

Living Life One Day at a Time

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”
Psalm 90:12

- I. The IMPORTANCE of Living One Day at a Time Reviews the Brevity of Life and Our Duties.
 - A. Life is extremely short, accelerates its passing with time, deceives us into slothfulness, and ends before we are ready (Genesis 47:9; Job 7:6; 9:25-26; 14:1-2; 16:22; Psalm 39:4-5; 49:11-13; 89:47; 90:9-10; 102:11; 103:15-16; 144:4; Luke 12:19-21; James 4:14; 1 Peter 1:24).
 - B. We have a clear duty to honor God with our short lives (Deut 10:12-13; Ecc 12:12; Rom 12:1-2).
 - C. God gives talents to each of us according to ability (Matthew 25:14-30). What is your return?
 1. Do you want your life to be a success? If so, how are you making sure that it will be so?
 2. Has your life thus far been a success? If not, what can you do to change your approach?
 3. We should want to live the second assumption of faith – God is, and He deserves our lives.
 4. How do we accomplish this great goal? Is there a way to live that God has prescribed for us?
 - D. We should number our days – living them one by one – to apply greater wisdom (Psalm 90:12).
 1. Here is one of the great practical texts of the Bible for wise and successful living by saints.
 2. It is a lesson we must learn; life is lived one day at a time; and the goal is applying wisdom!
 3. Every wise man will realize the brevity of life and value each day as a gift from his Creator.

- II. The BASIS of Living One Day at a Time Considers Divine and Human Reasons for Doing So.
 - A. God created all things by working daily and having the evening before the day (Genesis 1:1-2:3).
 1. God could have created all things at once, but He did a portion each day (Exodus 20:11).
 2. God saw the evening as preceding the morning in making a day (Gen 1:5,8,13,19,23,31).
 3. The evening is preparatory to the day, rather than the evening being recovery from a day.
 4. The Jewish day began at 6:00 P.M. We take our day and night calculations from the Romans.
 - B. A number of productive days is superior to sudden efforts or long plans to accomplish much.
 1. Why did God divide our lives into twenty-four periods of time known as days (Gen 1:14)?
 2. Since He could have created in less than a nanosecond, His choice was for our profit.
 3. The natural creation follows this rule: canyons, dandelions, anthills, pearls and beavers: they all accomplish major projects a very small amount at a time. They persist with small efforts.
 4. The Scriptures warn against haste in working to obtain economic security (Prov 28:19-22).
 5. Consider savings. Large sums are hard to find, but small amounts saved regularly add up.
 6. See how the lives of men are often measured in days rather than years (Gen 5:4; 6:3; 25:7).
 - C. A day should be seen as a twenty-four hour period with the evening preparatory to the day.
 1. God incorporated this perspective into the life of Israel by commandment (Lev 23:32).
 2. Instead of using the evening for recovery, this perspective sees it as time for preparation.
 3. This creates a very real difference of approach to life when it is followed conscientiously.
 4. Sleep is preparatory to the rigors of the day following, not merely recovery from that day.
 5. If plans are not made the night before, there is great likelihood days and time will be lost.
 6. The goal is to control and plan our lives, rather than allow our lives to control and crush us.
 - D. God has clearly warned us against presumptuous thoughts about longer periods of the future.
 1. Due to short and fragile lives, we are not to assume about tomorrow (Pro 27:1; Jam 4:13-16).
 2. Due to the evil of each day, Christ would have us not worry about tomorrow (Matt 6:34).
 3. Due to our evil hearts, God would have us exhort one another daily, Today (Heb 3:12-13).
 4. Due to His providence, God would have us seek our bread from Him daily (Matthew 6:11).
 5. Due to daily trials, God strengthened Paul by His Spirit day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16).
 6. Due to the weakness of the flesh, God calls us to fear Him all the day long (Prov 23:17).
 7. Due to human variability, God calls us to take up our cross daily to follow Him (Luke 9:23).

8. Due to the scarcity of time, we are to redeem what we have left to use (Ephesians 5:16).
9. Due to the emotions of the flesh, we are not to be angry past sundown (Ephesians 4:26).
10. Due to love of sinful trysts, God measures us by our daily performance (Ezekiel 18:19-24).
11. Due to the trial of our faith, the day of Jesus Christ will come as a thief (2 Peter 3:10-14).
12. Due to the rapidity of life, God tells youth to remember Him in their early days (Eccl 12:1).
- E. Scriptural examples of godly and ungodly men show each day to be an important opportunity.
 1. David emphasized each day (Ps 44:8; 71:8,15,24; 84:10; 96:2; 118:24; 119:97,164; 145:2).
 2. Felix and Agrippa both wasted an important day by not acting that day (Acts 24:25; 26:28).
- F. Human experience recommends such a perspective, if we are to have victory over evil habits.
 1. Procrastination is that sin of slothfulness that justifies putting off duties until sometime later.
 - a) "Work expands to fill the time available for its completion" is beat by the limit of a day.
 - b) If we deal with days instead of weeks, months, or years, we cannot always defer work.
 2. Depression often results when we consider long periods of time instead of shorter ones.
 - a) If we look to the future in years, then a given goal seems almost impossible to achieve.
 - b) If we look to the past in years, then a given shortcoming seems to show total failure.
 - c) Long lengths of time seem very much out of our control, but we can manage a day.
 3. Major projects seem quite impossible when they are viewed in total, but not in daily steps.
 - a) "Little" accomplishments on a daily basis will build discipline and get you moving.
 - b) A little daily progress maintained consistently will always beat large, sporadic efforts.
 - c) Time must be thought a friend, not an enemy. It can make small efforts big victories.
 - d) Remember the examples from the natural creation given above that utilize small efforts.
 - e) Athletes do not obtain gold medals by crash methods. They train regularly over time.
 - f) Students are not educated at once. They study small concepts over many years.
 - g) Savings do not amount to great sums at once. But time and consistency will work.
 4. Progress is distorted over time. Hopefully anyone can show some progress in a lifetime.

III. The DEFINITION of Living One Day at a Time Presents the Principles Controlling Such a Plan.

- A. It requires initiative to get started Today, and it takes perseverance to continue daily effort.
 1. David said, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments" (Psalm 119:60).
 2. Paul taught that we are Christ's, if we hold our confidence fast to the end (Heb 3:6, 14).
- B. A true adage states, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." Keep this in memory.
 1. Long-term goals must be reduced to daily goals. We can accomplish much day by day.
 2. A life built on many days of successful accomplishments will be a very successful life.
 3. A life is no more complicated than a series of individual days. Live them one at a time.
 4. A consistent daily life of meeting daily goals will result in a life meeting life's goals.
 5. It has been said, "Inch by inch, life is a cinch; yard by yard, life can be hard." Believe it.
 6. What is your return on God's talent? Consider the superiority of daily compounding.
 7. If you are going to do everything with your might (Eccl 9:10), you must work efficiently.
- C. A job well done for one day is what God seeks. Continuing the same way is true godliness.
- D. It is a right perspective. Was I a good father TODAY? Was I a good wife TODAY? Was I meek TODAY? Did I pray TODAY? Did I avoid temptation TODAY? Did I work smart TODAY?
 1. Do not worry about last month, last week, next month, or next week. Work for today only.
 2. We should seek to "number" our days – count them one by one and make them count.
 3. Avoid deception by assuming you have more time (Ps 49:11-13; Eze 12:26-28; Lu 12:19-21).
 4. Abraham was told to sacrifice his son Isaac. He rose early in the morning (Genesis 22:3),
 5. Each day should be lived as if Jesus Christ would return that day (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11).
 6. Instead of "What have I done with my life?" we should say, "What have I done today?"

- E. The future is important. Remember, “Don’t sacrifice the future on the altar of the present.”
 - 1. However, while you work to save the future, make sure you do not waste the present.
 - 2. Instead, by properly using the present time, you will guarantee a successful future.

IV. The BENEFITS of Living One Day at a Time Provides the Effects You Should Clearly Realize.

- A. Consider examples of problems we all face that can be overcome living one day at a time.
 - 1. Is your weight a problem? Surely you can control your eating habits for a single day?
 - 2. Is your job frustrating? Make each day a new challenge to diligently accomplish things.
 - 3. Does child training intimidate you? Trust God and work to make each day count for them.
 - 4. Are you praying as regularly as you desire? Set daily goals for prayer and maintain them.
- B. God does not suffer forever. Living one day at a time avoids judgment (Prov 29:1; Rev 2:21).
- C. Do you wish confidence in old age and at death? Then we must fight day by day (2 Tim 4:7).

V. The APPLICATION of Living One Day at a Time Presents the Steps to Get Started Today.

- A. We should organize our lives around a daily plan that fits with our long-term objectives.
 - 1. While a written daily schedule is not necessary, most people find it very profitable.
 - 2. The daily plan should reflect our long-term goals and be the primary time we think ahead.
 - 3. A plan for the day prepared in the evening will be superior to a plan made in the morning.
 - a) Once you get involved in a day, there are always numerous things demanding attention.
 - b) A plan in the evening should especially include goals for the first hours of the next day.
 - c) It is much easier to be more objective the night before the goals are to be completed.
 - d) It encourages an attitude during the night of preparation, rather than recuperation.
 - 4. Comparisons to plan should be made day by day. God emphasizes what you are doing now.
 - a) Such comparisons should be made at the end of the day before planning the next day.
 - b) The “historians” should emphasize this point to forget their errors in the ancient past:
God does not care you wasted some hours a few days ago, if you have confessed the sin.
 - c) It is much too easy to measure ourselves over a long time: we can easily generalize.
 - d) If you miss your goals on a daily plan basis, then your loss is only days, not years.
- B. Maintain a perspective of the present as being important time, not the generally vague future.
 - 1. This will most likely be a new approach to living. Life will become a series of planned days.
 - 2. Instead of thinking how you want to be a better father, you should be a better one Today.