August Transcript

Good day everyone. I'm Mike Hampton and this is Stewardship 365. Traditionally, when we think about stewardship, we generally lump all of our gifts into one of three categories. These are time, talents, and treasures, and if you look at each and examine them, you can argue that some people are more blessed when it comes to treasures or talents. But at the very core, we all have the same amount of time. In this month's look at stewardship, I'd like to dive into the blessing of time.

Time as we know it is a fixed component. We all get exactly the same amount. I can't earn more time no matter what I do or how hard I try. Now, I won't argue that we can utilize our time better, and some people are masters at time management. Many, in fact, have made quite a nice living at teaching people how to squeeze more life out of the 24 hours a day that we all receive.

The Bible portrays time as a precious gift meant to be stewarded wisely. It teaches that life is short and temporary encouraging believers to prioritize spiritual growth, to live purposefully and to trust in God's divine timing over human impatience. When I started searching for information about time in the Bible, I was surprised at how often it is mentioned and how it is described. Let me share with you some of the key themes about time I found in the Bible.

The first theme is about God's divine timing. God is the author of time, and for everything there is a season, whether in times of joy or sorrow, planting or harvesting. God's timing is perfect and brings beauty to every situation.

Another theme is eternity versus the present. Ecclesiastes 3:11 reveals that God has placed eternity in the human heart, pointing to a reality beyond our current earthly existence. Meanwhile 2 Peter 3:8 reminds us that God exists outside of human time constraints, where one day is as a thousand years.

Still another theme I discovered is the brevity of life. Scripture frequently compares the length of human life to a passing shadow or a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Passages like Psalm 90:12 urge readers to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom. The Bible compares the rapid passage of time and the brevity of human life to fleeting things like a passing shadow or a breath or a fading vapor. And these speak to the swiftness of time.

Psalms 90:4 says for a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past or as a watch in the night. Psalms 144:4 says man is like a breath. His days are like a passing shadow. And in James 4:14, Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

And finally, the Bible guides us to be wise stewards. Ephesians 5:15-16 advises believers to make the best use of the time, because the days are evil. This encourages living with intentionality, grace, and focus on God's kingdom rather than wasting moments on worldly distractions.

Now, I'll be the first to admit that as I've grown older, time has certainly been flying by, and I have rarely been a good steward of the blessing of time. I'd like to say that I wake every morning and the first thing I think about is the blessing of a new day and how is God planning to use me today. But of course, I can't say that I respond to each day like this. My intentions are good and I frequently think about how I use my time to serve God by serving others.

Perhaps by thinking about how God sees time, it will help us all to become masters of time management. So, I want to challenge us all to spend some time thinking about the gift of time. Can we be better at how we utilize our time in service? Is there a friend, neighbor, or fellow parishioner that could use a bit of our time to just sit and visit? Perhaps spending some time re-bagging dog and cat food and service to the people in need at Palmer Court is how you could spend some time.

We are fortunate at Christ Church that we have seemingly endless opportunities to spend a little time in service. Life is busy, this we know for sure, but there are many times when we allow the noise and busyness of earthly life to eat into our 24. With God's help, I think I can sort out the important from the unimportant and free up some of my 24. Hopefully you can too. So, until next time, may God bless you and your efforts to share His love and kindness through stewardship.