

Ordered #3
“You’ve Got the Time”
Luke 19:10
6/6/16

- I want you to imagine something this morning. Imagine what you would do if you had a bank that credited your account each morning with \$86,000 that carried over no balance from day to day. That means you were not allowed to keep money in your account, and every evening the account cancelled whatever part of the amount you failed to use during the day. What would you do?
 - o Well, if you had any sense, you would draw out every cent every day, of course, and use it to your advantage! Right? You would make sure you got every cent of it!
 - o Well, you have such a bank, and its name is TIME! Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night, you lose whatever of this you failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balances, it allows no overdrafts. Each day it opens a new account with you. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against tomorrow.

- We’ve been talking for the last two weeks about living an ordered life. There is no way to live an ordered life without looking at how we spend our time.
 - o Two weeks ago I talked about the dangers of being too “Driven.” I shared how it seems to me that there are two opposing views of life – the push to be driven or the push against being driven and instead being what we might call drifting or just kind of going through life.
 - o See, there is as much danger in wasting time as there is in being so driven that we are driving ourselves away from God.
 - o And, regardless of whether you are more driven or more drifting, time is always an issue. We have been given a certain amount of time. What does the creator of that time want us to do with it?

- I would imagine that if I asked how many feel like they don’t have enough time each day, most people would raise their hands. Am I right? Let’s see. I’ve said that more times than I can count.
 - o Yet, here’s what H. Jackson Brown said, “Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo Da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein.”
 - o There is great truth in that, right? How is it that we can live in the day we do of every modern convenience known to man in our own house and we still don’t have enough time? We don’t have to carry our own water, it comes

right in the house. We don't have to walk anywhere, we can get into a car. We don't even have to go to a library, we have vast amounts of information at our fingertips through our personal computer and internet.

- So, it can't be that we don't have enough time, it's how we use our time. **Robert Orben said**, Time flies. It's up to you to be the navigator. Now, I don't believe that fully. I think it should be "Time flies. It's up to you to allow God to be the navigator." After all, he knows how to live an ordered, full life.
 - o We found that truth in our ordered-living verse that can be resolution for everyday living in **Philippians 3:12b-14**. We have to leave things behind – our past, our mistakes, our sins, our distractions – and press toward our heavenly prize.
 - o It's also what our theme verse for this series says. Psalm 37:23 *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.*
 - o If we want God to ORDER our steps and if we want God to delight in our way, we must be careful to STEP in the direction He leads us and in His timing. Ultimately, that is what will make us "good" as we press toward the ordered steps of a good God. We do that within the amount of time given to us.

- I think a perceived "lack of time" controls most of our hearts. We think we don't have enough time. And, because we think we don't have enough time, we end up wasting the time we have!
 - o Think about it. How many things go "undone" in your life because of time? They are on your radar to do someday, but it seems like someday never comes.
 - o Now, how many of those things are good, Godly, holy aspirations...but they just don't get done? They get replaced by things that you know aren't nearly what God wants you to do.
 - o Things like pray, have a daily devotional time, worship, help others, serve at church, participate in a Kindness Outreach, join a LIFE group, take wife on date, read to kids, play ball with kids, set times just for family time – at the part, at the movies.

- Here's the reality - more time is wasted not in hours but in minutes. A bucket with a small hole in the bottom gets just as empty as a bucket that is deliberately kicked over. When we aren't in control of the dripping minutes, suddenly the hours are gone and our bucket is empty!
 - o If you want to guard God's plans for your life and if you want to fulfill the calling that God has for you that we talked about last week, then we have to utilize the time we have in the way God desires.

- There is a perception of a lack of time, but is that the reality? Or is the reality that we have dis-ordered time? Is our time focused on something that is out of order from God's plan?
 - In keeping with the water analogy, are we too busy mopping the floor to turn off the faucet? We're focusing on the wrong things.
- So, as we are examining our use of time, what are some symptoms of a leaky bucket or a faucet that needs turned off in your life? I found a list of some Symptoms of Disordered Time. See if any of them resonate in your life.
- My desk is a mess. Cluttered, unorganized, covered with papers, to do lists, unfinished work – they all make it difficult to complete one project to go to another because you don't know where anything is.
 - My car is a mess. The remains of countless #3 combos or DD coffee cups are in back, the oil is not changed, tires need rotating, it's dirty.
 - My mind is paranoid. I'm constantly afraid there's something I didn't do well or didn't accomplish.
 - I forget important things. Appointments and deadlines are missed. I forget to return phone calls or messages.
 - My energy is wasted on unproductive things. I avoid making a decision, so I put things off and waste time on things of no value.
 - I feel poorly about my work. I feel constantly under the gun because I have put things off, so then my finished work is not as good as it could have been.
 - I lack intimacy with God. I have good intentions, but little action. I have no regular prayer, study, or worship time on my own.
 - My personal relationships suffer. Days pass without significant contact with children or spouse or others. Instead, I fill my time with other things.
 - I just don't like myself, or my life. I feel so disorganized I am depressed. When life is out of order, you don't feel together. When you don't feel together, you begin negative self-talk and it causes a cycle of negative living.
- Do any of those symptoms speak about you? You are not alone. Those are the danger signs of disordered time. How does disordered time happen? Is it merely because we don't have enough time?
- I don't think we can actually say that, can we? We have the same as Helen Keller, DaVinci, Thomas Jefferson, Einstein.
 - So, then, we have to look at where does my time go so that it becomes disordered?
- Let's examine that for a bit. Where Disordered Time Goes.
- First, Disordered time flows toward my weaknesses. It goes toward the thing that you probably struggle with the most to say "no" to.

- What is your Achilles heel, you're weakness? What is the thing that you are most likely to waste your time on? Is it the internet, TV, cell phone, games, texting, hobbies, a certain sport.
 - If you don't prioritize your life, your time will flow to those things. They are things you don't have to think about, you just do. And, they can easily become idols in your life.
- So then, start with a PRIORITIZED "to do" list. Don't get stuck doing the easy stuff that is often useless all day. Instead, determine to do the difficult, useful stuff.
 - This also helps to avoid "chicken-with-head-cut-off" task management. You know, what a chicken with its head cut off does, right? It flaps around aimlessly, going here and there without any control.
 - You are in control of your time. Rather, God should be in control of your time and my time. He gave it to us. Determine to live by his priorities, not your weaknesses.
- Second, disordered time is ruled by dominant people in my life. There is a quote that says, "God loves you and has a plan for your life. But, He's not the only one." We have an enemy who is constantly trying to trip us up and keep us away from God's plan.
 - Then, there are others who will control your life and time if you leave it out of control. These might be driven people who have more forceful personalities who will drive right over you and get you to do things for them and they drive rather than care about where God is driving you. And, if your time is disordered, you let them!
 - We all know a dominant person, right? The one who it's just easier to say "OK" to rather than to stand up to. You should be saying "OK" to God and his purpose rather than a dominant person!
 - Organize your life around God's purpose for you, then you won't be controlled by dominant people.
- Finally, disordered time surrenders to the demands of all emergencies. Charles Hummel said, "*We are governed by the tyranny of the urgent.*" You don't plan where your time goes, emergencies do, deadlines do, the immediate right before you does. It's like the saying, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease." Whatever is yapping at you and squeaking at you, gets your time.
 - And remember those dominant people? Well for those people and for the people who want something from you, everything is an emergency.
- When your time is DISORDERED, you are at the mercy of the whims of others. But when you KNOW why God placed you on this earth, and you ORDER your calendar around that purpose, then you have to say "no" or "wait" to some requests.

- Now, there is tension it that, isn't there? People don't like to hear "no" or "wait." I have certainly found that to be true. Sometimes, people have gotten irritated with me because I won't meet with them right now or drop everything in an instant. I'm not available all the time. If I operated under the tyranny of the urgent, I would be running around like that chicken without a head.
 - I have got to know my priorities and order myself around why God has placed me on this earth. And, not every good idea that comes into someone's mind is within the purpose for me or for our church and not every perceived need demands my immediate attention. That's not just for me - you have to know your priorities as well.
 - So, please know this – I'm not trying to insensitive to what is going on in your life or your ideas or what you think I should do about something. I'm trying to order my life according to the purpose that God gave me so that I can manage the time he has given me to be most effective for the kingdom and for the purpose of this church. Now, I haven't fully perfected that, so please be patient with me as I will with you!
- So where is your life today? *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.*
 - Who is ordering your steps and your way? Are you allowing an undisciplined lifestyle and use of time to rob you of your eternal destiny?
- This morning, let's take a look at the World's Greatest Time Manager. Who do you think that was? Jesus! In three years, Jesus fully accomplished the purpose and mission that his Father gave him. Now, that's impressive. Most of us are still trying to figure out our purpose, right?
 - And then, just think about the pressure Jesus lived under. He was under constant pressure from friends and enemies to do this and to not to that.
 - Every word he spoke, every action he took was constantly monitored. He had virtually no private life. In order to get any private time, he had to sneak out into the wilderness in the middle of the night while everyone else was sleeping. He was probably sleep deprived because of that.
 - He had the biggest, most important job in the history of the world. Yet, when you read through the Gospels that tell of what he did while on earth, He never seems hurried.
 - You never read, "When Jesus was done teaching the people, he had another speaking engagement. So, he and the disciples rushed to their boat and rowed as fast as they could to get to the crowd that was waiting for him across the lake for an afternoon teaching. After that, having no time to eat, Jesus immediately hurried to a strategic planning meeting in the evening with his disciples..."

- Instead, it seemed like Jesus always walked slowly through the room or down the street or along the hillside. He walked slowly enough to see people, to touch people, to build relationships with people.
- How did he do it? How did he live an ordered life that was slow, but didn't waste time so that he accomplished his purpose in just three years?
- Well, first, Jesus knew His mission. He spoke it very plainly in Luke 19:10 when he said, "*For the Son of Man^[a] came to seek and save those who are lost.*" Everything he did was to seek and save those who were lost. Everything.
 - So then, he wasn't about reforming the Jewish temple. He wasn't about debating with religious leaders. He wasn't about buying a piece of property to build his own church. He wasn't about getting involved in politics. He wasn't about overthrowing the Roman government. Those were things others thought the Messiah would do, but that was not Jesus' mission.
 - He was about seeking and saving the lost. So, his ministry involved slowly walking around the hills and valleys of Israel looking for lost people and personally reaching them. Because he focused on his mission, he was able to do far greater things than reforming the broken Jewish system or overthrowing foreign rule. He changed the world forever!!
- An example of typical, mission-focused Jesus is found in Luke 18. He is taking his final walk to Jerusalem. It was an important time in Jerusalem. The Passover was about to take place. The disciples and others certainly believed that Jesus' rightful place was in Jerusalem, the center of Judaism.
 - But, as he is walking, Jesus hears the faint cry of a blind man. He stops to do what – to seek and save the lost. He stops to fulfill the prophesy that he would open the eyes of the blind.
 - To bystanders, it seemed like Jesus was misusing His time. He should have been rushing to Jerusalem. This was going to be his big moment! Obviously, they had no clue about his big moment for his big moment was his death and resurrection, not religious or political involvement.
 - So, in stopping for this one man, it irritated some people, but Jesus knew His purpose.
- The very reason we don't order our time is we don't know our mission. Or, maybe we do know our mission, but we are too afraid to step out. You can only get your mission from God.
 - You can do a lot of good things for the community and for people around you. But, those good things will never make the impact that following God's calling and mission for you will make.
 - God is the mission giver, not you. Ask God for your calling and mission and then trust him enough to follow it. It will lead you to a cross to bear, just

like it did for Jesus, but the cross you bear for your mission will change the world and expand the kingdom of God.

- The second thing that Jesus did to manage his time was that Jesus took time to receive from heaven. This might well be the biggest struggle for every believer and disciple of Jesus Christ – taking time to receive from heaven.

- When I lived in Chicago, I was involved in the singles ministry which primarily met through small groups. There were 10-12 singles small groups in the church.
 - One evening, the singles ministry coordinator, Vilma, was the guest facilitator for the women’s small group I was involved in. She was asking us about our quiet time and devotional time.
 - As we went around the room, we all woefully shared how it was hard to find time between going to school or work or other responsibilities. No time, no time. We all knew we should be spending time in prayer and Bible reading, spending time with Jesus, but alas, there was no time for us single girls.
 - Vilma nodded her head as we were speaking, as if she understood. Then, she said this, “We’re all single here. How many would like to be in a relationship?” We all did. She continued, “So, what would happen if you got into a relationship with a guy right now? It sounds like you wouldn’t have time for him. But, you know you would. You all know that if you started dating someone, you would make the time to be with him. But, for some reason, you can’t make time for Jesus, the one who loves you and you say you love him. That’s just not true. In reality, either you do have the time or you don’t really love him.”
 - Knife to the heart because we knew she was right!

- Jesus, God in human flesh, probably had the best excuse in the world for not having quiet time or prayer time. After all, he’s God, right? He was in constant communion with his Father – they were God. Natural connection, right?
 - Yet, Jesus spent 30 years in virtual silence preparing for the three years he spent in ministry. He prepared by being in communication with his Father.

- How many others experienced the same thing? Many, many of them.
 - David was anointed as king way before he ever received the throne. During that time, he was running all over the desert, crying out to God for protection from King Saul who was trying to kill him.
 - Moses spent 40 years in the desert with God before ever confronting Pharaoh.
 - Paul also spent time in the desert listening to God before becoming the greatest missionary ever in history.
 - Did you notice the desert experiences? We talked about those last week. God took his people through these desert experiences in order to prepare

them for the ordered and called life to come. He took them through a time of preparation so they could receive from him in order to be able to then serve him fully. He also was preparing them to be able to see clearly their mission.

- Even after 30 years of preparation, Jesus spent 40 days – where? – in the desert in prayer and fasting before he began his ministry. In fact, before every major confrontation, decision or event on the horizon, Jesus spent extended time in prayer.
 - He spent the night in prayer before choosing the 12 disciples. He spent the night in prayer before being arrested and crucified. The list could go on.
 - If Jesus needed to be able to withdraw into a time of prayer and fasting and even go through a wilderness experience in order to receive his mission from God and to be prepared for that mission, how much more do we need that every single day in order to receive our mission and be prepared for our mission?

- Once Jesus received from heaven, he then took time to pour into others. Instead of calling thousands to follow Him, Jesus chose to pour into only 12. Even of those 12, he had three in his inner circle that he revealed even more to, was even more real with.
 - Even with crowds pressing Him daily, Jesus took out time to withdraw and teach His disciples.
 - Jesus knew that these disciples were going to carry on his work and share the gospel of salvation through him to all the world. God had entrusted them to Jesus. So, he was deliberate and intentional to pour into them through teaching and through his example.

- Unfortunately, when our time is disordered, we put other things above pouring into those who God entrusted into our care.
 - In a 1989 survey, parents rated their inability to spend enough time with their children as the greatest threat to the family. In this survey conducted for the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Corp., 35 percent pointed to time constraints as the most important reason for the decline in family values.
 - While 63 percent listed family as their greatest source of pleasure, only 44 percent described the quality of family life in America as good or excellent. And many reported that they saw their quality of family life actually declining over the next 10 years.
 - Yet, despite their expressed desire for more family time, two-thirds of those surveyed said they would probably accept a job that required more time away from home if it offered a higher income or greater prestige.

- A disordered life will always put money and stuff above people. It always sets priorities upside down rather than how God intended them to be.
 - Jesus never, never did that. He came for us, not for anything else. I was wondering this week, if this is why he never really proclaimed to be the Messiah.
 - Jesus didn't go around proclaiming he was the Messiah because it would make his coming about him rather than about saving us. He wasn't sent to seek a title. He knew who he was. It wasn't important that everyone else know. What was important was that he was sent to seek and save the lost and that he did just that.

- That's why he took time to pour into others. Like Jesus, we need to be able to identify people we are pouring into. If we have children or grandchildren, those better well be the ones on top of our list of people to pour into. God entrusted them to us. Nothing is more important.
 - And, we should be pouring into others as well. We should always be pouring into others our knowledge of God, our experiences, our wisdom, our encouragement. That doesn't mean that you know everything. It means that you share what you know and, most importantly, you share yourself and Jesus.
 - If we look around, we will find so many opportunities to pour into others. Even right here this morning, there are children whose parents don't come here who need Christian adults to pour into them. There are newer Christians who need more mature Christians. There are those who are struggling with something who need someone who has struggled and made it through those same things. There are leaders who need to invest into others that will come behind them to lead.
 - You will have to limit yourself. You can only pour yourself into a few at a time. So, look who God has already placed around you and begin pouring!

- So what should I be doing with my time? Psalm 90:12 says, *"So teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom."*
 - Number each day. There aren't that many of them. The NLT version of that verse says, "Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.
 - Then, make those days all count. We only grow in wisdom when we realize the brevity of life and the we determine to take control of them to make this brief life count.

- When I was youth pastor, each year we would do a 30 Hour Famine. The teens were challenged to get people to sponsor them a certain amount per hour for 30 hours when they would then go without food for those 30 hours. Then, all the money we raised went to a hunger relief organization.

- This was so important to me to kind of break the entitled, lazy, consumeristic, me-focus of society. It really focused on the kids thinking beyond themselves and that their hunger was what some children experience every day.
- One year, the theme of the 30 Hour Famine became our quote for the year. It was – You have one life. Do something.
- Today, I would modify that a bit. Don't just do something. Doing something can be still the wrong thing which can still lead to a life of disorder.
 - Instead, find your life's calling, your mission. You aren't going to find it yourself. It comes from God. Your life calling is what God wants you to live out every day.
 - You will find it by receiving from Heaven and investing in the world as you pour into others. You will find it by following the example of Jesus and living life, each moment, to the full, for his purpose and his glory.
 - You've got the time!