

This is the Day
Sermon Series: Otherworldly
Psalm 118:24; Ephesians 5:14-17 Psalm 90:12

Introduction: I love celebrating a new year. I like the feeling that comes with getting a clean slate and a fresh start. Many of us take time to do some personal evaluation. Are we where we want to be physically, emotionally, and spiritually? Are you as close to your loved ones and to God as you should be?

This is also a great time to allow God to begin something new in your life. God is the God of the new, and He can make a new you in this New Year.

In fact, did you know that right now, whether you know it or not, you are a new person? Scientists at White Laboratories discovered that 98% of the atoms that are in your body today were not there 365 days ago. **You are literally not the same person you were this time last year.**

A lot of things can happen in a year, can't they? Some of you have welcomed new family members, some of you have said goodbye to loved ones, some of you have switched jobs, said hello to new wrinkles or faced some sickness and hardships. Some of you have started attending church here in the past year, and I thank God for you. Some of you have given your lives to Jesus, been baptized, or made some commitment to Jesus this past year...**that's awesome!**

Last week, I began a New Year's series called "Otherworldly."

The dictionary says Otherworldly means: relating to or resembling that of a world other than the actual world. It sounds very science fiction and alien-like doesn't it, but that's who we are or who we are supposed to be as believers in Christ; we are not of this world; we are Otherworldly.

I'm getting this title from Jesus' prayer for His disciples in John, chapter 17:
15My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." (NIV)

You've probably heard a thousand times that Christians are supposed to "be in the world, but not of it." But what does that look like?

It's a lot like a boat in the water. The boat is designed to float on the water – to be in the water and surrounded by water on all sides. But it's not a good thing when water gets in the boat. Our goal as followers of Christ is to actively engage our culture with the Gospel without allowing the culture's ungodly morals, values, attitudes, and behaviors to infiltrate our lives.

Last weeks' **Key Take Away was, the wisest decision you can make is to seek God's wisdom for every decision.**

God has given us the power to choose. There are choices we make that are literally choosing life... choosing wholeness... choosing closeness to the God who made us and sent His Son to redeem us. And there are choices we make that are literally choosing damage and destruction.

Joshua challenged Israel "... choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

A couple hundred years later, on Mount Carmel Elijah went before the people and said, **"How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him...."** 1Kings 18:21

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He gave them a similar choice: **"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life that both you and your descendants may live"** (Deuteronomy 30:19).

Transition: what I want to talk about today is described as: Sometimes it flies, sometimes it crawls, but it always passes. We mark it, save it, waste it, and race against it. We measure it incessantly with a passion for precision. We are blessed with it and obsessed with it; and we never seem to have enough of it. **What I'm talking about is time.**

One of the most important buildings, in the world, sits in a perfectly circular, well-guarded park in northwest Washington, D.C. It is a non-descript concrete building on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Observatory and it houses the nerve center of the U.S. Directorate of Time.

Behind its well-guarded barred windows sit 28 atomic clocks. Four of these clocks hold atoms of hydrogen and 24 of them hold atoms of cesium. Laser beams and microwave beams are fired at these clocks, causing the atoms to pulsate with an incredibly regular vibration. The results are measured by a computer and every second, they are fed into America's Master Clock.

Those measurements in turn become the basis for all time keeping in the United States and those measurements are sent to the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, just outside Paris, which keeps the world on time.

What we now call, "Standard Time" came about because of the railroads. When they began to publish schedules, for the first time in 1883 our country was divided into 4 time zones. Time became very important.

Nothing will teach you the value of time more than when you get into a situation where you think you are just about out of time. When a person finds out that they have a terminal illness the first question that always comes to mind is; **"How much time do I have left?" None of us know the answer.**

Do any of you remember the song, "The Cat's in the Cradle" by Harry Chapin. I wish I could pull out a guitar and sing it for you, but here are the words.

**"My child arrived just the other day.
He came to the world in the usual way.
But there were planes to catch and bills to pay.
He learned to walk while I was away.
He was talking before I knew it, and as he grew
He said, "I'm going to be like you, Dad.
You know I'm going to be like you."**

**My son turned ten just the other day.
He said, "Thanks for the ball, now come on let's play.
Can you teach me to throw?" I said, "Not today,
I've got a lot to do." He said, "That's OK."
And he walked away and he smiled and he said
"You know I'm going to be like you, Dad,
You know I'm going to be like you."**

The final verse says:

I've long since retired and 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 could 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 real 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.**

There are a few lessons that could be learned from this song. But notice the line that says, **I've long since retired and 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 could find the time.**

If I could find the time, how many of us have said that. Maybe you've heard the song, but here's the rest of the story as Paul Harvey would say: Harry Chapin's wife, Sandy, wrote the words to that song after their son Josh was born. It became a self-fulfilling prophecy. When their son was 7, Harry was performing 200 concerts a year and Sandy asked him when he was going to take some time to be with his son. Harry promised to make some time at the end of the summer. He never made it. That summer, Folk rock singer-composer Harry Chapin, known for his fund-raising work to fight world hunger, was killed in a fiery auto accident when a truck hit Harry's Volkswagen Rabbit and he was killed. He was 38 years young.

Here's the Good News today; God has not left us on our own to figure out how we ought to spend our time and live our days out on this earth. He has given us specific advice on the best way to have wisdom in managing our time.

The title of today's message is: **This is THE Day Let's PRAY**

Key Take Away Today: The most valuable use of your time is spending most of your time on what is most valuable.

The four letters in the word T...I...M...E will be the main points of my message.

T. TREASURE Your Time because every Day is a Gift from God

A.W. Tozer wrote: "Time is a resource that is nonrenewable and nontransferable. You cannot store it, slow it up, hold it up, divide it up or give it up. You can't hoard it or save it for a rainy day—when it's lost it's unrecoverable. When you kill time, remember that it has no resurrection."

To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who failed a grade.
To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask a mother who gave birth prematurely.
How valuable is ONE HOUR? Ask the businessman whose flight was delayed an hour and he missed an important business deal.
How valuable is ONE MINUTE? Ask the man who had a heart attack in a restaurant where an EMT was sitting at the next table and CPR saved his life.
How valuable is ONE SECOND? Ask the Olympic athlete who missed qualifying by six-tenths of a second. Time is to be treasured.

Listen to what the psalmist wrote, "***This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it...***" (Psalm 118:24 ESV) **Note Three things:**

1. Treasure Your Time by Approaching Each Day Thankfully

The psalmist begins by saying, "***This is the day the Lord has made***"

Interestingly the word "***made***" is the same one that is used throughout the first two chapters of Genesis to describe how God made this world. When God created space, God also created time. Just as God created a world for us to live in, God created the time for us to live in it. In other words, every single day you live is a God-given gift.

Every day has 24 hours in it. Rich people don't get 25 hours and poor people don't get 23. We all get the same amount of time.

The fact is, you may not have all the time you need to do what you **want** to do, but I will guarantee you have all the time you need to do what you **should** do.

Jesus only lived on the earth for 33 years, but He said in John 17:4: "***I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.***"

Treasure every moment that you have! Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift...That's why it's called the "present!"

And every time someone gives you a "present" you should be thankful.

1. **Treasure Your Time by Spending Each Day Usefully**

Look at the first half of this verse again and listen to the two verbs in it. I'll emphasize them. ***"This IS the day the Lord HAS made."*** (Psalm 118:24, ESV)

The psalmist is not talking about yesterday. The verse does not say, "That was the day the Lord did make." The psalmist is not talking about tomorrow. It doesn't say, "That will be the day the Lord will make."

You can't enjoy yesterday; it is just a memory. You can't enjoy tomorrow; it is just a possibility. The psalmist is talking about today. You can only enjoy today.

We talk about "saving time" or "making time" or "borrowing time." You can't do any of those things with time. The time you waste today is gone forever. The time you don't use today cannot be carried over until tomorrow.

In a game, you can call "time out", but you can't do that in life. [\(Dad's death\)](#) The clock is always running, and it never stops. Time only knows one direction and that is forward. You can put money in the bank, but you can't put time in the bank. You can't stretch time. You can't put 61 minutes in an hour or 25 hours in a day.

When railroads were built, and we left the agricultural age and entered the Industrial Age we began to realize that time was money. The idea of making workers more efficient and more productive and making every second count was the order of the day. Think of how much we multi-task. [Ex. Driving](#)

Many businesses now are open 24 hours a day. When I was a kid, I just went outside and played with other kids! Today, parents schedule playdates. [The good news is there is a desire within most of us to make the best use of our time. This is the DAY, the Lord has made: approach it **thankfully**, spend it **usefully**.](#)

A. **Treasure Your Time by Living Each Day Joyfully**

Notice the second half of this verse; ***"let us rejoice and be glad in it."***

Don't let bad things that happen each day take the joy away from all the good things. We sing a song called...**Goodness of God**...it says **from the moment that I wake up, till I lay my head, I will sing of the goodness of God.**

From the moment I wake up I have a choice as to whether I am going to enjoy the day. No matter what else is going on in my life today, I can rejoice that God loves me. I can rejoice that God is for me. I can rejoice that God will work everything out for my good. I can rejoice that I am forgiven, and I have eternal life. I can rejoice that I have another day where I can thank God, praise God, love God, serve God, and worship God.

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

T - TREASURE Your Time because every Day is a Gift from God

I - INVEST Your Time Wisely because TODAY is the day the Lord has Made.

We use a lot of phrases with time that aren't possible. You can't buy more time, you can't find more time, and you can't make more time. You can only invest it. Time is more valuable than money. It's different from money though, because while money can be saved, time can't. If you don't use it, you lose it.

In the early 1970s Jim Croce wrote a song that said, "If I could save time in a bottle, the first thing that I'd like to do, is to save every day 'till eternity passes away—just to spend them with you."

Those are great, romantic lyrics. It would be nice if we could save time, but you can't. In fact, a few months after he wrote that song, he was tragically killed in a plane crash in Natchitoches, Louisiana at the age of 30. You can't save time. There are 168 hours in each week. Where are you investing those hours?

Here are some TIME investment tips.

1. Investing small amounts of time over time is

cumulative.

If you exercise 30 minutes a day, four days a week; week after week after week; year after year, it's cumulative. It adds up to something.

If you have a family and you eat dinner at home together 3 or 4 nights a week; week after week; year after year, that time together adds up.

If you eat right; day after day, week after week, year after year...

If you save money and invest it month after month; year after year...it adds up.

If you have prayer and bible reading day after day, week after week; year after year...it's cumulative, it all adds up and is life-changing.

2. Neglect is cumulative.

Neglect comes easy but it's costly. Small deposits over the course of time make a difference, but so does neglecting those small deposits. When we choose to neglect what's easy; it's costly.

If you think investing in your retirement is too costly; try getting older and not having enough money to live on. If you think investing time with your family is too time consuming, see what happens when a child goes off the rails. If you think investing in your spiritual health is too costly, what are you going to do when a crisis comes, and you feel so far from God?

Neglect is always easy, but it will also be costly.

3. Random has no cumulative value.

Depositing 30 minutes of exercise day after day, year after year has value, but doing it haphazardly has little value. Consistent devotional or family time adds up but doing things randomly will not amount to much.

4. In the areas that matter most, you can't make up for misspent time.

Or let me say it like this; you can't pull an all-nighter to catch up. If you have a family and you're the type that is on the go, work, work, work...busy, busy, busy; and you wake up one day and realize that the kids are almost grown up and you hardly ever spent time together; and you think I need to make up for this...you can't cram all those missed moments in to make it up.

You can't say, "Hey kids this morning we're going to have breakfast together and hang out all day and catch up and make up for all those times we missed.

Have you ever heard this excuse? Some dads or mom will say, "I don't spend much time with my family, but the little time I do spend is **'quality time.'**"

It's like talking about "quality money." If I offered you an old hundred-dollar bill, would you say, "No, it's wrinkled," I'd rather have a crisp new \$5 bill?

At a graduation commencement at Wheaton College, Billy Graham said: "Time is the capital that God has given us to invest. People are the stocks in which we are to invest our time, whether they're blue chips or penny stocks or even junk bonds."

There is no substitute for investing most of your time on what is most valuable.

T - TREASURE Your Time because every Day is a Gift from God

I - INVEST Your Time Wisely because TODAY is the DAY the Lord has Made.

The next letter in family TIME is:

M- Manage Your Time because Your Time on Earth is Limited

There is an entire field of study called "time management." In almost every business in America, consultants are hired to teach busy executives how to better manage their time. Time management is a hot topic. In his book, Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey writes: "Time management is a misleading concept. You can't really manage time. You can't delay it, speed it up, save it or lose it. No matter what you do time keeps moving forward. The challenge is not to manage time, but to manage ourselves."

Instead of managing your time, the bible speaks of "redeeming" the time,

which is an even better idea. Paul writes: **15Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15-16, NIV)**

The KJV says **“redeem the time, because the days are evil.”**

The Amplified version says, **“15Therefore see that you walk carefully [living life with honor, purpose, and courage; shunning those who tolerate and enable evil], not as the unwise, but as wise [sensible, intelligent, discerning people], 16making the very most of your time [on earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil.”**

Illustration: A time management expert was teaching a seminar for executives. He placed a large, clear open-mouthed jar in front of the group. Next, he put seven or eight large rocks into the jar and asked. “Is the jar full?” Everyone nodded. Then he took pebbles and filled up the jar with the small rocks until they reached the rim. “Is the jar full?” They didn’t answer. So, he poured fine sand in. “Is the jar full?” Some nodded. He proceeded to take a pitcher of water and filled up the jar again. “What’s the lesson about time management?” he asked. Hands shot up, and everyone agreed “No matter how busy you are you can always fit more things into your schedule.”

“Wrong.” he replied. “The lesson is: unless you put the big rocks in first, they never will fit in. You must figure out what the big rocks are for you.” What are the big rocks in your life? Spending time with God? Giving time to your marriage and to your children? If you don’t put those big rocks in first, someone else will fill up your jar with the small stuff. **If you don’t manage your time - someone else will manage it for you.**

T - TREASURE Your Time because every Day is a Gift from God

I - INVEST Your Time Wisely because TODAY is the DAY the Lord has Made.

M- MANAGE Your Time because Your Days on Earth are Limited

[The final letter in TIME is:](#)

E – ENJOY Your Time because that is God’s Will for You in Christ Jesus

There will always be something else to do. There will always be somewhere

else to go, but if you are going to enjoy your time, you must learn the power of that little two letter word, “NO.”

You need to understand that when you say, “YES” to God and “YES” to family time, then you have already said, “NO” to something else. Nobody on their deathbed ever said, “I wish I had spent more time at work, playing golf with my buddies, watching TV...”

Here’s why I don’t think people enjoy each day, even Christians. We’re overloaded. Overload comes when we have too much activity in our lives. The solution is to put some margin into your life. Margin is breathing room. Margin is the space between your load and your limit. Someone said, “Margin is having breath at the top of the staircase, money at the end of the month, and sanity left over at the end of each day.”

On the other hand, “Marginless” is being 30 minutes late to the doctor’s office because you were 20 minutes late getting out of the hairdresser because you were 10 minutes late dropping the children off at school because something unexpected came up and ruined your perfectly timed out plan. “Marginless” is not having time to finish the book you’re reading on stress.

When you’re overloaded by activity, you can only think of yourself. You’re in survival mode, just trying to make it through another day. When you have no margin in your life, and God taps you on the shoulder and says, “I’d like you to do this for me,” your first response isn’t joy; it’s, “Oh, no! Another thing to do! Sorry, God; I’m just too busy.”

You don’t have to live on overload. You don’t have to live in survival mode.

Psalm 91:1 says, ***“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.” NIV***

The Hebrew word for "dwell" means to sit down, to remain, or to settle. So, the very first thing that God wants you to do to is to enjoy His rest. And when you do, God’s protection, peace, love, and other blessings flow in your life.

The Bible says that we are seated with Christ at God's right hand (see Eph. 2:6, Heb. 1:3). The word "seated" is beautiful—it means that you are no longer standing and working, rushing and stressing. Remember Mary and Martha?

CONCLUSION:

Gary Freeman tells about a girl who went to college & just hated it. But she told herself, "If I can ever get out of college & get married & have children, I know I'll finally be able to enjoy life."

So, she stuck with it. She went to classes every day & finally graduated from college. Then she got married & had children & discovered that children are a lot of work. She told herself, "If I can just get these kids raised, then I'll be able to relax & really enjoy life."

But about the time the kids were entering high school her husband said, "Guess what? We don't have enough money to send our kids to college. I guess you'll have to get a job."

Well, she didn't want to, but she knew he was right & they needed the money, so she went to work. And she hated it. But she told herself, "If I can just get these kids out of college, & get all of the bills paid, then I can quit work & really enjoy life."

Finally, the last child graduated from college, & all the bills were paid. So, she walked into her employer's office & said, "I quit." He said, "you don't want to quit now. If you stay with us just another 8 years, you'll have a pension for the rest of your life."

She thought, "Well, I don't want to work another 8 years, but there's all that money there, & I really can't turn down the opportunity." So, she worked for another 8 years. Finally, she & her husband retired at the same time. They sold their home & bought a little retirement cottage.

Then they sat down on the swing on their front porch & looked at the family picture album & dreamed about the good old days.

You have a bank CALLED TIME. Every day we are credited with 86,400 seconds. TIME allows no overdrafts, there is no going back for a second chance.

Time.

Treasure it. It's a valuable gift from God.

Invest in it. It pays big dividends.

Manage it. It will bless you and everyone in your life.
Enjoy it. It is filled with God's richest blessings.

God wants you to get the full value out of your time. He wants you to get the biggest bang for the buck in every minute you live.

The most valuable use of your time is spending most of your time on what is most valuable.

So, here's the question; where do you need to begin making consistent deposits of time so that you know you are treasuring, investing, and managing the time God has given you, wisely? Will you be able to enjoy each day with the choices you are making?

Right now, in the stage of life you're in, school...college...young adult, grandparent, new job, raising young kids, **what area or areas do you need to begin making consistent deposits of time?**