

Noble Moments

*But the noble man devises noble plans;
And by noble plans he stands.*

Isaiah 32:8

We have been learning biblical principles for business planning, implementation and time management. We learned that our business planning should begin with a God-centered purpose, which we referred to as our *Noble Plan*. Then we considered what kind of counsel to seek in this planning process in a study entitled *Noble Counsel*. Next, we discovered planning and project management principles modeled by Nehemiah in our *Noble Planning* study. Finally, we studied how to diligently implement our Noble Plans in a study entitled *Noble Diligence*. So ... now each of us has a perfectly balanced daily and weekly plan to "forcefully" make progress on God's plans for your business, while also meeting our other responsibilities, including taking care of ourselves ... right? ☺

So what happens when that perfectly balanced schedule is interrupted? Should we brush it aside, diligently pressing on to get every one of our action steps accomplished on today's "to do" list?

In today's study we are going to look at how Jesus handled interruptions, and what God's Word has to say about this aspect of "time management."

Matthew 20:29-34

29 And as they were going out from Jericho, a great multitude followed Him.

30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"

31 And the multitude sternly told them to be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"

32 And Jesus stopped and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

OBSERVE

Following these principles of forceful action, diligence, daily focus, good routines and balance, we will make progress on our projects to accomplish the BHAGs that God has given us and fulfill our noble purpose. But what about interruptions, unexpected things that intrude on our packed, but perfectly balanced, daily schedules? Lets discover what the Word of God says about this, looking first at the example of Jesus.

Leader: Read the CONTEXT box and then read Matthew 20:29-34.

CONTEXT

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem for the final days of His earthly ministry, culminating with His death, burial and resurrection. He will shortly ride into the city on a colt, thus fulfilling Zechariah 9:9, Psalm 118:26, and on the exact day prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. If there was ever a man who didn't need interruptions to His schedule, surely it is Jesus on this day of all days.

33 They said to Him, "Lord, [we want] our eyes to be opened."

34 And moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.

Isaiah 35:5-5

5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah.

Ephesians 5:15-17

15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise,
16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.
17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

OBSERVE

Contrast the response of Jesus and the multitude to the interruption of the two blind men. What did Jesus do, and why did He do it?

Leader: Read Isaiah 35:5-6, which is a prophecy of the Messiah's healing ministry, marking "Then the eyes of the blind will be opened"

Does this passage suggest another reason that Jesus responded the way that He did?

DISCUSS

What principles do we see in Jesus' response to an interruption that we can apply to our daily schedule?

Leader: Read Ephesians 5:15-17, saying aloud and marking "making the most of your time."

OBSERVE

The "therefore" leading this passage refers to warnings given about walking as unwise men. How does this passage describe the walk of a wise man? *Hint: Look for the three ideas presented.*

According to this passage, why should we walk as wise men? What do you think this means?

Is this an exhortation to manage our time efficiently? Lets dig further into the word translated "time" in order to properly interpret this verse.

Leader: Walk the group through the steps beginning on page 6. If available, bring the actual resource materials to show the team.

OBSERVE

So, based on what we have just learned, what is the Greek word translated "time" in this verse? What does this word mean?

Now what do you think God meant when He wrote this exhortation to believers?

Leader: Return to step 4 on page 6. Then read Colossians 4:5-6 and say aloud and mark "opportunity."

Colossians 4:5-6

5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, [as it were,] with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

INSIGHT

Opportunity in Colossians 4:5 is the same Greek word "kairos" that was translated *time* in Ephesians 5:16. The NIV translated "kairos" as opportunity in Ephesians 5:16 also. It is sometimes helpful to study how other translations render a verse.

Did this cross reference increase your understanding of what this word, and also Ephesians 5:15-17, means?

DISCUSS

Now what do you think this verse means? Did you think it meant something else before?

What is the principle of this verse that applies to our planning and management of our daily schedules?

Leader: Ask one or two members to share briefly an example of a "kairos" moment that interrupted their daily schedule. Then direct the group to the chart at the end of the lesson and explain how this relates to interruptions to our schedule.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES DISCOVERED

- Handle **interruptions** with grace and discernment, for it may be the most important thing God has for you all day.
- Create **margin** in your “chronos” schedule in order not to miss your “kairos” opportunities, which are your **Noble Moments**.

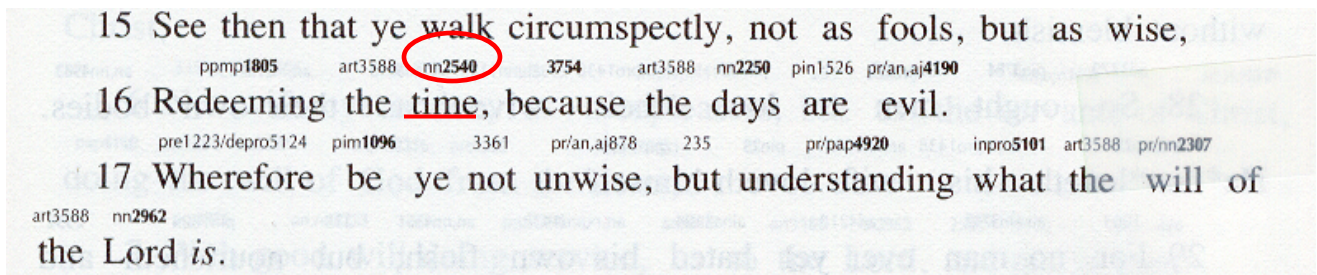
BUSINESS APPLICATION

1. Evaluate your schedule and add “margin,” even if you must take things out of your schedule. I believe you will find that following the principles we learned last lesson on diligence will create margin without getting less done!
2. Give your full attention to each and every “kairos” opportunity presented by God, even if it is an interruption.
3. Evaluate your “normal day,” your “normal week.” What % of your time is spent dealing with Emergencies, Distractions, Diversions, and Obligations. Do you think this is the right breakdown? What are you going to do about it?

Word Study Steps

Step 1: Find the number code for the word we are studying which identifies the corresponding Greek word that was originally used. The two most common sources of this information are (1) a resource like the Complete Word Study New Testament written by Spiros Zodhiates; or (2) an exhaustive concordance in the same translation you are using for study.

This is an excerpt of the passage we are studying in Ephesians chapter 5 from the Complete Word Study New Testament. The numbers above the words identify the corresponding Greek words in a Greek dictionary.



A second way to find the number that corresponds to the original Greek word (known as the Strong's number) is to look up the word in a concordance. A concordance is like a dictionary which lists the words in alphabetical and Bible order (providing a portion of the verse in which a particular instance of the word is used.) It also provides that important "Strong's number." This excerpt was taken from the New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible because we have been using the New American Standard as our study translation.

All of the verses listed in the excerpt use the English word "time," but notice that five different Greek words were translated using the same English word.

when the fulness of the <i>t</i> came,	Ga 4:4	5550
However at that <i>t</i> , when you did	Ga 4:8	5119
the gospel to you the first <i>t</i> ;	Ga 4:13	4387
But as at that <i>t</i> he who was born	Ga 4:29	5119
for in due <i>t</i> we shall reap if we	Ga 6:9	2540
at that <i>t</i> separate from Christ,	Eph 2:12	2540
making the most of your <i>t</i> ,	Eph 5:16	2540
praying at the same <i>t</i> for us as well,	Col 4:3	260
that in his <i>t</i> he may be revealed.	2Th 2:6	2540

There are actually 25 different Greek words translated “time” in the New American Standard Bible (NASB). This is another excerpt from the Complete Word Study New Testament that provides this kind of information.

time -s — 744, 1074, 1208, 1441, 1597,
1909, 2034, 2119, 2121, 2235, 2250,
2540, 3195, 3379, 3568, 3819, 3999,
4218, 4287, 4340, 4455, 5119, 5151,
5550, 5610

Step 2: The Greek word (Strong’s number 2540) is *kairos*. The excerpt below was taken from yet another Bible study reference, The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament.

Notice it is not the word for chronological time, which is *chronos* (5550). Rather, it is a deeper word meaning season, opportune time, and in this particular verse, opportunity.

2540. καιρός, *kairós*: gen. *kairoú*, masc. noun. Season, opportune time. It is not merely as a succession of minutes, which is *chrónos* (5550), but a period of opportunity (though not necessity). There is really no Eng. equivalent to the word *kairós*, appropriate or opportune time, which when used in the pl. with *chrónoi* (times), is translated as “seasons,” times at which certain foreordained events take place.

(I) Fit time, proper season.

(A) Generally equivalent to opportunity, occasion (Acts 24:25; Rom. 13:11; 2 Cor. 6:2; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5; Heb. 11:15; see John 7:6).

(B) Appointed time, set time, certain season, equivalent to a fixed and definite time or season. Followed by the gen. (Matt. 13:30, “in the time of harvest,” i.e., the usual season; 21:34, 41; Mark 11:13; Luke 1:20; 8:13; 19:44; Acts 3:19, “times of refreshing” or appointed of God; 2 Tim. 4:6; Heb. 9:10; 11:11; Sept.: Eccl. 3:1ff.); by the gen. of person or a pron. as “my time,” as appointed of God, e.g., in which I am to suffer (Matt. 26:18) or accomplish any duty (Luke 21:24, “the times [or seasons] of the Gentiles”; John 7:6, 8; 2 Thess. 2:6; Rev. 11:18). In Gal. 6:9, “one’s own due time” (a.t.); see 1 Tim. 2:6; 6:15; Titus 1:3. With a demonstrative art.

Step 3: Take the definition you have found back to the verse you are studying on page 3 and see if it clarifies your understanding of the text.

Step 4: Sometimes it is helpful to look up other verses that use this same Greek word since Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture. Lets look up Colossians 4:5.

Priority Chart

I M P O R T A N T	<div style="background-color: #00FF00; display: inline-block; padding: 2px 5px;">OBLIGATIONS</div> <i>Respond</i>	<div style="background-color: #FFFF00; display: inline-block; padding: 2px 5px;">EMERGENCIES</div> <i>Repair</i>
	<div style="background-color: #FFFF00; display: inline-block; padding: 2px 5px;">DIVERSIONS</div> <i>Retreat</i>	<div style="background-color: #FF0000; display: inline-block; padding: 2px 5px;">DISTRACTIONS</div> <i>React</i>
URGENT		

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Importance relates to our noble purpose and noble plans, our obligations before God, the “kairos” of our days.

Urgency relates to “chronos,” the pressing necessities of our 24 hour days.

Ideally, most of our time will be spent responding to the “obligations” of our Noble Plans. Evaluate the urgent interruptions, discerning the difference between those that are important and those that are not. Create margin for those “kairos” moments by eliminating the “root cause” of the “chronos” distractions and emergencies.