

How to Waste Your Time in 2021 (really, not to)!

Ephesians 5:15-17 New American Standard Bible

¹⁵ So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Introduction

In January, everyone seems determined to keep their new year's resolution going strong. For instance, for a healthy year, some of us get into physical exercise such as walking, jogging, yoga, jazzercise, and so forth. Others try to eat more nutritious foods. More others start the New Year with godly resolutions such as attending services more often this year, daily prayer, getting into the Bible, and so on. All we want is to spend time wisely, productively, and efficiently, making every moment count.

This morning, I am going to talk about the ways we use our time (we all have 24 hours a day, 365 days a year). And, for the sake of some tongue-in-cheek fun (I got this idea from Rev. Chuck Swindoll's sermon), I am going to present to you five suggestions of time wasters. If you follow the suggestions I am about to make, I can guarantee that you will make no progress this year and find yourself wasting your time --big time and every minute of it!

Content

First, be unforgiving. Lengthen your list of enemies this year. Have a goal to double it up. Hold your grudge against your enemies as long as you can. Don't even try to forgive those who made it on the list this year. If necessary, never forgive them at all, insisting that it is all their faults and not yours. Say that there is nothing you can do about it. Dump your hurts on family and friends. Harbor your anger and resentment day in day out. Nurse your grievances against your enemies throughout the year forgetting what it actually does to you, spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Next, keep comparing. Compare yourself with others all the time. Be dazzled with your own successes while you pity those who have failed or not as good as you are. Take every opportunity to toot your own horn before others. If you are an underachiever, be sure to throw a pity-party, reminding yourself how bad you are. As a matter of fact, it will do the

trick for you for many years to come. If you are really into physical beauty stuff and envy the youth, count the wrinkles on your face, neck, and hands every day, but be sure to have the Valium ready.

Thirdly, doubt. Make doubt your number one priority and ally this year. Put the Doubting Thomas to shame. Doubt everything. Always doubt that God loves you. Doubt more that He is with you. Doubt that He is going to see you through this year. Question God's credentials. Question more His faithfulness. Never trust that God takes care of your daily needs. Doubt most that He is a personal God who knows what you go through or provides the way out from your temptations.

Fourthly, grumble: Complain all the time that everything goes wrong against your plans. Grumble that God's provision is never enough for you and your family. Always ask for more beyond what you need. Demand that you want them right now. Be an Ebenezer Scrooge this year. Never share God's blessings with others. Be a mean person. Be the champion of the game. Take everything for granted. Never miss the opportunity to let everyone know your absolute entitlement. Never take time to count the blessings from God. Neither thank Him. Take all the credit to yourself for your peace and prosperity. Never thank those to whom you owe your success.

Finally, worry. Be the warrior of the worries. Worry constantly. Day and night. Make a goal to be on the Guinness World Records as the number one Worrier in the world. Spread your worries to anyone and share with them that this year is going to be a disastrous year for all and for the global economy. Keep on worrying about what to wear and what to eat every day. Lose your sleep by worrying that tomorrow is going to be the end of the world. Spend more time, twice longer than usual, looking at the numbers of the stock market. Have your mood swing with those fluctuating numbers in economy.

There you have it, folks: five sure-fire time-wasters! Put them into practice and this year would be the most disastrous year of all.

But, on the other hand, who does really want to do that? No one, right?

Let's get serious this time: my point is to beware of those time-wasters!

Here's what I really want to say.

- 1) *Forgive* as if this is the last day of your life on earth. Forgive your enemies as often as you can and as quickly as you can. The sooner is the better. Whether they repent or not, forgive anyway. For your own sake, forgive. Get into the habit of it. Bless and pray for them. Do not prolong your forgiveness. Remember what Jesus said: your sins won't be forgiven until you forgive others' trespasses (Matthew 18:35).

- 2) *Stop comparing yourself with others.* Rather, be thankful and content with what you have. Praise God for the way that He has created you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made by God (Psalm 139:14). You are a wonderful work of God.

By the way, if you keep comparing yourself to others, you will find you constantly ricochet between arrogance and pity. It is not healthy. It is not pleasing to God, either. Therefore, stop comparing. Instead, dwell in God's promise knowing who you are in Christ and be faithful to His plan for you. You are bought by a price, that is, Christ's sacrifice on the cross. You are God's. You are His treasured possession. You are His steward. Focus, therefore, on fulfilling God's will and plan in your own life.

- 3) *Have faith in God.* Stop being afraid. Stop fearing, because God is with you all the time. He loves you. He will see you through no matter what happens to the world. Commit your way to the Lord and trust in Him (Psalm 37:5). Trust in Him rather than the numbers in your checkbook.
- 4) *Stop grumbling.* Train yourself not to grumble this year. Say more often the words of gratitude instead. Say thanks to God daily for His blessings. Say thanks to your loved ones as often as you can. Be content with what God has provided you. Share your blessings with others more often. Give more.
- 5) *Pray more and worry less.* Do you want to be worry-free? Try prayer. You can't change a thing by worrying. Prayer does. Prayer works. A day hemmed in prayer never unravels. When you pray, God will keep your heart and mind in His peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:6-7).

Conclusion

It is not God's will for us to waste our time. Let us make the most of our time this year by forgiving, being thankful and content, praying, and trusting in the Lord.

Let us pray.