

DEVELOPING KINGDOM TIME

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INTRODUCTION

You have been learning a lot about time management already. You have been making weekly and monthly plans and attempts at daily schedules. It gets confusing sometimes, doesn't it? What is the purpose of it all? Does God really want us to be that time conscious? Perhaps it is surprising but nearly every book in the Bible talks about time management; let's look at a few examples.

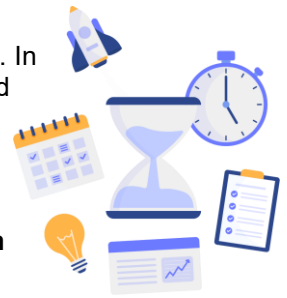
Proverbs instructs "*Go to the ant you sluggard.*" Ants make good use of their time. And what about the proverb about the lazy man who does not sow in season and when harvest comes he looks, but his field is empty. And consider Proverbs 31 about the woman who rises early and uses her time and resources wisely? Or David! He was not allowed to build the Temple, but he used his time wisely and gathered resources so that Solomon could begin as soon as he became king. God also made some very specific time prophecies about living 430 years in Egypt, and other detailed time prophecies in Daniel. Look at creation! Each day had its task including the seventh on which God rested. In the New Testament God directly instructs us to "*Redeem the time for the days are evil.*" Furthermore we are encouraged to "*Do everything as unto the Lord.*"

So God is concerned about our time use. He said, "**Seek you first the Kingdom and its righteousness.**" Some of our time then must become Kingdom time and, what is more, our Kingdom time must become our **primary time** -- our most important time. Secondly we must have some time for ourselves, for earthly things, not heavenly. That would be our secular time or time used for secondary less important things. So let us take a new deeper look at what time management and scheduling are really all about. We will begin by looking at where "**prime time**" (Kingdom time) comes from. What makes it so important, so "**prime**?" And what will it accomplish?

I. KINGDOM TIME

A. Kingdom Time — What is it?

Time management becomes much easier when we have a strong focus and purpose. In fact there is a direct relation between them. Without a purpose there is no focus and without a focus there is nothing to manage. Therefore people truly called by God tend to have a stronger purpose than those who are not called. After their calling, Isaiah, Paul and others expressed, “Woe is me if I do not proclaim God.” Immediately they became time conscious and their time was divided into two parts — Kingdom time and secondary time. Kingdom time is **time that is invested in the Kingdom of God—in eternity.**



Secondary time is the time that is taken up with the ordinary aspects of daily life. All people everywhere need time to eat and groom, to take care of themselves and to travel. So what makes some people and some countries so outstandingly successful while others barely survive? Successful people have learned to streamline and minimize their secondary time so that they can devote the bulk of their time to accomplishing that specific thing for which God created them.

“Kingdom time” is those strategic hours of the day in which we are directly involved in the great commission and the example of Jesus to multiply. It becomes “Kingdom” because we have that focus in our life. The more deeply we are convinced about certain important issues, the less we will tend to deviate from our primary objective in life. God the Creator had a plan and a purpose for each of His creations and He saw that it was very good. **God has a precise plan and purpose for you.** You are His creation and it is your responsibility to live up to God’s desired standard for your life. This requires awe and love for God as well as hatred and an abhorrence of sin and evil. The result is a strong sense of the Lord’s calling upon your life, which means knowing His will and having a life’s purpose.

B. Kingdom Time — What do we do with it?

Kingdom time is the time we are engaged in accomplishing our life purpose. Secondly, it is the time when we are actively living out God’s job description for us. As God’s children, as called ones, as spiritual workers, these two should be inseparably intertwined. Purity as a spiritual worker comes if we ignore working for a living and dedicate ourselves to only work for the Lord regardless of our material provisions. John 6:27. The higher the level of dedication the more “Kingdom-focused” our time becomes. A worker does not have to be time selective, he just “puts in time” until a project is completed. A spiritual leader has several projects going and different situations to manage, so he must divide his time and prioritize or create “Kingdom” time and lesser “secondary” time. It becomes his responsibility to be mostly engaged in “Kingdom” tasks. This calls for using his time wisely. The more he can be engaged in “Kingdom” tasks the more successful he will be. A couple illustrations of Kingdom tasks would be leading study groups, unbelievers’ groups, training coaches, etc.

C. Kingdom Time — Where does it come from?

Kingdom time **must be created by you!** God has given you about 70 years to create your own lifestyle. As an image of God you are to be a creator also, a creator of your own small universe which surrounds you. God created all things out of chaos. So you too must create Kingdom time out of the chaos that exists around you. And just as satan opposed God so will he oppose you also. It will not be easy to live effectively for God, but it can be done. You can be an overcomer and in this lecture we would like to help you to become a victorious Kingdom time manager. Here are some points that we want to cover: 1) We will look at how to make personal lifetime objectives. 2) Then we will help you develop an Annual Ministry Plan.

II. FORMULATING A LIFETIME PLAN

The 1st thing is to list your personal lifetime objectives / desires

Step one in living a purposeful functional life is writing down your own life objectives. What things would you like to do? What do you hope to accomplish with your life? What results do you want to see happen in your

life and **when**? Do you want to be a businessman or a pastor? Perhaps first you want to get education, then get married, then become a preacher and finally become a missionary. /// 1-1 /// Many of us have unwritten desires that can become reality if we write them down and turn them into concrete objectives. As you consider your goals and priorities, continually ask yourself, “Which things do I need to do to be successful in God’s eyes?” Spend time in prayer as you wrestle with this.

The 2nd item is to list your long term ministry objectives / desires.

Step two for a spiritual worker is to write down his Ministry objectives. As a New Life for Churches team member your desire is to grow effective church leaders that will multiply churches. That takes many steps and requires detailed planning. Whom do you want to disciple? How much time do you have for that? How long do you want to be a coach? /// 1-2 /// Perhaps later you want to become a church planter.

The 3rd Make a chronological list by combining the two above objectives.

Step three is to amalgamate these two (your private life goals and your ministry goals) and formulate a set of plans for your life. Such plans often follow a natural sequence so they are best listed in a chronological sequence. The bottom line should be a summary statement of the total — describing your final objectives. /// 1-3 /// Presumably these “final” objectives will match your “initial” objectives. This final summary statement is a deathbed type statement that would enable you to look back upon a life well lived.

A sequential statement of your life’s objectives forms the basis for what you want to accomplish this next quarter or the coming year, etc. It includes the future, like the next 2-3 years, and a “5 year” plan or some other concrete segment of life in which a certain set of activities are slotted that you want to accomplish.

Make sure that your goals are written down in a place where you can refer to them regularly and where they will not be lost. Your computer or phone are best. You should have goals for your personal life, your family, your ministry, and team or your groups.

Remember: Any goal that is worth achieving is worth writing down!

PRAYER —Matt 6:33 Seek first what may be God’s desire for you. Search Jesus’s desire by adding a Bible verse to each objective. God is looking to strengthen those who are sold out to Him 2 Chron 16:9 For that purpose it is well to make a paper copy you can lay before the Lord from time to time and seek His Face for renewed fresh insights.

II. USING YOUR TIME-MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO CREATE KINGDOM TIME

Now take a look at how you can tap into *God’s Great Time Plan* and discover His precious Kingdom time for your life on a daily basis. To have quality daily Kingdom time calls for two things; a) **designing an accurate plan**, and b) **daily obedience to your plan**. Each year add **3** days to EASTER to seek God’s mind for the coming academic year. To determine God’s **guidance** begin by reviewing your purpose statement and Ministry goals and prayerfully design an annual plan. Then divide your annual plan into the 4 seasons of the year and see what needs to be accomplished each season. Now the seasons can be broken down accurately into 12 monthly steps. /// 3 /// Each time you come to a new month you design a detailed set of weekly plans. To make each week a fruitful event in your life you prepare a daily schedule. If you obey your daily schedule you will have a productive week, a fruitful month and eventually a successful spiritual year. So accurately planning and obedience to your plan will bring the heavenly results — Kingdom time — you are hoping for. Let us take a quick look at each element.

A. Designing an Annual Plan

By using your Ministry purpose statement and your Ministry Chronological Objectives you can produce your Annual Goal Statement which is plotted out on a yearly calendar. A yearly calendar is a “**track statement**.” It tells us what lies ahead within one set of 4 seasons. All of God’s creatures intuitively follow such a calendar. It is a step-by-step plan of the near and foreseeable future. A calendar provides a general overview. Often time managers have a large wall calendar on which they plot events to happen and things to take care of.

Such an annual calendar plan or Annual Overview is an incentive device enabling us to prepare accurately for the future. Physically we know the seasonal temperatures that lay ahead, mentally we know the requirements that lay ahead, etc. This helps us to comprehend and logically think about a certain quarter. This

helps us to shape 12 one-month steps, /// 4 /// each of which is based upon and follows the previous step and prepares for the next step. Twelve-month calendars accurately designed and followed ensure a Kingdom year well lived.

B. Designing a Quarterly Picture

An Annual Overview can best be broken up into quarterly segments. God made four seasons. Think about how nearly all of our thoughts follow that pattern: spring, summer, fall and winter. God started creation with light, sunshine and the shaping up of things, and rested at the end. The Jewish calendar also started with spring and ended with winter — this is God's pattern. Our January one date has heathen origins and is not very functional. Except for technical details such as tax and leases it is not a practical system. Likewise many professions have their own seasons — busy time, slack time, vacations, etc

The provincial and local church ministries follow God's pattern by beginning in the springtime with planning. In the spring accurate detailed long-range plans and sincere commitments need to be firmly made in order to have a smooth running fall and winter ministry. Like the physical seasons spring is preparation, fall is harvest. In spring fields are carefully prepared; they are measured and divided according to what the farmer wants to produce. Seeds are prepared, the soil is tilled, plants are set out. After this spring work the expectations for the harvest flow out of what was prepared and how well it was prepared during the spring time. The very same is true of the Mentoring ministry. Stable student groups need to get the next course, some groups will be changed or amalgamated. Coaches need assignments, expansion into new regions or new churches must to be planned, course materials need to be ordered. With well-made spring plans, organization and administration, the fall will be productive in many people's lives. Without this spring work the spiritual activities will produce meager results in the fall time and churches will be disappointed with the results. The quarterly picture has some overlaps depending on the different levels of ministry. The Mentoring and discussion group ministries falls into quarterly pictures as follows:

April, May and June For coaches and students it is a finishing up time for the present academic year. In most normal years students will be completing their 3rd course for that year. For leaders and coordinators it is *general* strategy time for the next academic year and it is a specific *detailed* strategy time for next autumn's ministry. It is recommended for most student groups to continue course studies until June 15 or 20 like other official university programs.

June, July and August cover the annual overlap from one academic year to the next academic year. This covers planning, summer sessions, vacations, interviews and briefing for staff and preparation for new ministries. For coaches and students June often is part of their summer program. For leaders June is often included in their strategy and finishing up time. Hence this overlap. August 20 is when leaders need to be "back in the saddle" to prepare for the new academic year beginning in September.

September, October, November. The new academic year begins for coaches with a Coach- Workshop at the end of August or the very beginning of September. The earlier in September you can begin the academic year with your students the better. These months are the backbone months for a discipling ministry and they cover three parts: conducting a regular course, leading several workshops, and starting numerous groups of unbelievers for church expansion. These activities usually follow 12-week system and may extend into December.

December, January, February form the winter quarter. December and January signal changes. These changes are chiefly due to varying course lengths plus the various Christmas and New Year celebrations. New groups are formed and new courses are started. For leaders this is the time for mid-year analysis. From the middle of December continuing over Christmas until the end of March is another key time segment to accomplish a second round of discipleship work and some courses.

March is a month signaling the end of winter and the beginning of spring. It is a time of change. Physically March does not fit either the winter weather or the spring weather. It can be bitterly cold or quite mild. For the ministry March also stands alone — it does not fit into any quarter really. Therefore March is an outstanding time for short breaks and motivational incentives such as pastors' or student training sessions. March marks the time to look back over the academic year and make the last adjustments in order to finish well. It is important however to keep your student groups moving as much as you can throughout this month. The official academic system calls for finishing 3 courses sequentially each year, one each quarter — fall, winter and spring.

A quarterly picture is formed very simply by having on hand a temporary set of 3 monthly calendars. /// 3-2 /// They form a scratch-pad type system on which you gradually fill out the monthly tasks in greater detail, the furthest month being the most general and the closest month being the most detailed. This will prepare you for the next step of designing a monthly calendar.

C. Designing a Monthly Strategy

A monthly strategy, using a Monthly Calendar, is designed by the following steps:

- a) Begin by looking over the annual plan and quarterly tasks and mark down the items slotted in for this particular month.
- b) Next review the Monthly Calendar for the past month (the month about to be completed) and note if the design for this present month sequentially and accurately follows the previous month's accomplishments. This is a **"reality check."** Example: you plan to start this month with Galatians lesson 9 but by reviewing the past month you find one group did not complete lesson 8. So you have discovered a "reality gap." Make appropriate adjustments and if necessary reflect those on your Annual Overview.
- c) Third, add all appropriate items from your other management tools.

D. Designing a Weekly Plan

A Weekly Plan consists of two basic time divisions, primary time (which is Kingdom time) and secondary time.

An accurate Monthly Calendar forms the basis for your primary (Kingdom) time. Your weekly primary time is adjusted to reflect weekly changes, like a holiday or a new bus schedule, etc. Your weekly plan should also reflect details such as: which lesson to cover in your discussion seminar, what detailed written questions to prepare, sermon and lecture preparation time and deadlines.

Your **"To Do" List** and other management tools provide the basis for compiling your Weekly Plan.

E. Designing a Daily Schedule

Each evening review your primary (Kingdom) goals for the next day and write in the details. Don't just mentally agree to them, but literally turn to the task to be done (wherever you have it written down) and refresh yourself with the details of that task. Illustration: "Tomorrow morning design and write down the practical questions for the discussion seminar."

The **"To Do"** List and other management tools provide the basis for compiling the details of your secondary time slots.

CONCLUSION

The **secret** of time management is deciding what you want to accomplish, placing these things in a chronological schedule so they will be accomplished on time, and *making yourself stick to that schedule*.

Laying in the soft, green, summer grass gazing into the deep blue sky scattered with little white puffs of clouds while eating freshly-picked, delicious strawberries designing an annual plan may not look that difficult. But beginning with a life's purpose, requiring 10 or so sequential purpose statements for a lifetime, makes one fully aware of his **dependence upon the Almighty**. Choosing a Christian lifestyle philosophy, choosing one lifetime mate to love and cherish because God hates divorce, and choosing how to conduct one's ministry in a holy and blameless way requires dependence upon the Holy Spirit. **Out of the heart flow the issues of life**. When God discussed with Solomon his life's purpose Solomon chose wisdom and God approved that it was a good beginning. Nevertheless, Solomon did not end well. It is necessary to do serious annual updating and make corrections in one's personal plan. Add to this your spiritual ministry, which in many cases requires you to lead and thus plan for a team of co-workers, and it becomes very serious business. It takes a lot of prayer, fasting, spiritual counsel and advice and deep, deep strategizing and accurately placing each detail on your Overview, your quarterly plans or monthly calendars. **It requires a reality check**.

A good annual plan requires a week **with God on holy ground**.

A good monthly calendar takes a **day of fasting and prayer**.

A good weekly plan can be designed only after an **hour of prayerful meditation**.

Daily you will need about **15 minutes** to obediently follow the Lord's leading and then fill in the details for tomorrow.

Everything rises and falls on leadership. Leadership is influence. Influence does not originate with a minute detail on your daily schedule. It comes from your life purpose, which finds its ultimate expression in how obediently you fulfill each detail of your daily schedule. **God expects a holy, fruitful lifestyle. He designed you and your circumstances for that.** May God be with you as he was with Stephen! With a face like an angel's he saw Jesus standing on the right side of God. Stephen finished well. I hope you will do the same. **God has given you His precious gift of time.** Go and redeem it, my dear brother. Farewell. Farewell.

Practical assignment

Completed

- Formulate a lifetime plan

 - Turn your unwritten desires into concrete objectives by writing them down.
 - Write down any other goals or **ambitions** that you have.
 - Write down your Ministry objectives.
 - Ask God if there are any other things He would have you do.
 - Combine the lists with the most important priority at the top and the least important at the bottom. Make sure that you spend time asking God which ones should go where.
 - Break your list up into steps that are measurable.
 - Write out a life purpose statement, which summarizes and encapsulates all of your objectives. Try to make it into *one simple* sentence.
 - Bring your purpose statement and your list of priorities to the next meeting to share with your leader.

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- Make an annual overview

 - Make a copy of the Annual Overview that has been provided.
 - Using the life purpose statement that you have just made and the steps that you developed to reach your goals, fill in your Annual Overview (calendar) with the steps that you need to take this year.
 - Bring your completed Annual Overview to the next meeting to share with your leader.

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Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.