

Theology of time Management: Glorifying God with the Resource of Time

Pastor Joel Albright - FBC - Adult Sunday School for Spring, 2021

Lesson #5 - Formulating Wise Short-Term Plans

INTRODUCTION

Q: What are your takeaways from the two articles & Scripture focus?

- Article 1 - *Simple Tricks for Productivity* - By R.C. Sproul
- Article 2 - *Productivity: Redeeming Your Time* - By R.C. Sproul
- Article 3 - *7 Thoughts on Time Management* - By Doug Wilson
- Scripture - Colossians 4:2-6

Q: What are Pastor Joel's goals for our lesson today?

1. To convince you that you should regularly, carefully and strategically plan your week.
2. To instruct you on the marquee principles behind the importance of planning your week.
3. To explain the process of planning your week.
4. To demonstrate the process of planning your week.

I. THE CASE FOR PLANNING YOUR WEEK

4 reasons why you should regularly, carefully, and strategically plan your week

A. You need a strategy for managing your discretionary time

- Strategic weekly planning helps you to identify how much discretionary time you have.
 - 168 hours per week. 56 = sleep; 50 = commute/work; 21 = Eating. This totals 127 out of 168. This leaves still 41 hours per week as discretionary time. "A person's entire contribution to the kingdom of God may run on how those hours are used." - J.O. Sanders
 - Remember the quadrants? Remember the practical assignment from last week?
- Strategic weekly planning helps you to redeem the discretionary time you have -
 - "Don't despise how much can be packed into small corners..." (Wilson)

B. You need a mechanism to integrate your roles/vocations

- This mechanism lets you reserve role-blocks into the plan for the week.
- This mechanism helps you to keep primary roles and responsibilities from being crowded out.
- This mechanism allows you to ask the right questions about your week.

- What should we NOT first ask? What things are vying for my attention the most.
- What SHOULD we first ask? “What things are most important for me to be doing and how do I make sure that I am able to move ahead on them.”

C. You need spaces to integrate productive routines

- Routines create a freedom
 - “A schedule is more liberating than restricting. The schedule should be a friend, not an enemy. It helps us find the rhythm for a God-glorifying productive life.” (R.C. Sproul)
 - People tend to work best from routines.
- Routine creates a framework - “You tame time through a routine” (Perman)

D. You need accountability to measure laziness & diligence in time management

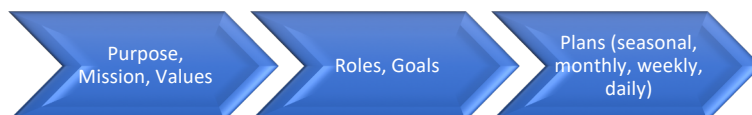
- Weekly planning gives objective evaluation - When you measure what you ought to do with your week, you can identify what is time well spent, what could be time better spent, what time lines up with mission and goals.
- Weekly planning gives objective articulation - How can you specifically identify what needs more or less attention?

II. THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND PLANNING YOUR WEEK

3 critical principles behind planning your week

Principle #1 - Responsibility

- Scripture commends diligence and responsibility - (Proverbs 6:6-11)
- Plan in a way that promotes proactivity, not passivity.
 - Proactivity - Write down what you ought to do. Schedule. Pray. Trust providence. Submit to Spirit. Love God. Love people. Go into your week with a deliberate plan.
 - Passivity. Let’s week come to you without consideration of what you ought to do.
- Plan in a way that prioritizes roles and responsibilities - Put the big rocks in first.
- Plan in a way that reflects God’s purpose, mission and values.



- Plan in a way that prioritizes quadrant #2

Principle #2 - Reliance

- Prayerfully depend upon the Lord with your planning

3 Reasons to carefully and prayerfully plan

- 1) Because God is the one that makes plans effective. (Prov. 16:3)
 - 2) Because planning without God is foolish. (James 4:13-17)
 - 3) Because prayer is the antidote for our tendency to worry about tomorrow. (Matt 6:25; Phil 4:6)
- Consider your weekly schedule as a prayer list. If these are the most important things, should we not pray for them? Pray through roles. Pray through responsibilities. Pray through goals. Pray through schedule.
 - Let this careful and prayerful planning produce a Spirit-submitted, love-motivated flexibility. Seize opportunities.
 - "Learning to let love inspire and drive our planning likely will mean fairly rigid blocks for our proactive labors, along with generous margin and planned flexibility to regularly meet the unplanned needs of others." - Mathis
 - "Every interruption is a chance to surrender your work to the only one who can bless your work..." Doug Wilson

Principle #3 - Rhythm

- "Free yourself from the thinking that your life is a one-shot deal. You don't set it up and forget about it. It demands dedicated attrition on a regular basis. Constantly refine." (Challies)
- "Your system will function well when you make time for this review and it will begin to sputter when you do not."

Consider the following Planning Rhythms



- Seasonal Rhythm - What should you do during a "seasonal rhythm"?
- Monthly Rhythm - What should you do during a "monthly rhythm"?
- Weekly Rhythm - What should you do during a "weekly rhythm"?
- Daily Rhythm - What should you do during a "daily rhythm"?

III. THE PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUR WEEK

4 essentials for your regular, careful and strategic weekly planning session

- It is essential that you have a set time and place for this planning session.
- It is essential that you have the right goal for this planning session. "You should want to be like a fruitful tree, not efficient like a machine." (D. Wilson)
- It is essential that you NOT skip this planning session. ... even when you are busy, and especially when you are busy! You can't NOT do this.
- It is essential that you have a helpful tool for this planning session.

6-step method for planning your week

Step #1 - Pray

Q: How do you do this?

- Pick a key passage and pray through the passage (Some suggested passages: Ps 90:12-17; James 4:13-17; Eph. 5:15-17; Col 4:2-4; Matt 6:25-33)
- Ask God to help you identify what is most important to focus on this week
- Submit each role/block/day to the providence and goodness of God
- Ask God to help you to Love Him with all your heart and to reflect God's love to others.
- Ask God to bless the week
- Insert this prayer step throughout whole process.

Step #2 - Review

Q: What should you review?

- You should review your mission, purpose, roles, goals and values: Your planning for the week should be the fruit of your goals, values, and mission, roles, and responsibilities.

Step #3 - Brainstorm

Q: How do I do this?

- Show up to your weekly time and place for this.
- Categorize roles/combination of roles/responsibilities
- Ask questions of each category. Think thoroughly, selflessly and strategically.
 - What should I do this week, based on my role/responsibilities that is forward thinking - big goal oriented? (Quadrant 2)
 - What should I do this week, based on my role/responsibility that is more urgently essential? (Quadrant 1)
 - What are things that only I can do? What are things that I can/ought to delegate?
 - What would I like to do this week, based on my role/responsibility?
 - How can I creatively do good? How can I uniquely serve someone in need? How can I surprise based on this category?
- Answers to the above questions should result in unprioritized lists.

- Prioritize that list before you start putting those things into the schedule for the week.

Step #4 - Schedule

Q: How do you schedule?

- Plug in regular good habits (ex: Bible reading, exercise, etc.)
- Plug in regularly scheduled routine blocks (ex: major work blocks, already scheduled routines, like church services, etc.)
- Plug in already scheduled appointments
- Identify the discretionary times within your week, then go to work managing this time the best. Look for corners, windows, doors...
- From your brainstorm list, plug in priorities until the puzzle is completed.

Step #5 - Communicate

- Communicate with people to set up times. Schedule appointments
- Delegate things that can/should be delegated

Step #6 - Do

- You've planned the work, now work the plan! Now you get to create your daily list!
- At the end of each day, see how you did. Don't go to bed until the day has been reviewed and the next day is recalibrated.

IV. THE DEMONSTRATION OF PLANNING YOUR WEEK

A. Seasonal Rhythm Demonstration

B. Monthly Rhythm Demonstration

C. Weekly Rhythm Demonstration

D. Daily Rhythm Demonstration

V. THE CHALLENGE FOR THIS WEEK

A. Scripture Focus: Read/Study Matthew 6:25-33 and Philippians 4:4-7. Observe and meditate about how God wants believers to rightly think about and respond to anxiety and worry.

B. Weekly Article: Read "First Things First: Make the Most of Your Mornings" - By David Mathis & "God's Sovereign Plans Behind Your Most Unproductive Days" - By John Piper.

C. Practical Assignment:

- If you don't already have an effective planning/scheduling tool, purchase one.
- Revisit your mission, roles, goals, core values.
- Tonight, plan your week using the 3 principles and 6 step process from above.
- Each night this week, do a daily review and adjusted plan for the next day.
- Schedule a seasonal review for some time prior to going into the Summer months.
- Don't get discouraged. This is life-long process. Find joy in the continued growth of this process. Ask for help.