

Slide One:

Slide Two:

Did you hear about the boy who was running around his bed? → His mom asked him what he was doing. He replied, “I’m trying to catch up on my sleep!” Wouldn’t it be nice if it were that easy?!?

My message is entitled: **(Slide 3)**

Who’s Got the Time?

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Time. We all have the same amount. Too bad we didn’t all feel that way. But we are called to be stewards of our time. To be a steward is to serve, to manage, to see to the interests of, the boss, the owner, the employer. So, to be a steward of our time is to align our priorities with the owner, the giver of time.

Since God is our Creator, Owner, Boss, all of our time belongs to Him. Therefore, let me rephrase my earlier statement: we are called to be stewards of His time. Therefore, you should be at the church 24/7, right?!? Wrong! Our priorities must be in line with God’s priorities. Yes, our spiritual life should be a high priority. And our spiritual life must not be a separate compartment, but an integral aspect of our entire life.

Louis Cyr was 5’10.5”. He weighed 300 pounds. His chest measured 60 inches. He was billed as the world’s strongest man, and he looked the part. One of his greatest feats was accomplished on December 20, 1891, in Sohmer Park, Montreal. A team of two draft horses was attached to each arm by a special harness. Each team was to pull on the harness, while Louis tried to keep his arms still, hands touching his chest. **(Slide 4)** The horses leaned in the harness, but after several minutes of pulling, slipping and sliding, Cyr emerged the obvious winner. He never budged. Too bad we do not have such strength and fortitude when life’s → demands pull us in many different directions. If we give in to all these demands, the only result will be that we will go to pieces.

Time is a cruel master. It is ever demanding, always selfish. There never seems to be enough time to do all that is needed. **(Slide 5)** We find ourselves trying to juggle, working feverishly to keep all the balls in the air. Professional jugglers make it look easy, but it’s not. **(Slide 6)** → We’re lucky if we can keep one ball from hitting the floor. We need help!

There are some many needs waiting for our time. But herein lies the danger. Is it needed, or merely wanted? Is it important, or merely urgent?

Slide 7: Our self-worth (or lack of it) → often drives us to busy-ness. We have work-a-holics, people-pleasers, and attention-seekers, all out with something to prove.

We get involved in many activities, out to → prove ourselves to be:

→ Useful

→ Talented

→ Worthy

We are all these things and more. But in Christ we have nothing to prove.

→ In Him, we are:

→ Chosen (John 15:16) You have not chosen me; I have chosen you.

→ Gifted (I Corinthians 12:11) The Spirit gives gifts to each one, just as He determines.

→ Worth more than many sparrows (Matthew 10:31) We may not be worthy, but we are worth God's gift of His Son.

We do not need to be driven, to prove ourselves, either to ourselves, others, or to God.

But we find ourselves ever busy. And the irony is, busy does not **(Slide 8)** necessarily equal productive! Many of us are busy, but accomplish little of significance.

Slide 9: As stewards of God's time, we need proper → time priorities.

In reality, it comes down to → one thing: "One thing" is mentioned in several passages of Scripture.

→ In Luke 10:41-42, Mary is commended for not being distracted (literally, pulled away, as by horses!) from hearing Jesus' teaching.

→ In Luke 18:22, the rich ruler was told of one thing he lacked: freedom from his wealth and possessions.

→ In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul speaks of doing one thing: pressing on to the goal.

"That sounds great, pastor, but I've got news for you: I'm faced with more than one thing." As are we all.

Slide 10: Let's look then at establishing some → time priorities.

1. **The kingdom of God.** → Jesus said we are to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). When we do this, all other needs and demands will fall into line.
2. **Family.** → Scripture admonishes us to honour our parents (Ex. 20), nurture our children (Eph 5), love our spouse (Eph 5). Family time is important. Our families need our time, our love, our attention. Linus drives the point home: **(hyperlink to slide**

11) →→→ Our families suffer when we over-commit.
([hyperlink back to slide 10](#))

Reflections by Erma Bombeck, after finding out she had cancer.

“I would have gone to bed when I was sick, instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren’t there for the day.

I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the ‘good’ living room, and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.

I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television – and more while watching life.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn’t show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I’d have cherished every moment, and realized that the wonderment

growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, “*Later. Now go get washed up for dinner.*”

There would have been more “I love you’s”. More “I’m sorry’s”. But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute ... look at it and *really* see it ... *live* it ... and never give it back.

Stop sweating the small stuff. Don’t worry about who doesn’t like you, who has more, or who’s doing what.

Instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who Do Love Us.

Let's think about what God HAS blessed us with.

And what we are doing each day to promote ourselves mentally, physically, emotionally, as well as spiritually. Life is too short to let it pass you by. We only have one shot at this and then it's gone.”

It has been said that, on their deathbed, no one wishes they spent more time at the office. Now’s the time to begin to rectify that.

3. **You.** → Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19). We need time to re-create, to unwind, to just be. We ourselves suffer when we over-commit. **([hyperlink to slide 12 and back to slide 10](#))**
4. **Work.** → While I have it at the bottom, it is by no means insignificant. Whatever we do, we are admonished to do it as unto the Lord.

Slide 13: → What do I do? How do I establish these priorities? Start with one thing, number one: the kingdom of God. Jesus said that this is priority one. When this is number one, it helps to put → everything else into proper perspective.

→ Someone with imbalanced priorities will be an imbalanced person.

Does putting the kingdom of God first mean that the church becomes our second home? Definitely not! How would we then interact with our neighbours, families, and friends?

Too much church involvement can be a bad thing (so can too little!).

Sometimes we need to → learn to say no!

Slide 14: So many of us need to → rest. I heard of a recent study which said that people who did not take an annual vacation time were at higher risk for heart attacks and other health problems.

Stop being so busy! God provided the Sabbath for our benefit. We need to → take one day a week and do as little as possible. God commanded that even the work animals were to be given the Sabbath as well. Jesus declared that → the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). Finally, Jesus gives the invitation to all of us who are too busy, too tired, too driven, to come to Him:

→ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

That doesn't mean that we will stop working. It means that we will be leaning, learning, and labouring with Jesus. And anything with Jesus makes all the difference in the world.

Who's Got the Time? (**Slide 2**) We all do. Let's set our priorities correctly.