

Life of Joseph

Lessons in Humility, Leadership and Forgiveness

Redeeming the Time

- Joseph was sold by his brothers to a passing caravan and hauled away to Egypt.
- He could have easily become depressed and discouraged, but instead he chose to make the most of his situation.
- As we shall see, Joseph's life is a wonderful example of "redeeming the time".
- What if I told you that an anonymous donor is going to deposit 86,400 pennies in a special account every day for you to spend?
 - That is \$864.00 per day which adds up to \$315,360 per year you can spend as you wish.
 - However, the account balance resets to \$864.00 each day, so whatever you do not spend of that money on a given day is forfeited.
- What if I told you that God gives you 86,400 seconds every day for you to spend as you wish?
 - You cannot save up time to use on another day, so whatever time you do not thoughtfully and diligently spend on a given day is forfeited.
 - Some of this time must be spent sleeping, but that should be part of your thoughtful use of your time.
- In Eph 5:15-16 we find an exhortation to be careful how we walk, "redeeming the time".
 - These verses are part of a passage that extends from verse 14 all the way down to verse 21.
 - So, what does it mean to "redeem the time"?
 - Why is this important?
 - How is it accomplished?
- The word "redeeming" in verse 16 is a participle of ἐξαγοράζω (exagorazō).
 - This word was used of paying a purchase price to liberate someone from slavery [Gal 3:13; 4:5].
 - This word was also used of buying up a precious and rare commodity.
 - The word carries with it the idea that the buyer has a passionate interest in the purchase.
 - This participle is in the middle voice which means we are to buy up the time for our own use.

- This participle is in the present tense which means we are to buy up the time continually.
- Here this word means to “buy up” the time by “making the most of” this precious commodity.
- The word “time” in verse 16 is the noun καιρός (kairos).
 - The word for time as in the ticking of the clock is χρόνος (chronos).
 - The word καιρός (kairos) means “season, “appointed time” or “opportune time” without any emphasis on chronology.
 - Here it means “opportune time” or “opportunity”.
- The NET Bible translates this Greek phrase as “taking advantage of every opportunity”.
- Therefore, “redeeming the time” means to take a passionate interest in living your life for Christ by taking advantage of every opportunity to glorify God [1 Cor 10:31; Eph 6:5-6; Col 3:17, 23].
- Time that has been forfeited in the past is gone and cannot be retrieved.
- Therefore, we should not dwell on or feel guilty about lost time from our past.
- We must focus on “now” and take advantage of the opportunities that can be claimed in serving Christ and glorifying God today.
- But why is it important to take advantage of every opportunity to glorify God?
- The rest of verse 16 gives us the answer – the days are evil.
- The word “evil” is πονηρός (ponēros) which refers to those things which are in opposition to that which is good.
- This manifests itself in our lives through three forces – the world, the flesh and the devil.
 - The flesh is an internal enemy.
 - The world and the devil are external enemies.
 - All of these forces work to trip up the believer who is walking in the Light and pleasing God by being obedient to His perfect will.
- The word “days” is from ἡμέρα (hēmera) and describes the chronological counting of time.
 - The days go by as time marches on and we cannot stop it.
 - The extent of our time on this earth is limited [Job 14:5; Ps 39:4-5].
 - God’s mercies are new each day [Lam 3:22-23].
- All of this should call our attention to the fact that our time on this earth is short [Jas 4:14].
- However, we must remember that God has granted to us all the time we need to do the works He has prepared for us [Eph 2:10].
- This is why it is important for us to take advantage of every opportunity.

- In the course of our lives, our days will be occupied with many things [Ecc 3:1-8].
- Therefore, our purpose must be to live out our days for the will of God rather than the lusts of men [1 Pet 4:1-3; Heb 12:1-2].
- Our very lives should become less important to us than God's will [Acts 20:24; Phil 1:21].
- So, how does one "redeem the time"?
- **Firstly**, we must awake from spiritual slumber and realize the importance of taking advantage of every opportunity [Eph 5:14].
- **Secondly**, we must be careful to walk as wise men [Eph 5:15] using the wisdom that only God can supply [Pr 2:1-6; Jas 1:5].
- This is true in regard to our walk before believers and unbelievers [Col 4:5].
- **Thirdly**, we need to understand what the will of God is [Eph 5:17].
- This recognition of God's will comes as we grow in spiritual wisdom and understanding [Col 1:9].
- There is no shortage of Bible verses that reveal God's will [Rom 12:2; 1 Thess 4:3; 5:16-18; 1 Pet 2:15; 4:19].
- **Lastly**, we must be filled with the Spirit [Eph 5:18].
- The victorious Christian life requires the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
- All born-again believers are indwelt by the Spirit, but sin in the life of the believer causes loss of fellowship/filling [1 John 1:5-8].
- Solution: confession of sin [1 John 1:9] plus walking by means of the Spirit [Gal 5:16].
- This allows us to abide in Christ where we can bear fruit [John 15:4-5; Gal 5:22-23].
- All four of these keys to "redeeming the time" require us to have our focus on God.
- We will experience circumstances in life that challenge us to stay focused on God.
- Joseph found himself in some pretty tough situations, but chose to keep his eyes fixed on the Lord rather than his circumstances.