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WELS Women's Ministry

LESSON 1 | A Look at Time

Opening prayer and Introductions

Getting into our study

Time is a precious gift from a gracious God. How we make use of the gift is our topic for these four weeks of Bible study. The goal is to equip us in the midst of a “no limits” society to make wise decisions in scheduling each day; to live biblically in all the seasons of our lives. God speaks clearly saying “live in peace and be content.” We say, “How is that possible?” We’ll look at those possibilities. We also note that nowhere does God say, “Now here’s a great way to live a harried life!”

The concept of time has eluded the best of minds from every generation. Scripture lays the foundation of our study with some basics in Lesson 1—the creation and purpose of time. Throughout the study we keep in mind the words from the psalmist, our theme verse: “My times are in your hands.” (Psalm 31:15) Lesson 2 goes deeper into God’s Word to increase our understanding of four concepts of time: time of grace, times of refreshment, opportune time (vs. chronological time) and the fullness of time. Like a child spending precious time with her wise father, the time we spend with our just and loving Father gives the direction and confidence we need for Lessons 3 & 4 where we get practical, analyzing our current season and schedule, setting priorities, and looking at solutions. The final lesson refines our decision-making so that we respond to daily choices in how we use our time with a “joyful yes” or a “graceful no.” The foundation of all our study is that we live in God’s grace. Our plans and decisions are imperfect, but with the forgiveness we receive through Jesus’ perfect life and sacrificial death we are renewed to live again.

1. Take time to think about time! Select thoughts that have run through your mind lately. Share with the group how time impacts your life, for better or for worse.

- ☐ “I don’t have enough time!”
- ☐ “I think that’s the perfect time.”
- ☐ “I wish this (class/school year/test) would be over soon.”
- ☐ “My nights are rough. Will I ever be able to get a good night’s sleep again?”
- ☐ “My priorities seem to be in pretty good order at this point in my life.”
- ☐ “Now that I’m (retired/laid off/not working), I don’t know what to do with my time.”
- ☐ “My parents are really aging – I want to spend more time with them.”
- ☐ “I’m not at all sure what the future holds.”
- ☐ “That was time so well spent.”
- ☐ “Thank you so much for taking the time to be with me.”
- ☐ “Dear God, how do you want me to live out these last few (days/months/years) of my life?”
- ☐ “Hurry up! We’re late!”
- ☐ “My children are growing up too fast.”
- ☐ “I feel like I’m just wasting my time doing this.”
- ☐ “Tomorrow’s a new day—can’t wait!”
- ☐ Other? _____

2. Why is thinking about time helpful and necessary, but when can it become unprofitable?
3. How would you define time? Consider the dictionary definitions of time. Do they help us with the practical use of our time?

Wikipedia: Time is the indefinite continued progress of existence and events that occur in apparently irreversible succession from the past through the present to the future.

Webster's: Time is the measured or measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues (there are 13 options in the definition of time; some are: duration, occasion, age, present conditions, season, repeated actions, person's experience...)

4. The inspired writers of Scripture write about time. Look up and tell about what we learn from the creation of time in Genesis 1:1-5, 14 and 2:2-3?
5. What else do we learn about time from the psalmist in Psalm 31:14-15?
6. God reveals to us the purpose of time in many places. Scan the following passages below. Tell about some of the purposes God has for us with the time he gives.

Genesis 1:26, 28

Psalm 50:23

Matthew 5:16

John 15:8

Philippians 1:9-11

2 Corinthians 5:15, 20

1 Peter 2:9

- 7. Take one of the statements you selected from the opening exercise and picture it being carried in Jesus' hands. Talk about how that makes a difference. Now draw a picture of two open hands on your paper, filling the page. Inside the hands, jot down a few things you have to do tomorrow. How does this picture change the way you look at your list?**

MORE TIME (As time allows, choose any of the following for further study and discussion)

- 8. Compare the directive in Romans 13:11 (understand the time) and the assessment of Acts 1:7 (not for you to know the times). How do these relate to each other? To your life of managing time?**
- 9. Think about how people spent their time in days past. Was time ordered for them better than for us today? Who put the order in place? What would you change (if you could) in the way time is ordered today? In what ways does God's purpose for the use of time change from generation to generation? In what ways does it remain the same? Share memories of your grandparents' use of their time.**

10. Consider life in biblical times. What do Genesis 8:22 and Exodus 20:8-10a tell us about the ordering of time in a simpler agricultural society?

11. How did Jesus spend his time? Review some of the following passages and jot down specifics:

Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 42; Luke 5:13, 6:10, 19, 9:6, 9:11

Luke 4:15, 5:17

Luke 4:18-19, 43-44; 5:20

Luke 5:16; 11:1

Luke 5:23

Luke 10:21

12. Our culture seems to give greater honor to the one with a fully booked schedule rather than the one with extra time to pray, study, be available. What would it take to reverse that aspect of our culture? What might we share with our children to prepare them for a balanced lifestyle?

13. What might we learn from other cultures where honor is given to time spent in spiritual growth, relationship building and study?

Closing prayer (Include prayer requests)

Closing song

Christian Worship Supplement #764, st. 4 **“There Is a Time for Everything”** (*License needed*)

Alternate Closing song – Christian Worship #469 **“Take My Life and Let It Be”** (*Public domain*)