

USING OUR TIME WISELY



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” (**Ephesians 5:15-17**)

We are all given the same amount of time each day (24 hrs)

Whilst some people achieve much with their time, others on the other hand accomplish very little with their time.

For Christians effective time management is different to those who are in the world. For non-believers their priorities when it comes to time management are often influenced by what they can gain and accumulate in their life here on earth, with their primary focus often being on accumulating material possessions and a pursuit of pleasure.

But as Christians we are in the world but not of it. We are ambassadors for Christ with a mission to help others to become part of God’s eternal Kingdom

So as believers we need to effectively manage our time so that we complete all of those things that God has planned for our life and store up treasures in heaven.

Jesus Himself said,

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (**Matthew 6:19-21**)

As Christians we continually need God’s wisdom and guidance to use our time effectively. If we allow the Lord to direct our steps in life we will always have enough time to complete all that He calls us to do in life. He will help us to use our time wisely.

Being effective in the use of our time as Christians helps us to be both a shining example in the workforce as we do our work well and to also be fully effective in completing our God given mission here on earth as we flow in our own unique ministry calling.

So as believers if we use our time wisely it will enable us to both shine for Jesus in our workplaces and enable us to faithfully complete all that God has planned for our life (our ministry calling) here on earth.

For those called into the five-fold ministry it is even more crucial that we are effective in the use of our time, so that we can help to equip and encourage many in the Body of Christ to be effective in the work of the ministry. That we set the example of what good time management is to those who have been entrusted to our care.

Every believer, whether in the secular world or in the five fold ministry has a unique ministry calling. The Apostle Paul wrote,
“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” **(Ephesians 2:10)**

Every believer can make a great difference in their sphere of influence if they are disciplined in the use of their time and live with a Kingdom perspective

The Apostle Paul wrote,
“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” **(Ephesians 3:20)**

Given the great potential that every believer has to make a great difference in this world for eternity and to impact the lives of many, the Devil will continually try and distract and discourage all believers so that they waste their time here on earth and never fully realise their full potential in Christ.

After being a Christian for 25 years I have learned that we must purposely be disciplined in the use of our time as believers, otherwise the Devil will continually side-track us from the things of God. We have one gift of life to make an eternal difference in the lives of others.

The bible has much to say on the importance of using our time wisely.

The Apostle Paul wrote,
“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.” **(Colossians 4:5)**

In the book of Proverbs we read,
“Go to the ant, you sluggard!
Consider her ways and be wise,
Which, having no captain,
Overseer or ruler,
Provides her supplies in the summer,
And gathers her food in the harvest.
How long will you slumber, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?
A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler,
And your need like an armed man.” (Proverbs 6:6-11)

Jesus Himself said in relation to not procrastinating and squandering our days, “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.” (**John 9:4**)

Jesus also said,

“Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, **lift up your eyes** and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” (**John 4:35**)

Given the imminent return of the Lord how important it is that we maximize the use of our time so that our lives can make a great eternal difference in the lives of many others.

The Apostle Paul emphasised the importance of giving our best for the Kingdom Cause when he wrote,

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (**1 Corinthians 15:58**)

In reality we will only ever experience the abundant life that Jesus spoke of in John 10:10 when we wholeheartedly live for the Kingdom Cause and **invest our lives in storing up treasures in heaven.**

For the rest of this study I will be looking at some keys that can help us to use our time wisely so that our lives can make a great difference in this world for eternity. Keys that can help us to fully appropriate all that God has planned for our life so that we can realise our full potential in Christ.

1) Prayerfully involving God in all that we do in life.

God’s ways are higher than our ways

In the book of Isaiah we read,

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” (**Isaiah 55:8-9**)

We will always achieve much more with our time doing things God's way as He helps us and gives us wisdom to best prioritize the use of our time.

In the book of Jeremiah we see the LORD’s willingness to help us to become fruitful in our life. The LORD said to Jeremiah,

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (**Jeremiah 33:3**)

When we do things God's way there is much fruit that comes out of our efforts. God multiplies the output from our endeavours when we do things His way.

So in God's economy it is not just about doing more things with our time but doing things His way and in accordance with His plan for our life. God's heart is always that our lives would bear much fruit and that our fruit would remain.

Jesus Himself said,

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” **(John 15:16)**

2) Prayerfully making plans for our week and for each day.

This ensures that we complete the tasks that need to be completed each day and each week. When we prayerfully plan our days and weeks we can come up with strategies to help us to maximize the use of our time such as:

- Visiting a number of people in the same area in the same day
- Doing our banking during the quieter times
- Travelling in the non-peak times and planning our daily schedule to minimize travel time. i.e. Planning our daily activities so that they are generally in the same area so that we are effective in the use of our time
- Doing menial tasks that require no thinking when we are tired and unwinding for the day (i.e. Folding tracts while we are listening to some anointed worship music), and
- Combining things to do at the same time

For example combining things such as walking and praying at the same time, mentoring some key leaders whilst you are driving somewhere to run an errand, listening to the bible on tape whilst we are driving and using one message that can be not only used for a leadership study but also for a Sunday PowerPoint message, are all ways of helping to maximise the use of our time

Good planning also helps us to enjoy the day more and to be less rushed. When we do things with a calm spirit we achieve MUCH MORE and avoid making many unnecessary mistakes that waste our time

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.”

(Proverbs 16:3)

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.” **(Proverbs 21:5)**

3) We need to learn to be led by the Holy Spirit.

In this way we will find that we are always at the right place at the right time.

Jesus Himself said,

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” (John 16:13)

Being continually led by the Holy Spirit is a great key to always being in the centre of God’s will for our life and to bearing much fruit in our life.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

CHOOSING to be continually led by the Holy Spirit will always ensure that we are living for the Kingdom Cause and maximising the use of our spiritual gifts.

Being continually led by the Holy Spirit will also help us to make right choices in life so that we do not waste time by making many unnecessary mistakes in life. Our lives will always be most productive when we simply allow the Holy Spirit to guide and direct our steps in life. (Philippians 1:6)

4) We need to learn to be flexible.

Sometimes we will need to adapt our plans and schedules to complete things in a different and better way. Sometimes we will also experience unexpected circumstances in our life that will cause us to have to change our plans. So whilst planning is important we must also always be flexible enough to adapt our plans to fully accomplish what matters most today to do.

In the book of James we read,

“Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will^[a] go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you *ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” (James 4:13-15)

God’s ways are higher than our ways. We need to always ensure that we are open to being directed by the Lord at all times and be flexible enough to change the way that we do things as He directs. Doing things God’s way will always lead to our lives being more fruitful and productive.

We also need to be able to receive counsel and correction from others who are more qualified and experienced in life so that we can continually learn and grow in our walk with the Lord and our area of gifting so that we become more efficient in the use of our time and spiritual gifts.

We must continually be flexible enough to adopt new ways of doing things that will help us to become all that God has planned for our life.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“A man’s heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.” **(Proverbs 16:9)**

God always has new and better things planned for our life when we are faithful in the little. In general most people like to get comfortable with a set routine for their life. But when we wholeheartedly live for the Lord He will invariably stretch us by giving us new things to do in different ways. We must always be flexible enough to adjust our plans to be in line with His will for our life

5) Learning from others how to do things better and more efficiently.

We need to continually have a teachable spirit. There is so much to learn in life. Learning from others helps us to grow more quickly in our walk with the Lord and to become better at what God has called us to do in life.

The more teachable we are the more quickly we will develop in those things that God has called us to do, and the less mistakes we will make as we learn from the experiences of others.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.” **(Proverbs 9:9)**

“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” **(Proverbs 11:14)**

We can learn much when we look at the lives and messages of others that have been used mightily of God

6) Learning to live one day at a time.

God gives us enough grace to handle today's tasks and challenges. When we start looking at all that we have to do in the coming weeks we can become overwhelmed and anxious. This will greatly undermine our productivity TODAY Jesus Himself said,

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” **(Matthew 6:34)**

7) We must not waste time dwelling on our past failures.

Dwelling on our past failures will only discourage us and prevent us from fully embracing all that God has planned for our future. God can even use our past mistakes for His glory as we help others to avoid making the same mistakes.

We must simply avoid the practice of reflecting on our past mistakes, what could have happened if we made different choices and how we could have done things differently, especially during the winter seasons of our life. We must continually keep looking to the future that God has planned for our life. No amount of agonising over our past disappointments will ever change things.

This is why the Apostle Paul wrote,

“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 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, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” **(Philippians 3:12-14)**

We will always have setbacks in life. Everything will not always run smoothly. We also have a very real enemy who is always out to destroy God’s plans for our life. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

When we have setbacks in life we need to simply learn from them and move on into what God has planned for our future. We must never waste time living with regrets.

8) We need to avoid time wasters who have the potential to totally disrupt our day

We must not allow people who are undisciplined in the way that they live their lives to negatively affect our own lives. Whilst we need to always have a heart to help people, we need to be aware of those people that the enemy will use to pull us away from God’s plan for our life.

If we lack wisdom in life, we can get sidetracked and pulled away by others from what God has called us to do in life so that our lives become unfruitful. In the past I tried to help many people who had no real desire to change and as a result I made many poor choices in life and squandered much of my time as an early believer in the Lord.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.” **(Proverbs 12:26)**

We must be continually wise in how much time we spend with certain people and who we invest our lives in

9) We need to have healthy boundaries in our life that enable us to be focused on fulfilling what God has planned for our life

We need to be continually focused on achieving those things that God has called us to do in life. If we have no clear boundaries in our life we can be more easily pulled this way and that by others so that we never get around to doing what God has called us to do in life.

For this reason we need to have good boundaries in our life so that we know when to say yes to people's demands and when to say no to people's requests. Otherwise we can begin to do things in a resentful way as we allow others to get us to do things that we are not really meant to be doing.

Particularly people who have good and soft hearts are more easily able to be manipulated by others to do things which can cause them to neglect the things that they are meant to be doing in life. People who allow this to happen on an ongoing basis are more likely to become resentful towards others because of their inability to set healthy boundaries in their life.

People with healthy boundaries on the other hand are invariably emotionally healthy and very productive and fruitful in their lives. Having healthy boundaries in our life helps us to maintain a right heart. (Proverbs 4:23)

Having healthy boundaries will enable us to fulfil all that God has planned for our lives so that we will be a great eternal blessing to many others.

Without healthy boundaries in our life we will invariably squander much valuable time and be less productive in life and fail to embrace God's best for our life.

We need to have healthy boundaries in the use of our time in the following areas:

- i) That we fully engage in what God has called us to do in life and make our primary focus one of *following His blueprint for our life (Ephesians 2:10)*
- ii) That we do not allow people to draw us away from doing what God has called us to do by getting us to do other things. Having clear priorities in our life helps us to know what to say yes to and what to say no to (*Habakkuk 2:2*)
- iii) That we do not squander valuable time engaged in idle discussions about things that eat up our day and throw our plans into disarray. Many people have the ability to lead us into conversations and arguments that lead us nowhere. We must not allow these people to squander our time.
- iv) That we purposely schedule in times of rest and recreation into our weekly agenda. This is crucial when we have much to do in life. Having times of time-out in our daily and weekly schedule is a great key to remaining physically strong and mentally alert and spiritually refreshed, and
- v) That we spend quality time with the Lord each day. (Psalm 37:4)

10) As leaders we need to spend quality time in investing in the lives of other emerging leaders and in helping to encourage and disciple other believers. (1 Corinthians 4:15-16) (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

This is a great key to leaving a legacy from our life here on earth

The more time that we invest in training up and discipling other believers, the greater the legacy we will leave from our time here on earth. Spending quality time encouraging and mentoring other believers' needs to therefore be a key focus in our lives as leaders, particularly the longer we progress in our walk with the Lord.

Jesus Himself said to His disciples,

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen” (Matthew 28:19-20)

The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy,

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

11) Learning to rely on God's strength and enabling power in all that we do.

This is a great key to doing things well and efficiently

God will always give us the ability to accomplish all that He calls us to do in life. We need to learn to depend on God's ability to achieve all that He calls us to do in life. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

The Apostle Peter wrote,

“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:11)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.” (2 Corinthians 3:5)

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

When we do what God calls us to do His way and in His timing, we will always find that He will empower us to complete the tasks that He gives us to do in a very efficient way. (Psalm 37:3-5) (Philippians 1:6)

When we do things continually God's way, our lives will always bear much fruit and we will see maximum results from our investment of time and resources. For example when the Lord directs us to do an outreach in a certain area at a certain time, there are always many Divine appointments waiting for us. It is amazing what GOD can do in a two hour outreach that He has put on our hearts to do.

Similarly when God directs us to embark on a two week mission's trip to India or Africa, it is amazing what He can accomplish through our lives during this time as He draws key people to the pastors workshops and does the networking behind the scenes.

For this reason my main focus in life is now to simply know and follow God's will and plan for my life and for our church and to continually know His timing. In doing this I know that He will always empower me to complete the tasks that he gives me to do.

12) Learning to do things when God puts on our heart to do these things.

In doing this you will find that the tasks are easier and quicker to complete as He anoints you to complete the tasks.

We need to avoid procrastinating in life. When a task needs to be done there is no time like the present to do it. In doing this it helps to smooth out our daily schedule and helps us to accomplish all that we need to do each day. When we put things off it only puts time pressures on us later.

I have found that if I consistently just do what God puts on my heart to do when He instructs me to do things, my days and weeks run far more smoothly. God knows how to best unfold His plan for our life and to help us to use our time wisely.

13) The importance of fully investing our life in accomplishing what God has called us to do in life (1 Corinthians 15:58) and in being a good steward of our spiritual gifts

God has uniquely gifted every believer with the potential to make a great difference in this world for eternity. It is in faithfully using our spiritual gifts on an ongoing basis that over the course of our life we will make a great difference in the lives of many.

Fruitfulness in our life comes from simply consistently being available to be used of God in our area of gifting. As Christians we are in a marathon and not a sprint.

Many believers start out zealous to use their spiritual gifts but when persecution arises for the word's sake they quickly go off the boil and drift back into the things of the world.

Jesus Himself said in His explanation of the Parable of the Sower,

“These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.” **(Mark 4:16-20)**

Given the fact that God has uniquely gifted each and every one of us as believers, it is crucial that we are not distracted by the things of this world and our fears and insecurities, but that we fully engage in what God has called us to do in life. Others depend on us being faithful in the use of our spiritual gifts. We all need one another in the Body of Christ just as every member of our physical body has need of the other members of the body. (1 Corinthians 12:18-28)

We are the most fulfilled and anointed in life and the greatest blessing to others when we are flowing in our own unique gifts and calling.

Given this fact, how important it is that we as Christians are faithful stewards of our spiritual gifts (Matthew 25:14-30) so that we can be the greatest blessing to others. Living with eternity in mind helps us to appreciate the importance of using our time wisely so that we can fully utilize our spiritual gifts over the course of our life time.

When we have a heart to serve others and to live for others we will always have the right motivation to fully invest our lives in using our spiritual gifts to see God's Kingdom expanded here on earth.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.” **(1 Corinthians 14:12)**

It is only in this life that we can use our spiritual gifts to help others to come to Christ and to see heaven populated. Given this fact, it is so important that we do not allow the enemy and our own selfish desires to stop us from fully utilizing our spiritual gifts during our time here on earth. I read one sticker on a young person's car that really summed up the importance of not wasting our time here on earth as a believer. This sticker read, “One life to live. One chance:”

14) As a leader readily delegating tasks to others able and called to do them, so that we can focus on completing tasks that others cannot do and pioneering new things.

As leaders we need to be able to delegate tasks and leadership responsibilities to others as the Lord leads

Without the ability to delegate tasks and assignments to others we will be limited in what God is able to do in and through our lives and through our churches. When others can do tasks that we have been doing, we need to readily delegate these tasks to them as the Lord leads so that we can focus on doing tasks that others cannot do. In this way our lives will be far more fruitful.

Moses' father in law Jethro stressed to Moses the importance of delegating leadership responsibilities to others when he saw his son in law being weighed down by the task of leading the Children of Israel single-handedly.

We see his advice to Moses to delegate leadership responsibilities to others to free him up to deal with only major and more difficult cases in the book of Exodus;

“When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, “What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?”

Moses answered him, “Because the people come to me to seek God’s will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions.”

Moses' father-in-law replied, “What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.”

Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves. Then Moses sent his father-in-law on his way, and Jethro returned to his own country. **(Exodus 18:14-27)**

15) The importance of incorporating times of rest into our daily and weekly schedule so that we are fresh and alert to do tasks efficiently.

We all need to have regular times of rest and recreation in our life to help us to remain physically healthy and strong in our walk with the Lord. Having times of rest in our daily and weekly routine is a great key to longevity in ministry. Having adequate rest in our life helps us to function more effectively in what God has called us to do in life and helps us to make less careless mistakes that have the potential to squander much time

Incorporating times of rest in our daily and weekly routine helps us to keep sharp and focused in life. Like an axe if we do not get resharpened we will become blunt and jaded and less effective in what we do. If an axe is not taken out of action for a while and resharpened on a regular basis, it will become blunt and less effective and take much more time to complete tasks. However when the axe is resharpened it becomes far more effective again and tasks are completed again in far less time. Like trying to cut wood with a blunt axe, doing life without taking regular rest periods will cause us to be less effective and efficient in the use of our time. This is why Jesus said, "**The Sabbath was made for man**, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27)

When we have a day off each week spending time with the Lord and being physically refreshed, we are well able to do all that God has called us to do the other six days. We all need to draw aside to be refreshed on a regular basis so that we can be productive in the use of our time.

Especially after long periods of ministry or work, we need to step aside and relax for a while to be refreshed. Consistently incorporating times of rest into our schedule is a great key to maintaining our passion for life and the things of God. If the enemy cannot get us to compromise in life, he will try and burn us out. As Christians we are in a marathon and not a sprint. We need to learn to pace ourselves.

Jesus Himself said to His disciples after they had returned from their mission's trip, "**Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while**" (Mark 6:31)

16) The importance of having structure in our life.

Without structure in our lives we are more likely to live undisciplined lives and to squander much time. People with initiative who achieve much in life are invariably wise and disciplined in the use of their time. Generally if you need something done in life it is always better to ask a person who is busy and productive in life than someone who is undisciplined and who has no structure in their life. Efficient people will always be able to make time in their schedules to fit extra things in if needed.

17) WE NEED TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH THE LORD DAILY TO KEEP OUR FAITH FRESH AND VIBRANT

Each day God has things to share with us to help guide and encourage us in our walk with Him – When we make time to spend with the Lord we need to have an expectation that we will hear from Him

Everything in our faith flows out of our intimacy with the Lord

Jesus Himself said,

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

(John 15:4-5)

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” **(John 15:7-8)**

We must therefore never neglect to spend quality time with the Lord on a regular basis. Spending quality time with the Lord is a great key to growing in our faith and to remaining strong in the midst of trials and temptations

18) The importance of PRIORITIZING the study of the Word of God and prayer in our daily agenda. This is a great key to being prosperous and having good success

We must never get too busy so that we do not spend quality time meditating on God’s Word. It is important that our faith is continually built up so that we remain strong in our faith in a world full of temptations and unbelief.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” **(Romans 10:17)**

God will always speak to us through His Word and give us guidance and direction to help us to make good choices in life. Regularly spending time in God’s Word helps us to stay in the centre of God’s will and to receive wisdom and guidance to do life well.

In the book of Psalms we read,

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

(Psalm 119:105)

The Psalmist also wrote,

“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.”

(Psalm 119:133)

Spending quality time in God’s Word helps us to prosper and to succeed in life as we build our lives on the promises and wisdom contained in His Word.

The LORD said to Joshua just prior to him leading the Children of Israel into the Promised Land,

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” **(Joshua 1:8)**

With so much compromise now going on in our world where many biblical values are now being rejected and with so much lawlessness and deception now existing, more than ever before we must ensure that we spend quality time in God’s Word so that we remain strong in our faith to the end. Our faith is the most precious thing that we have and it is eternal. (1 Peter 1:3-9)

Spending time in God’s Word will help us to continually adhere to the truth and to build our lives on a firm foundation. (Matthew 7:24-25)

Jesus Himself said,

“If you abide in My word you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” **(John 8:31-32)**

19) Spending time to study and to develop in our area of gifting and calling so that we become the best in what God has called us to do in life. Be it a businessman or pastor or mother

It is good to seek to become the best at what God has called us to do in life. In doing this we can become a shining example to those in the world of what God can do in and through our lives as we do things for His glory with a great attitude.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” **(1 Corinthians 10:31)**

For those called into ministry it is good to study the Word of God and to listen to teachings from other well know preachers to be equipped to be the best that we can be in the area of our ministry calling. Spending quality time in God’s Word and drawing aside to seek the Lord on a regular basis, are great keys to helping us to become effective preachers who preach a word in season to those that we are ministering to.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” **(2 Timothy 2:15)**

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” **(2 Timothy 3:16-17)**

Being excellent in our work vocation is also a great key to opening up platforms to share our faith with others. When people see a spirit of excellence in what we do in the workplace, we are then in a better position to speak into the lives of others and to share our faith.

Spending time to learn and to study to be the best at what God has called us to do is therefore an important part of managing our own life. We can always learn much from those who are more advanced in our area of calling or vocation in life.

Jesus Himself said,

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” **(Matthew 5:16)**

Spending time to learn how to share our faith better with others is also important for all believers because we all have a mission’s field.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.” **(Proverbs 11:30)**

20) The importance of always being on time for our appointments.

This is a great attribute of all successful people.

When we are late for meetings we do not only disorganize our own day, but we put into disarray the schedules of all those that are attending the meetings. Our reputation is also very much tied in with our integrity in being consistently on time for our appointments.

As Christians we should seek to set the example in what it is to be punctual. A key to doing this well is to always leave yourself a little extra time to get to your appointments just in case there are some delays on the way.

21) The importance of completing tasks

It is important that we are disciplined in completing tasks. We must avoid the habit of starting many things but completing few of them. Having a focused mind in completing one task before commencing another is one great key to being productive with our time.

Jesus is our example of what it is to complete assignments and tasks in life.

At the beginning of His ministry here on earth Jesus said,

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” **(John 4:34)**

Near the end of His time here on earth Jesus prayed to His Father in Heaven,

“I have glorified You on earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” **(John 17:4)**

22) The importance of being organized

Being organized helps us to save much time. Putting our keys in the same place, putting receipts in a box and being organized in where we put things, all help us to find things more easily so that we spend less time looking for things that we need. If we are continually searching for our keys and for other important things, we will waste much unnecessary time.

Being organized and tidy helps us to be more efficient in the use of our time. There is a saying, "A place for everything and everything in its place." If we apply this saying and principle to our lives, we will save much valuable time and avoid much unnecessary stress that comes from trying to find things that we have either misplaced or lost.

23) Being aware of the lateness of the hour that we are now living in.

Jesus Himself said,

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." **(Luke 21:34-36)**

We can now see the nearness of the Lord's return and the rapture of true believers as we look at the current state of the world and because of the fact that all of the prophecies that relate to the time period before the rapture have now been fulfilled. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

How we need more than ever before to flow in God's plan for our life and to make the most of every God given opportunity to see God's kingdom advanced here on earth. The harvest truly is ripe but the labourers are few. (Luke 10:2)

Like never before it is TIME now to be always ready for and looking for the imminent rapture of the saints where we as believers will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (Luke 21:28) This will precede His Second Coming when He returns to earth with the saints to set up His Millennial Kingdom.

Given the nearness of these events, it is imperative that we use our time wisely and responsibly as we live each day with eternity in mind and make the most of every God given opportunity to help others to come to Christ.

And

24) The importance of having balance in the use of our time

It is important that we do not neglect any areas of our life and ministry. It is important that we prosper in every area of our life (3 John 2) and devote time to all of the following important aspects and areas of our life:

- That we are continually growing in our own personal walk with the Lord through the study of the Word of God and prayer
- That we are investing time and energy into building and strengthening our family relationships. Our family is our most important ministry - As pastors and leaders we must not neglect to spend quality time with our own family. For our children quality time = LOVE
- That we are having quality fellowship with other mature believers on a regular basis
- That we are being faithful in the use of our ministry gifts to help build up the Body of Christ and to help lead unbelievers to faith in Christ
- That we schedule in times of rest and recreation, and
- That we make time to exercise on a regular basis to keep fit. Daily walks help to keep us more active and mentally alert

A leader will rise to his LOWEST ceiling:

- **PHYSICAL** (Diet, Rest, Sleep, Exercise, Health)
- **EMOTIONAL** (Healthy relationships, ability to deal with negative emotions, stability)
- **MENTAL** (Ability to deal with stress, ability to TRUST God, ability to prioritise, delegate)
- **SPIRITUAL** (Prayer life, Worship life, Knowledge of the Word, Faith / Resting in God)

SO IN CONCLUSION:

May I encourage you to be efficient in the use of your time and to being committed to following God's plan for your life and to doing things His way, so that all that He has planned for your life will come to pass in the coming days!