

It's Time to Go!

A. Introduction:

- "We are vaguely wretched because we are leading half-lives half-heartedly." Walter Kerr
- "I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10
- Whatever you're going to do with your life you'd better get on it because time is running out.
- If you're not doing something worthy with your life it really doesn't matter how many days you've left.
- Reflection:
 - When was the last time you laughed until tears poured from your eyes?
 - During the past year, have you really wept deeply at anything?
 - Has your heartbeat faster at the sight of beauty?
 - Have you seriously thought about the fact that you are going to die someday?
 - Instead of interrupting or even waiting for your turn to speak, do you really listen when people are speaking to you?
 - Whatever you're going to do with your life you'd better get on it because time is running out. The other side is, if you're not doing something worthy with your life it really doesn't matter how many days you've got left anyway!
 - What are you going to do with the seasons before you, the school year before you – more pointedly the ministry year before you? How will this year be any different for you?
- Like somebody with a bad cold, many have lost their sense of taste and smell. They know something is wrong with them but not wrong enough to do anything about it. They are letting things run their course. They are just getting by – drifting.
- And remember this – we never drift closer to God.

B. God gave every one of us the power to choose.

- The Bible says that nothing affects your life more than the choices that you choose to make.
- Our choices have profound affects on our lives. They show what we really think is important. What or who we really love.

C. Five things You need to know and do.

1. S = Stop Making Excuses.

- "Society's default mode basically says:
 - Everything bad in your life is somebody else's fault. Blame the environment. Blame the educator. Blame your parents. Blame anybody else, but it's not your fault."
- You're never going to have fulfilled life and you're never going to make your life count if you have that attitude.
- "You must stop making excuses are each responsible for our own conduct." Galatians 6:5
- Three kinds of people:
 - Accusers.
 - "Then Sarai said to Abram, 'It's all your fault! I gave you my slave, but she has been hateful to me ever since.'" Genesis 16:5
 - Excusers.
 - "A lazy man is full of excuses." Proverbs 22:13
 - Choosers.
 - "Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey Him and commit yourself to Him, for He is your life." Deuteronomy 30:20

2. E = Engage with God.

- We truly cannot live fully unless we make a space for God because the greatest privilege of our lives is engaging with our Creator.
- A person living fully is one who makes choices based on the rightness of it, as an expression of the character and the heart of God, regardless of personal consequence or outcome.

- *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."* Matthew 4:19
- To become followers of Jesus Christ, we have to get up from where we are, and we have to leave everything and follow him. Christianity is the movement that follows where God is going.
- Two certainties that matter as we follow God. Believing we will live life to the full each day.
 - We each have one of two standings before God either as a treasured child of the most high God or not. You have either turned your life over to Jesus by accepting his sacrifice in your place or you have not. You have either yielded control of your life to God's plan and purpose or you have not.
 - We each have one of two futures. We are all created to last for eternity. We get to choose where we will spend it.
- We already know how the story ends – the end of history has already been written. The kingdom of God wins. Christ conquers. The Church prevails.
- The ultimate tragedy in life isn't when a person dies. The tragedy is when a person dies and has never fully lived. The ultimate tragedy is a life wasted. A life never engaged fully with God.

3. I = Invest in now!

- Most of us are plagued with thoughts only of the past or of the future.
 - When we focus on the past, we are usually wrestling with things like uneasiness, regret, guilt or anger. These emotions prevent us from moving to the here and now.
 - Others live mostly in the future, and the future is filled with 'what if' or 'if only'. We're always looking ahead to the next thing instead of to right now.
 - 'Someday' is a dangerous attitude in this context.
- *"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* Matthew 6:34
- *"This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."* Psalm 118:24

4. Z = Zealously love

- *"Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God."* Ephesians 5:2
- Reflection:
 - Reflect on 10 people who are close to you, stop to think back over the past month. How much time have you spent developing and enjoying those relationships?
 - Are you able to slow down and pay quality attention to others?

5. E = Exude Generosity and Servanthood.

- *"...we must help the weak."*
- When you find yourself seeing someone in need, someone who is hurting, someone who is suffering, step in because you recognize that person matters to God, that you have yet to lay eyes on someone for whom Jesus did not die.
- *"...we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"* Acts 20:35
 - a) Giving yourself away delivers you from you.
 - b) Giving yourself away links your two stories together.
 - c) Giving yourself away imitates God's heart
- 'and then some.'
- *"Give and it will be given to you."* Luke 6:38
- God's picture of how we are to orient our lives is to be people who look like Jesus. People who live to give. People who give themselves away in His service. People who believe at the core of our existence that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

D. It's Time to Go. SEIZE EACH AND EVERY DAY!