

**Time** by Carl Beyer

Time is that ever elusive but always desirable fourth dimension we all deal with. Mathew 24:43-44. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come. This is a direct reference to time. The best of us always have it in the back of our minds that tomorrow we will do better. Tomorrow we will get our prayer life in order. Tomorrow keeps slipping away because we figure we have more time. But beware, our Lord warned us about the mismanagement of time.

With a little research we can find that our obsession with the clock is a relatively new activity. A quick search through the Bible reveals that the word “clock” appears seven times. Time, in the Bible, is pretty much irrelevant because our faith literally revolves around the desire to be in heaven for all eternity where there is no measure of time. Whoa, think about that! Eternity!! I can remember ten years ago when the kids were pre-teens and it is amazing just how much has changed. What will eternity encompass? Will we have certain routines we do for a thousand years and we then get tired of, so we do something different for the next thousand years? It is hard to fathom what could keep us interested for that long a period of time. Will we be sitting around a heavenly campfire and telling our great-great-great-great-great-great grandkids how we walked “up hill both ways in the snow to attend school”? And will they say “greatest grandpa you have literally told us that story over a zillion times”? Or will it be like some stories that no matter how many times they are told and passed on and retold always remain funny and exciting? Being a project oriented person I wonder if there will be projects that I can work on for thousands of years and have the enjoyment of seeing them to completion knowing that I have all the time in the world to complete them.

People started watching the clock with urbanization and the industrial revolution. Previously as an agricultural society we simply got up with the sun and went to bed at sundown and worked and played in between. Unfortunately, most of us are clock watchers. Even as I write this article I am aware of my day slipping away as I struggle to put words to paper. I have mentally calculated how long this should take and what my next task will be at a certain time. This, of course, makes me a fool because no one is the master of time. We can come close to mastering and planning all our time throughout the day but there will always be something that comes up to send us off track. Originally, my plan for today was to write this article, research SEOs and plan for a meeting I have tomorrow. But last night my vehicle broke so I am now sidetracked with a trip to the Toyota dealer for parts. We are not the master of time. There is always more time needed to complete our tasks.

I find it interesting that in some ways time has more flexibility now. Growing up on the farm everyone had a watch and our life revolved around time. We milked the cows at a certain time in the morning and at a certain time at night. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner were at a certain time. Today with instant messaging, email, cell phones, etc. we can simply be in constant communication and change plans as events happen during the day. On the farm, if we were meeting someone on the far end of a field to bring them lunch then we had better be there when we said or they would be left waiting for us. There was no way, other than going out to see them,

to get a message to them. So we wore watches and we kept track of how long tasks took and were expected to be where we said we would be at certain times. Today look around at teens and you would be hard pressed to find a watch on them. Ask one of my kids what time it is and out will come a cell phone to check the time.

Growing up on a farm and being a time watcher I tried always to be punctual. If you have a meeting planned with me I am a lot more likely to be there way early than one minute late. But as we all know we cannot control others so I have to learn patience. Oh, I hate that word, patience. Yes, the years mellow us, and if I somehow live another hundred years I may be blessed with patience. Wikipedia says Patience is the state of endurance under difficult circumstances, which can mean persevering in the face of delay or provocation without acting on annoyance/anger in a negative way; or exhibiting forbearance when under strain, especially when faced with longer-term difficulties. On second thought better give me those thousands of years in heaven to come close to accomplishing that definition. I am impatient for this article to be finished in the same way some of you are for it to end. Time needs to slow down so I can write faster with less time slipping away.

But age has taught me some things about time. The first and foremost I have found is that if we spend too much of our time accomplishing tasks we lose precious time spent with our family. If we become too project oriented, we find no time left for the important things that are well worth spending our time on. "Spending time" is an interesting phrase. It implies that we have a certain amount of time and that each expenditure of time brings us closer to meeting our maker. Imagine if we knew how much time we had banked. Would we spend it wisely or would we figure that with so much time left we could wait until the last bit to get right with our Lord and our family? And then would there be a clause saying time is relative? If you need two hours to wait in line at the MVD it will seem like an eternity but if you have a week with family it will go by in the blink of an eye. Would we be able to decide how much time we want to spend on sleep and exercise? If we chose to spend too little on these tasks would be penalized for improper use of time?

I have probably taken up enough of your time reading this article and left you wondering either where the time went or why did you waste your time reading this. So go forth and enjoy your time. Use it wisely. Spend time praying for your fellow man and for yourself. Go forth and take the time to smell the flowers, to listen to babies giggling, and listen to the wonderful sounds of the great outdoors. God Bless you all.