

Living An Invested Life

7 Areas to Pay Attention To

STUDY SERIES



'Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.' Psalms 90:12 NLT

'Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.' Romans 14:12

When we go through the daily grind of life, it becomes very easy for us to get caught up in activities and forget that every day is a gift with an assignment attached to it. When by the help of the Holy Spirit we start to see time from God's perspective and with the understanding that we will each give an account to God of how we lived our lives, we start becoming more intentional and strategic.

In this study we will be looking at 7 key areas we should be strategic about.

May the Holy Spirit open up our understanding through this series and show us how to live a well invested life.

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Day 1

Time

'Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.' Ephesians 5:15-17 NIV

Most of us know when we were born, very few have an idea of when we will die. As a result, we tend to live as though we have all the time in the world available to us. This may lead us forgetting that there will come a time when the reality of eternity will hit us and sadly for some that reality may come at a time that may be too late to do much with that understanding,

'Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered— how fleeting my life is.' Psalms 39:4

This verse isn't meant to instill fear in us, rather it should energize us as we realize that even if we live up to 150 years old, that's still barely a speck in the context of eternity. Why then should choose to mortgage eternity for such a short period?

'...We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit...' Colossians 1:9-10

'Behold, I (Jesus) am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each one according to the merit of his deeds (earthly works, faithfulness).' Revelation 22:12 AMP

How does the Lord expect us to invest each day? By spending time in fellowship with Him, growing in the knowledge of Him and impacting the areas He has put in our care according to His will. It's not enough to be active, the key to succeeding with time is to be active doing what Jesus has designed for us for to do at the time appointed for us to do it. He has a plan for each day, it's our duty to find out from Him what that plan is concerning us. He is faithful and willing to make this known to us.

Prayer: Lord give me the grace to live with the understanding that life is fleeting and that all that I do or leave undone has eternal implications. Help me use the gift of time in a manner that pleases you and consistently bears good fruit.

Day 2

Gifts/Skills

'Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men.' Proverbs 22:29

The Lord has blessed each one of us with gifts, skills, talents that He has designed to set us apart in our respective spheres. The same way an athlete may be born with certain skills but still has to train to perfect those skills, we also need to pay attention to whatever skill we have and discipline ourselves to excel in it. It's not about how many skills, rather how faithful we are in honing them for God's glory.

'Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him...' Daniel 6:3

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

Daniel was extremely diligent in a highly political and manipulative environment and wasn't concerned with being better than others, but rather that God would be given the glory in all he did. Imagine if you demonstrated an excellent spirit in whatever skill the Lord has given you? What if your goal was to excel so that others will be drawn, giving you the opportunity to share how the Lord has equipped and helped you to excel without conforming to the standards of the world?

'For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.'" Matthew 20:28

The Lord intends for us to stand out for good so that it will be clear that those who walk with Him are different. Not being selfish, mediocre or manipulative, rather in quiet and consistent diligence honing and perfecting the skills He's given us in a manner that benefits others. Yes, we will benefit as well as diligence brings its rewards, but our ultimate goal is to walk in service to others as Christ's representatives here on earth. Not everyone will step into a church building, but many will see how you live your life and how that testifies of the Lord we serve.

Prayer: Lord, please help me recognize and hone the gifts and skills you have given me and use them in a manner that honours you that men may see and give you the glory you deserve.



Day 3

Treasury

'But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...'
Deuteronomy 8:18

God is interested in every aspect of our lives and that includes our attitude to money. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with money, it's a tool that can and should be used for our benefit and for the expansion of God's kingdom here on earth. However, there is a danger of focusing too much on money/worldly possessions and making them idols, rather than the servants they should be. When we focus only on investing in the here and now, we run the risk of being sucked into an unhealthy attachment to material things which could take God's place in our hearts.

'You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.' Matthew 6:24

'For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.' 1 Timothy 6:10

Let's be clear on what the Bible says – it's the love of money that's a root of all kinds of evil, not that money is the root of all evil. There is no intrinsic evil in money, just as there's no intrinsic holiness in poverty. What God is interested in is how we approach money and worldly possessions. When we take our focus off God as our source and start focusing on what's around us, we make our treasures our idol and enslave ourselves to them.

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.' Matthew 6:19-20

Jesus understood how easily this can happen, which is why He advised us – even as we work hard here on earth – to store up our treasures in heaven. How do we do this? By investing in the kingdom agenda however we can. Matthew 25:34-46 shares more on this.

Prayer: Lord, please help me to always remember that it is you that gives me the power to create wealth. You alone are my source and you're the only one that has the capacity to supply all my needs. Help me to invest the treasures you've given me in the things that are important to you.



Day 4

Your Body

'Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself' 1 Corinthians 6:19 NLT

Our lives would be skewed wrongly if we only invested in our spirit at the expense of our bodies and vice versa. Every aspect of us is important and belongs to God. If we look at our bodies from the perspective of it being a covering that equips us to function here on earth, then it may help us put things in balance. The spirit is in charge, but the body must also be functional. This means we need to pay attention to and invest in the soundness of all aspects of our health – mental, physical, emotional.

'Beloved, I pray that in every way you may succeed and prosper and be in good health [physically], just as [I know] your soul prospers [spiritually].' 3 John 1:2 AMP

'I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.' Psalms 139:14

Majority desire to live long fruitful lives, while paying very little attention to healthy eating and lifestyle. Why's this important? Poor health can severely impact our ability to function effectively in the assignments God has for us. We are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made and our physical being needs to be treated with respect for our make and owner. You wouldn't put low grade fuel in an expensive vehicle, so the same principle should apply to what we choose to nourish our bodies with – what we see, hear and consume.

'Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship.' Romans 12:1

It's with the heart we connect and with the body we serve, the two are required and God wants every aspect of our being to be involved in what He has for us.

Prayer: Father thank you for indeed I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I ask for your grace to understand and maintain the right balance in treating the body you have given me as your temple.



Day 5

Relationships

'Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.' Philippians 2:3

Jesus in His earthly ministry was very intentional about who He chose to surround Himself with and who to keep at a distance. He loved everyone, but didn't give Himself to everyone. He did good to all without bias, always looking out for what was best for others. His perspective for engaging with people was never what He could get, rather what He could give them. This serves as a lesson for us as we also engage not just in romantic relationships, but platonic, social and business as well.

'Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.' Philippians 2:4

'Do to others as you would like them to do to you.' Luke 6:31

If we truly want to live an invested life, we need to look beyond ourselves. Wherever God has placed us there will be multiple opportunities to look out for the interests of others – whether they choose to reciprocate or not. It's about making a conscious choice to take the lead in acting as we would want others to act towards us. When we show this type of example in our relationships, we are testifying of who Jesus is as we demonstrate His love.

'Beloved... test the spirits, whether they are of God...' I John 4:1

'But Jesus, for His part, did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people [and understood the superficiality and fickleness of human nature]' John 2:24

Does this mean we should be careless about who we let into our personal space and private dealings? Absolutely not. The Bible clearly tells us to test every spirit and Jesus Himself didn't entrust things close to Him to just anyone. Whoever we permit into our personal space, we give permission to impact our lives for good or for bad. As such it's critical that we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit on who to engage with and the extent to which we should open ourselves up to them

Prayer: Lord Jesus, please help me follow your example in how to treat people. I ask for a discerning spirit and your guidance for every relationship I'm involved in.



Day 6

Souls

'...he who wins souls is wise.' Proverbs 11:30

Jesus invested his entire earthly ministry and paid a heavy price for the redemption of our souls. Even now He continues to intercede for us before the Father (Hebrews 7:25). If the Lord we serve placed such a huge importance on winning souls then as the Bible clearly tells us, it is wisdom for us to invest in doing the same.

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' John 3:16

'you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back from wandering will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.' James 5:20

Jesus came to earth not to condemn, but to deliver and we who declare Him as Lord have become His extensions here on earth and we are to continue the work He began. Not because we think we are superior, but because we recognize that none of us is righteous on our own and it's Jesus that has saved us all. Out of love for Jesus, we should reach out to others in whatever way we can to share the opportunity for others to be saved.

'Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever.' Daniel 12:3

Because the Lord we serve is faithful and good, He also gives us this encouragement that those who are involved in leading others to righteousness will shine not just on this side of eternity but forever. Imagine that! There's a reward waiting for everyone who leads someone to Jesus. So if that's the case why don't we do this? Sometimes it's fear – what do I say? How will I be perceived? What if the person doesn't respond? It may help us to understand that we're not the ones that save. All we can do is introduce the person to the love of Jesus. It may just be a seed you're planting, that another will water and bring to fruition. What's important is that we commit to doing our part. The Holy Spirit will take care of the rest.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, please bring someone my way today that is open to hearing about you and give me the boldness to share your love with that person.



Day 7

Ministry

'I assure you and most solemnly say to you, anyone who believes in Me [as Savior] will also do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these [in extent and outreach], because I am going to the Father.' John 14:12 AMP

One of the assurances Jesus gave us is that we will be able to do greater things than He did during His earthly ministry because we now have the gift of the Holy Spirit. For us to have this assurance means there's an expectation that we will actually do something with this wonderful gift we've been given. There's an expectation that each of us will invest in extending the frontiers of the kingdom of God here on earth using whatever gifts we've been blessed with.

Today we're looking at ministry not in the context of the five-fold ministry (teacher, pastor, evangelist, prophet, apostle), but as a believer who has a platform that can be used to extend God's agenda. The first thing to note is that there needs to be a deliberate and intentional effort on our part to create/use existing platforms in a manner that glorifies God. The second thing is that there is consistency required on our part for whatever we intend to do to be effective. It shouldn't be haphazard.

'While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for the work to which I have called them.'" Acts 13:2

Whatever it is you choose to do, please don't start without engaging the Holy Spirit. He's the one who gives us assignments and equips us to succeed in those assignments. If you haven't begun, set some time to pray and ask what the Lord would have you do. And if you've begun, ask the Lord if you're still on the right path or if there's more He would like you to do. Ask Him to help and equip you and He will.

Prayer: Lord, it's my desire to be used by you, please show me where and how to start and grant me the grace to be diligent in any assignment you give me.



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