moved away. I called him up just the other day. I said, 'I'd like to see you if you don't mind.' He said, 'I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time. You see my new job's a hassle, and the kids have the flu, but it's sure nice talking to you, Dad. It's been sure nice talking to you.' And as I hung up the phone, it occurred to me. He'd grown up just like me. My boy was just like me. And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon. Little boy blue and the man in the moon. 'When you coming home, Son?' 'I don't know when, but we'll get together then, Dad. We're gonna have a good time then.'"

Cat's in the Cradle by Harry Chapin

Why do you think these songs were big hits? What can we learn from them?

4. React to the following statements - If we want to devote our time to doing things that really matter, we need to:

- spend time with God every day so we can know His Word, His will, and His ways. (Matthew 11:28-30 & 22:37-38, Luke 10:38-42, Ephesians 5:15-17)
- spend time with other believers worshiping, fellowshiping, serving, praying, teaching, learning, growing, etc. (Matthew 22:39, Romans 12:10, Colossians 4:2, 1 Timothy 4:13, Acts 2:42-47)
- spend time telling people everywhere the Good News of Jesus and making disciples. (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, John 20:21, Acts 1:8)

5. Discuss the Centerpoint Devoted Steps card. How would you like to grow in serving the Lord with your time, talents, prayers, and treasure in 2023?

6. Spend some time praying as a group for our church. Ask God to help us become a church devoted to using the time He has given us to bring people to Christ, to disciple people to spiritual maturity, and to serve others. Ask God to spur every one of us on to generosity and joyful giving. (Hebrews 10:24-25)