

The Deceptiveness of Time

1. Perception of Time's Passing

A. God has so ordered the physical world to operate on time-basis where we function only in the present moment. **Illus:** VCR tape: FF/REW to edit. Can watch self or children on tape but cannot change what happened.

B. We use up present moments at a constant pace; what is *relative* about the passing of those moments is *our perception*:

1. **Illus:** Game clock: 2 min. left, team w/ ball behind by 4 pts. Perception?

Illus: Longest trip: 2 miles to hospital after Kaitlin cut finger.

2. Jesus affected by perception - Lk 12:49-50.

3. Our *perceptions* affect our *behavior*.

C. Life a "vapor": Js 4:14; Moses (age 120) - Ps 90:10; David (70) - Ps 39:4-6, 11.



1. Young (10-20) - No reflection of past, limited view ahead.

2. Young adult (20-30) - Some reflection on past, limited view ahead.

3. Middle age (30-50) - More reflection on a past which seems brief; much greater awareness of time left and goals unachieved. A sense of urgency sets in.

4. Mature age (50-70) - The terminus is now clearly in view; most of life is now accomplished and looks very brief. Life beyond more of a reality.

2. Redeem the Time - Eph 5:15-17

A. We are responsible to God for how we live our lives, *moment by moment*. We must "manage the clock," apportion time so that it is not squandered. At stake:

1. The development, training of our children - "Quality time" is a deception.

2. Learning the Bible - *When* are you going to invest yourself in gaining a proficient knowledge of the Scriptures? **Excuses:** Memory, education, teacher, etc.

3. Doing kingdom work - Visit elderly, encourage weak, teach young women, seek lost, attend gospel meetings, singings, patch marriages, relate to teen agers, etc.

4. Little things: getting to worship on time.

B. Obstacles resulting in wasted time:

1. Spending too much time in **past** (guilt, grief, lamentation, nostalgia) - Ecc 7:10; Ph 3:13 (*"forgetting those things which are behind ..."*). Too much time in the **future** (ambition, worry, anticipation/hope) - Mt 6:34. *The past is gone, done; the future can unexpectedly change for good/bad before it gets here.* **Illus:** Astronaut, dejected over poor eyesight; NASA changed rules, accepted. Took photo of Albuquerque from space ... dream realized!
2. Procrastination - *The **illusion** that later is better.* Occurs primarily with undesirable, unpleasant tasks. Felix - Ac 24:25.
3. Clutter - Many of us overcommit ourselves to activities which are not wrong in and of themselves but **cumulatively** crowd out God and His activities. Some lack enough self-discipline to say "no" and allow time for spiritual work.

C. We are admonished to *"understand what the will of the Lord is"* - Eph 5:17.

3. Length vs. Quality

A. Time is not a factor in God's dealings with man - 2 Pet 3:8. It matters not **to God** if a human being lives 20 or 90 years. What matters is **how** he/she lived.

B. John the Baptist died ca. 31 years of age; Jesus ca. 33; Josiah 39; Hezekiah 54. All these fulfilled their God-given responsibilities; God used them for His purposes and then replaced them with others.

1. *No man is indispensable!* We aren't irreplaceable. God can find someone else to do our job.
2. We must deal with our present circumstances faithfully, obediently, giving God the honor and glory for our lives. If elderly, sick, incapacitated, young, janitor or corporate executive.
3. Are you **now** all God wants you to be? Doing what He wants you to do?

C. The import of the word **"now"** - Urgency, action: 2 Cor 5:20-6:2 - *"now is the day of salvation ..."*.