A LIFE THAT COUNTS
#2: The Stewardship of Time
October 21-23, 2006

[1]Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all
generations. [2]Before the mountains were born or you brought
forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are
God. [3]You turn people back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, you
mortals." [4]A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has
just gone by, or like a watch in the night. [5]Yet you sweep people
away in the sleep of death—they are like the new grass of the
morning: [6]In the morning it springs up new, but by evening it is
dry and withered. [7]We are consumed by your anger and terrified
by your indignation. [8]You have set our iniquities before you, our
secret sins in the light of your presence. [9]All our days pass away
under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. [10]Our days
may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures;
yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly
pass, and we fly away. [11]If only we knew the power of your
anger! Your wrath is as great as the fear that is your due. [12]Teach
us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:1-12 TNIV

Introduction: As we continue to study the Christian doctrine of Stewardship–"the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care" (Webster's)–let's consider the stewardship of time. In a very real sense, time is the only thing that we have; it can utilized to build relationships, serve God and others, earn money, perform labor, and the like. Since we are mortal creatures, each of us has a limited amount of time "entrusted to our care." Therefore, using time wisely is the first task of responsible stewardship.

I. The Nature of Time
   A. Time is a limited commodity; we only have so much.
   B. Time is a measured commodity: 24/7/365.242199.
   C. Time belongs to God and cannot be recreated.
   D. Time is unstoppable.
   E. Time cannot be managed, in reality.
   F. We manage ourselves and our opportunities in order to budget time; this is stewardship.

II. The Creator of Time
   A. In every generation, God is our only constant dwelling; God is eternal, everything else is temporary. (v.1)
   B. God created time to measure earthly life, and thus exists outside of the time/space continuum. (vv.2,4)
   C. God has limited our time on earth in order to make us aware of eternity: we are but dust/grass. (vv.3,5)
   D. Every single new day is a gift from God. (v.6a)
   E. The end of every day is a reminder of the impending judgment of God on our stewardship of time. (v.6b)
   F. No moment is hidden from God's eyes. (vv.7-8)
   G. The passage of time reminds us of our mortality, so we mourn the loss of time. (v.9)
   H. No matter how long our lives (perhaps 70 or 80 years, if we are healthy), time passes quickly. (v.10)

III. The Stewardship of Time
   A. We are judged by God for the way that we use our time, and God's anger is powerful. (v.11)
   B. We must learn to measure our lives according to God's standard, to "number our days." (v.12)
   C. "The heart of wisdom" knows how to use time wisely.
   D. Budgeting time.

Conclusion: Jesus teaches us that we can determine where our hearts are by examining where our treasure lies. In that "time is money," we can determine our attachments by examining our engagements. The first priority of good stewardship is living as people created and chosen not for time, but for eternity.

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