

TITLE: RESCUING YOUR TIME

TEXT: COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

INTRO: Last week we taught and counseled at Frog Rd Bible Camp. There were *tons* of bugs there! Ever wonder what the purpose of bugs is (cockroaches, wasps, etc.)? Food chain. Wasps build their homes; then what? Make more wasps! Then what? More homes. Then what? Build bigger homes! No other purpose other than food chain?

****What about us? Build homes, have kids, build bigger homes! Any higher purpose? Lk 12:13-21 – tore down barns and built bigger ones – “thou fool...!” We complain because we have to work during our younger years in order to retire in our older years, when we’re too old to do the things we could’ve done in our younger years, but we didn’t have time to because we were too busy working...!**

What a horrible view of life! We might as well consider ourselves just another animal / insect! Our lives have a higher purpose! We’ve been put in charge of some things that belong to God, and He expects us to take proper care of them.

I. PREREQUISITE – CONTINUE IN PRAYER (v. 2-4):

- A. (v. 2) Don’t stop! (1 Thess 5:17 – “Pray without ceasing.”)
- B. Watch (keep your focus on Christ, not on these other ideas and philosophies that are creeping in)
 - 1. Be vigilant – In prayer we are watching and waiting
 - 2. “Keep awake” – Mt 24:36f
 - v. 39 – “Knew not til the flood came.” Many believe there is no God (Heaven/Hell). But they *will* know one day!
 - v. 42 – “Watch therefore!” You don’t know what hour the Lord cometh.”
- C. With Thanksgiving (1 Thess 5:18 – “in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”)
 - 1. 2:7 – Rooted and built up in Christ...and the faith...abounding therein with thanksgiving
 - 2. Why should we be thankful?
 - a. 1:13-14 – We’ve been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son; sins forgiven
 - b. 1:21-22 – Though we were enemies, we’ve been reconciled; we’re holy, unblameable, & unproveable
 - c. 1:27 – Christ is in us, and is our hope of glory
 - d. 2:13 – Though we were dead in our sins, he made us alive, forgiving our trespasses.
 - 3. Thankfulness is a HUGE prerequisite to stewardship. How can we ever take care of what we’re given if we don’t recognize who it belongs to and have thankfulness for having received it?
- D. (v. 3-4) Praying for Evangelists
 - 1. Mt 9:37-38 – “the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest...”
 - 2. Here’s a specific – Paul says to pray for him, that God would open a door of the word (Eph 6:19-20)
 - 3. Do you pray for open doors to preach & teach? Why not?
 - a. Because we know this is *our* job too. Can I ask God to send out workers if *I’m* not working?
 - b. Not everyone can go to Africa or India. But we can go next door. *And* we can pray for someone to go overseas.

II. RESPONSIBILITY – REDEEM THE TIME (v. 5-6):

- A. Walk (live) in wisdom (true wisdom, not the ‘wisdom’ of philosophy) toward non-Christians
 - 1. Watch what you say and do. Non-Christians are always aware of the faults of Christians!
 - 2. 2 Sam 12:14 – David’s sin with Bathsheba – “thou has given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme”
- B. Redeeming the time
 - 1. Redeem = “to buy back; to rescue from loss”
 - 2. We have been redeemed (“through His blood” - 1:14); God has bought us back...rescued us from loss! He owns us again. We are not our own; we were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God... (1 Cor 6:19-20).
 - 3. *Nothing* we “own” actually belongs to us. (Jam 1:17 – “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...”)
 - 4. Stewardship – management of something that doesn’t belong to you
 - 5. Our time is not ours! We need to use it wisely.
 - 6. Let your speech (λογος) be always with grace, seasoned with salt
Salt preserves and enhances. Let your words preserve and enhance. Think before you speak.
 - 7. Look for opportunities to use your time wisely
 - a. Paul did. He’s writing this from his Roman imprisonment, but he’s still working (Phil 1:13; 4:22)
 - b. Christians have a responsibility to be good stewards of *everything* we’ve been given.

CONCLUSION: Stewardship is an important topic. Time does not belong to you; it belongs to God. He created it and loaned it to us temporarily. The day will come when He will want an accounting of the things He has loaned you (Mt 25:14-30). Will you be ready?