

INTRODUCTION

In The Fellowship of the Ring (J.R.R. Tolkein), Frodo and Gandalf discuss the burden of bearing the ‘one ring’: “*I wish it need not have happened in my time,*” said Frodo. “*So do I,*” said Gandalf, “*and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.*” Every day contains 24 hours=1,440 minutes=86,400 seconds...what do you do with the good gift of time that God has given to you? Will you invest it in the eternal?

SCRIPTURE

¹*So the men of Kiriath Jearim came and took up the ark of the Lord. They brought it to Abinadab’s house on the hill and consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the Lord. ²The ark remained at Kiriath Jearim a long time—twenty years in all.*

1 Samuel 7:1-2

GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are the top three things in your life that are time-wasters?
2. Read 1 Samuel 7:1-2. Eleazar was consecrated (set apart, dedicated, sanctified) to guard (keep, protect) the ark. He did this for 20+ years. How would you feel doing the same thing for 20+ years?
3. Read Psalm 90:12 and Ephesians 5:15-16. What do these passages encourage? What do you think this means?
4. In Expositions of Holy Scripture, Alexander Maclaren states that, “*Redeeming the time does not merely mean making the most of moments, but means laying hold of, and understanding the special significance of, life as a whole, and of each succeeding instant of it as the season for some specific duty.*” How does this statement change/enhance your answer to the previous question?
5. Read Matthew 6:33 and 2 Corinthians 8:5. What comes first?
6. First means in our hearts and priorities, but the Bible also has many references to seeking God first in the morning. Read these passages aloud: Psalm 5:3, Psalm 59:16, Psalm 88:13, Mark 1:35. Do you believe it is necessary to start your day with God? Why or why not?

Study Questions for Community Groups

7. In Tyranny of the Urgent, Charles Hummel wrote that “Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important.” How do you live a life governed by God’s priorities (seeking HIM first) rather than life’s demands?

APPLICATION

Seek God FIRST. Set a standing appointment with Him and stick with it. Read Scripture, pray, and worship.

Consider joining a Fellowship Team and impacting someone for eternity. Visit our SERVE page at www.fellowshipcleveland.com/serve.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Read Luke 10:38-42. Which sister do you empathize with most: action-oriented Martha or contemplative Mary? Why?
2. Martha was *doing* nothing wrong—she was serving others. So why did Jesus rebuke her?
3. What does Jesus say about Mary’s choice in Luke 10:42?
4. The word “part” (*meris*) in Luke 10:42 can also be translated “portion”. Read Numbers 18:8-29 and Lamentation 3:23-24. What insight do these verses give you into WHO the “good part” is, and how we should view our time with Him?
5. It is interesting that the Luke and Numbers passages both reference food – Martha was preparing a meal for her guests, and God was giving the Levites instructions on what offerings were allowed to be eaten and which were holy. Read Psalm 34:8. How do you taste and see that the Lord is good? (See Psalm 34:1-7, Psalm 119:103, Hebrews 6:5, and 1 Peter 2:3.)
6. Jesus said that Mary had chosen the “one thing”. David also spoke of “one thing” in Psalm 27:4. What is your “one thing”?