



### Is MY Christianity a Waste of Time?

# <u>Psalms 90:12</u>: (NASB) So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

Did you ever notice that there never seems to be enough time? For some reason or other, we are always rushing around to do the things we need to do and we seem to scarcely be able to even take a breath in between this and that. Our lives are often harried, and as a result we tend to feel unfulfilled and empty at the end of a day. So, how are we spending our time? What are we doing - or not doing - with that precious commodity of time to either fulfill or fritter away our lives? As Christians, are there different and specific guidelines for spending and investing our time than for others? Are there ways to simply and efficiently reorder and reclaim our time? Where do we start? What do we do?

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"Only Time," (Last verse) Enya

Who can say when the roads meet That love might be in your heart And who can say when the day sleeps If the night keeps all your heart Night keeps all your heart Who can say if your love grows As your heart chose Only time And who can say where the road goes Where the day flows, only time Who knows? Only time Who knows? Only time

What are the important things for the Christian? Bible study, prayer, mediation, fellowship and service. How do we not lose focus on the most important things and how do we fit them into our busy lives? Christianity "done right" is a full-time job.

No one will give you a high-quality life; you have to *make* a high-quality life. Understanding and absorbing the simple truth of Time Management Tool #1 sets us up for paying attention to where our time goes.

Most of us, even though we are "busy," waste more time than we care to admit.





Rewind (1)) Introduction, The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans), zefrank1

These are roughly 28,835 jelly beans. I counted out 500 of them and used those to weigh the rest. In this pile, there is one jelly bean for each day that the average American will live. You might have more beans in your life, or maybe less, but on average, this is the time we have. Here's a single bean. It's your very first day. A special day, but kind of a rough day on everyone involved. Add 364 more and you have the first year of your life. Now for a sense of scale, here are your first fifteen years: 5,475 days. Which brings us to the threshold of adulthood. And at that moment, this is the time that we have left.





Let's get into a lesson about the passage of time and our need for a vision from the context of our theme verse...

### Time is bigger than we, as imperfect humans, can even imagine:

Psalms 90:1-12: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. (Obviously beginning with Adam)<sup>2</sup>Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

All ages past to all eternity moving forward, God was, is and shall be. He is the same in character and power throughout and the same God in the Old and New Testaments.

<sup>3</sup>You turn man back into dust and say, Return, O children of men.

This is another reference to Adam and the result of his sin (From dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return.) This Psalm gives us the sober sense that God is



# BIG! Our lives are very short when compared to the incomprehensible longevity of God.

<sup>4</sup>For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night.

Remember that God said Adam would die *in the day* he sinned? But Adam lived 930 years according to <u>Genesis 5:5</u>. This and other Scriptures liken a day with God to a thousand years. So, in God's perspective, Adam died "in a day." This gives us a *long view of time* outside of our present reality.

### What does God do now with those thousands of years since man sinned?

<sup>5</sup>You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; in the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew. <sup>6</sup>In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew; toward evening it fades and withers away. (Time passes on.) <sup>7</sup>For we have been consumed by Your anger and by Your wrath we have been dismayed. <sup>8</sup>You have placed our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your presence. <sup>9</sup>For all our days have declined in Your fury; We have finished our years like a sigh. (People say all the time, "Is this all there is?" This can cause a feeling of despair.)

Sin has taken its toll on the human creation.

## We now have VERY limited time. What should we be focusing on - what is worth our time?

<sup>10</sup>As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years, yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; for soon it is gone and we fly away. (Our time is very short.) <sup>11</sup>Who understands the power of Your anger and Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? (There is urgency to make our lives of great value.) <sup>12</sup>So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

*Number our days* - take notice of them, count them. In the eyes of God, if we *number our days* and focus on them clearly, He is glorified when we have a measure of wisdom.



If you use your time without valuing it, it withers away. We need to use our very short lives to give God great glory and honor.



Now that we see how precious our time is, what is the next step in using it more effectively?

(1) Days spent - part one, The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans), zefrank1

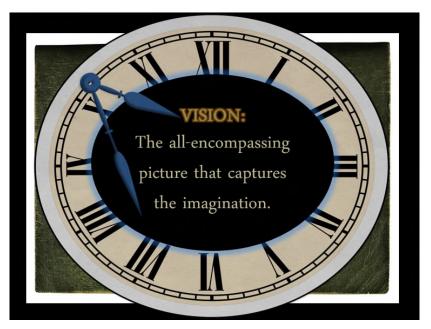
• And this is, on average, what we will do with all that time. We will be asleep for a total 8,477 days. If we're lucky, some of that time will be sleeping next to someone we love. We will be in the process of eating, drinking or preparing food for 1,635 days. We will be at work, hopefully doing something satisfying, for the equivalent of 3,202 of those days. 1,099 days will be spent commuting or traveling from one place to another, maybe a little bit more if you live in LA. On average, we will watch television in one form or another for a total of 2,676 days.



Time shrinks! So far we have focused on the necessity of knowing what our life is about.

We need several things to help us make the best investment of our time...

VISION is about the struggle surrounding what you decide to invest your time focusing on versus the default behavior of spending your time only seeing what the world sets before you. The distractions of life can take you off course. Rick and Jonathan had a vision to work together to serve the Lord, and He gave them the opportunity to witness on the radio and now podcast.

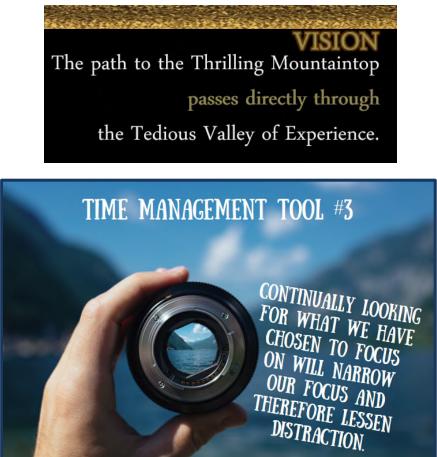




Proverbs 29:18: (KJV) Where there is no vision, the people perish:

### Our vision of a visionary:

<u>Hebrews 12:1-3</u>:(NRSV) <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.



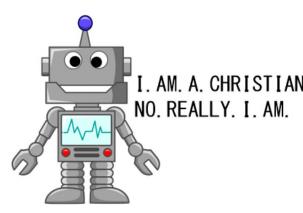
Carry the vision of the "mountaintop" with you.

(1) Days spent - part two, The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans), zefrank1

• Household activities, like chores and tending to our pets and shopping will take another 1,576 days. And we will care for the needs and well-being of others, our friends and family, for 564 days. We'll spend 671 days bathing, grooming and doing all other bathroom-related activities. And another 720 days will go to community activities like religious and civic duties, charities and taking classes. After we remove all those beans, this is what remains.



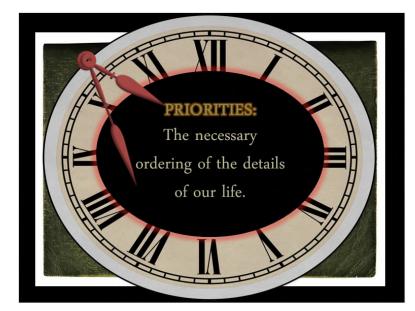




Ordinary people think merely of spending time. Great people think of using it. — Author Unknown

I. AM. A. CHRISTIAN. NO. REALLY. I. AM. If we are not investing our time properly, our Christianity is just a waste. It will be an external label that does not have any transformative affect. Make the vision of your Christianity viable every day!

Our vision is the big, panoramic picture of our passion and purpose. Someone once said, "The devil is in the details." If our vision is like the compass that gets us focused in the right direction, then our priorities are what help us determine which roads to take to get us to our "true north."



Establishing PRIORITIES is a function of mindful behavior. To be mindful is to be thoughtful, clearly aware and positioned to powerfully act on that awareness.

### God IS mindful:

<u>Psalms 8:4</u>: (KJV) What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that Thou visitest him?

For God to be *mindful* of man means that He loves us and plans for us.



<u>Psalms 115:12</u>: (KJV) The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

### God's mindfulness is proven in His plan!

We need to make a plan and be purposeful in our lives.

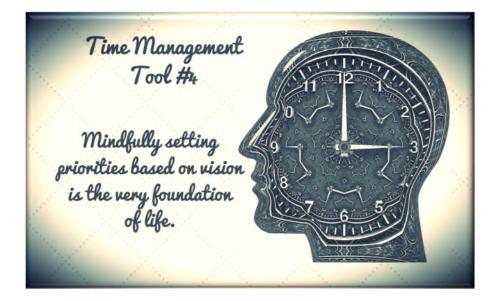
# For us to be mindful (the obvious opposite of mindless) means a deliberate investment of time and effort into identifying what requires our mindfulness and why:

<u>2 Peter 3:1-7</u>: (YLT) <sup>1</sup>This, now, beloved, a second letter to you I write, in both which I stir up your pure mind in reminding you, <sup>2</sup>to be mindful of the sayings said before by the holy prophets, and of the command of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior, (make a deliberate effort and be mindful...) <sup>3</sup>this first knowing, that there shall come in the latter end of the days scoffers, according to their own desires going on, <sup>4</sup>and saying, Where is the promise of his presence? For since the fathers did fall asleep, all things so remain from the beginning of the creation;

We have to be mindful because we will be tested. If we are not ready, we will stumble and fall when tested and our Christianity will fall apart. We must have a captivating vision and then be mindful to understand what is most important and why.



We may not get priorities right the first time, but as long as our vision is strong and scriptural, we can reset. Start over. Try again. Do not give up.





### Now that we have VISION and PRIORITES in place, what is the secret to living them?



"JoyfullandTriumphant" writes: Here is something that helps me to use my experiences, especially the really challenging ones THAT SEEM TO LAST FOREVER, in perspective: <u>1 Peter 5:10</u>: (NAS) And after you have suffered for a little while ("a little while" means

'puny' in the Greek!), the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. This PUNY time of challenge and suffering is fleeting, and unrepeatable...and so it is precious and may we use it to His glory!



"ICARUS70" writes: My favorite theme is <u>Colossians 3:23</u>: (NLT) Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

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PRIORITIES
The appearance of effortless service
comes ONLY as a result of practice, pain
and perseverance, all of which must
result from the right focus and activity.

This is important to remember when we look at others who seem to "have it all together," as if everything comes naturally to them.

Invest your time into mindful prioritizing.

When we have truly established our PRIORITIES based on the big picture of the VISION, there will naturally develop a deep sense of URGENCY, for nothing will be more important than following through on that which has proven to be most important.



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Urgency is in contrast to panic or rushing through something. Being urgent is not necessarily fast; it is doing something deliberately, with focus and mindfully with the clear-cut objective of what has to happen.

(In Jelly Beans), zefrank1) What do you do with the rest, The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans), zefrank1

This is the time that we have left. Time for laughing, swimming, making art, going on hikes, text messages, reading, checking Facebook, playing softball, maybe even teaching yourself how to play the guitar. So, what are you going to do with this time? How much of it do you think you've already used up? If you only had half of it, what would you do differently? What about half of that? How much time have you already spent worrying instead of doing something that you love? What if you just had one more day? What are you going to do today?

When you "value" something, you set it apart from other things. Value our moments because they can be a part of making our Christian life exciting, inspirational, full of growth, and an example to others.

### Urgently strain forward towards that which is most valuable:

<u>Philippians 3:12-16</u>: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; <sup>16</sup>however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

Even the Apostle Paul - with all his focus, energy and discipline - had to intentionally *press on*. He ran forward to make continual progress towards his goal. He did not assume that just because he was the Apostle Paul with a special calling that the prize was automatically his.

Here we can see the VISION and PRIORITIES in place and the deep URGENCY to fulfill them. Without URGENCY, VISION and PRIORITIES are merely theoretical - kind of like New Year's resolutions.

Too often we get stuck in the "idea" of Christianity rather than the life of a Christian. If we want that Christian life to not be a waste of time, we need to grab hold of what it means to live the life of a true Christian - the urgent investment of your time.

This can be difficult after a long day. Some of our greatest challenges lie in that, for most of us, the world is not as physically demanding as it used to be, but it seems to be more exhausting!

The Old Testament frequently uses the words *slothful* and *sluggard* to contrast idleness with urgency. These words are defined as "indolent" which means an "inclination to laziness."



<u>Proverbs 6:6-11</u>: (NASB) <sup>6</sup>Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her ways and be wise, <sup>7</sup>which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, <sup>8</sup>prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provision in the harvest. <sup>9</sup>How long will you lie down, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? <sup>10</sup>A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest <sup>11</sup>your poverty will come in like a vagabond and your need like an armed man.

Examples of what *not* to do should be received as loud and obnoxious alarms to vacate the premises! Do not live the life of a sluggard!

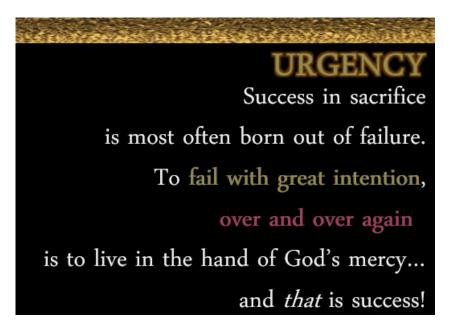
### Dying soon, Don't Waste Your Time - Steve Job's Death Speech, Simpson Productions

 "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every



morning and asked myself, "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "no" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something. Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything - all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose.

URGENCY does not produce perfection of action, but it does produce action and this action represents a necessary investment of time, even if it is lacking.



That is how we, as Christians, should invest our time so our Christianity is not a waste of time.



<u>Proverbs 24:16</u>: (NASB) For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity.

One important thing to remember is you only fall and rise when you are moving!



VISION, PRIORITIES and URGENCY are the necessary elements we must have in place to wisely invest our time. As Christians, we do not want to be wasting our time. Next we will review the "how to" practical part of the equation needed to support what must be in place in our hearts and minds to truly invest our time into our Christianity.

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"Time in a Bottle," (Verse one) Jim Croce

If I could save time in a bottle The first thing that I'd like to do Is to save every day 'til eternity passes away Just to spend them with you If I could make days last forever If words could make wishes come true I'd save every day like a treasure and then, Again, I would spend them with you But there never seems to be enough time To do the things you want to do Once you find them



### (1) Introduction, Design for Time Well Spent, Tristan Harris, PDF

• One thing I spend a lot of time thinking about is where I spend my time and where I spend my attention. I spend a lot of time thinking about where my time goes, and one question I think about a lot is, is where I spend my attention in a day or in your day, reflective of what you care about? Think about the hours, the minutes, the seconds where your attention is spent - does that reflect a conscious choice about what you care about or is something else going on?

Most of us have to work, so we need to choose our career wisely. Some careers take a lot of time. If we are in a job that is drawing us away from God, we need to consider making a change.

Inspiration changes your physiology, lifts you to a bigger level and helps you take important steps.



# Inspiration works best when we have someone whose struggle can be observed:

<u>2 Corinthians 12:7-10</u>: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

Paul needed the trial to keep his focus pure, because he was given something spectacular! He was given specific revelations and we are in awe of the grace of God through him.

<sup>8</sup>Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. <sup>9</sup>And he has said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.

The inspiration comes from the Apostle Paul going before God to ask to remove the weakness (we believe this was poor eyesight) and he is told *my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness*. Our inspiration comes from seeing how the grace of God becomes powerful.

### His trials INSPIRED him to a closer walk in Jesus' footsteps:

Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.



His inspiration is our inspiration. This is but one of MANY examples from the Scriptures to inspire us!

Life's change agent, Don't Waste Your Time - Steve Job's Death Speech, Simpson Productions

• You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart. No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet, death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because death is very likely the single best invention of life. It is life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now, the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it's quite true. Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma, which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become.

### STEP UP, STEP OUT and BE BRAVE with your Christianity!

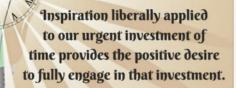
### Jesus inspires us to see through our trials to grasp victory:

<u>Ephesians 5:1-2</u>: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup>and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.



INSPIRATION

Time Management Tool #6





INSPIRATION is emotional and needs to be directed. It provides us with the desire to rekindle our VISION, reset our PRIORITIES and restart our URGENCY. But INSPIRATION alone cannot keep us there.

For inspiration to play its part in our use of time, it must be accompanied by its lesser known and certainly less attractive younger brother, PERSPIRATION! More on this shortly!

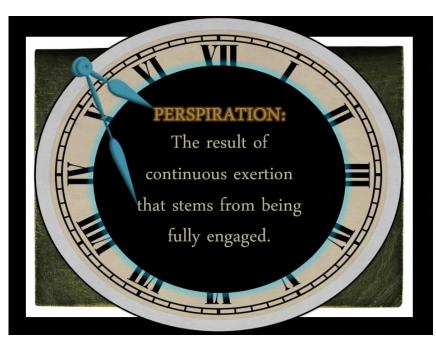
It's not enough to be busy. So are the ants. The question is, what are we busy about? – Henry David Thoreau

What are the elements making our lives so busy? Are they worthwhile? Do they fit with my VISION? My PRIORITIES? My URGENCY? My INSPIRATION?

(1) Facebook photo forward, Design for Time Well Spent, Tristan Harris, PDF

I'll give you an example. All of us face this. This email shows up and it's one of the most compelling emails a human being can receive. My social approval, my social acceptance and rejection, my vanity are all on the line when this email shows up. Except I'm not just going to click "see photo," I'm going to spend the next 20 minutes (admiring your own picture and who it was forwarded to, etc.). (Laughter) And we're all laughing because we all know that it's true and accept that 20 minutes of my precious attention, which is like this thing that I have on earth to allocate towards what I care about, that just got seduced away, right? Or for example, I'll find myself "pull to refresh" my email and then less than 60 seconds later, I'll pull to refresh again. Think about that- we do this all the time and it's crazy, because it's not like we actually think that some really important new email is about to appear in the next minute. It's strange that we're doing that. We check our phones 150 times a day!

How easily and often does our precious time get seduced away?





<u>1 Peter 5:6-9</u>: (NASB) <sup>6</sup>Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, <sup>7</sup>casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

So, there is *rest* in the Spirit, yet...

<sup>8</sup>Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

...we are in a "fight mode" which leads to sweat. Any time we are instructed to do anything with firmness, the effort implied is great and requires significant time and attention. It is this type of effort that brings us to perspire!

Why would I have to sweat if I am a Christian and "saved"? Am I not okay? Acknowledging Jesus as our Savior is only a starting point. Do we think, "God loves me, Jesus loves me, they will take care of me. Ahhhhhhh...relax." But that is only the beginning! The hard work comes in fighting off the adversary, denying ourselves, taking up our cross and following Jesus. If we do not invest our time into the hard work of Christianity, we will not receive the blessing of mature Christianity. No one ever ends the race where they start. We need to get to the finish line.

# Why should we be willing to sweat? Because replacing that which is old with newness of life is hard:

<u>Philippians 3:7-11</u>: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup>More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup>and may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup>that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death; <sup>11</sup>in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Paul saw the conforming of his past and recognized it was the wrong path. He would now be conformed to Jesus. We should be in love with the life of a Christian and eternal life, but that means sacrifice and perspiration along the way. Nothing replaces hard work and hard work takes time. We hear the adage "work smarter not harder," and this is true, yet for the true Christian we are to work smarter through the Spirit of God, and therefore we are able to work harder and more productively at those things of greatest importance.



A caller from Florida suggests: It takes a tremendous amount of discipline (and would apply regardless of what you wanted to be, like a doctor) to be a Christian, and you need maturity.

Phones are slot machines, Design for Time Well Spent, Tristan Harris, PDF

• I'll give you a hint why this is happening. What do you think makes more money in the United States than movies, baseball and theme parks and game parks combined? Slot machines. Slot machines make more money than all those, and we're not talking about all the casinos, we're talking about just slot machines. Which is crazy, because they're played with coins and not dollar bills. And the thing about this is, my phone is a slot machine.



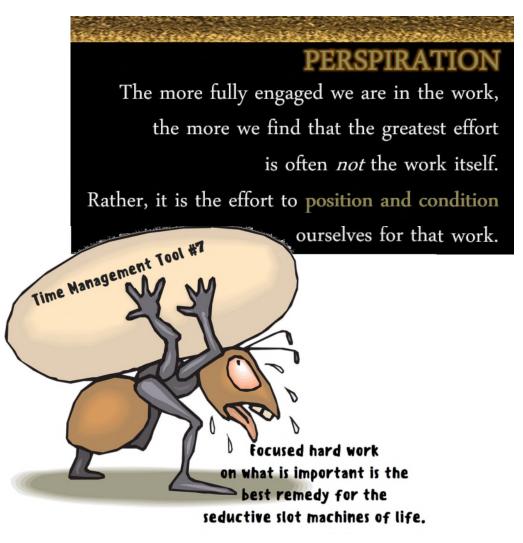
Every time I check my phone, I'm playing the slot machine to see, what am I going to get? Every time I check my email, I am "playing" the slot machine, saying, "What am I going to get?" Every time I scroll a news feed, I'm playing the slot machine to see what am I going to get. Every time there's a dating app, you're playing the slot machine to see if you got a match. This is like ubiquitous!



Our phones are addictive, just like gambling! It seductively moves our attention from that which is important.

# Combating the commonplace seductions of life is time and sweat well invested:

<u>Philippians 3:13-14</u>: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.



With the PERSPIRATION of complete engagement in place, there remains but one thing to give us a complete picture of redeeming our time. It is a simple thing, yet often overlooked when we set our minds to a service...stay tuned!





### (1) Scroll wheel seduction, Design for Time Well Spent, Tristan Harris, PDF

One of my friends is the lead designer of the very original Facebook News Feed in 2007, and she told me a story that one of the things that made the news feed successful was a hardware innovation. I looked at her like you mean you're just talking about the scrollable list of stories, right? She said, "Yeah," but it was because of the ubiquitous introduction of scroll wheels on mice and double finger scrolling on track pads that many of you have in the audience that your hand never has to leave its resting position so you can just scroll. It's the exact same thing they found with slot machines, that when your hand doesn't have to leave its resting position, people stay there a lot longer. This is incredibly, incredibly seductive, and the thing we don't often talk about is that in an attention economy, whether you are building a mediation app or an addictive game, or something that civically engages people, you're still competing for the same finite resource that we all have, which is attention. And the best way to get attention is to seduce people's social psychological instincts. To build a habit, to trigger someone, to get them to come in, to prolong their engagement, invest, get them to come back. This is like the entire internet game, right?

The world captivates us! Does the motivation of Christ have enough power to release us from the world? Satan will find many ways to distract and tempt us. Technology has made the seductive process of stealing away our attention, and therefore our time, easy, enjoyable and addictive. Unless we are prepared, we do not stand a chance.



How do we check ourselves to be sure we are consistently following the right path, the right thoughts, the right attitudes, the right actions and the right use of our time?

Philippians 4:4-8: (NASB) <sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice!

• Rejoicing is the first CONSISTENCY exercise introduced here. Rejoicing is built upon INSPIRATION. Rejoice regardless of the situation. Rejoicing



# is a heart communion with Christ that shows appreciation for our blessings.

<sup>5</sup>Let your gentle spirit be known **to all men**. The Lord is near.

• The next CONSISTENCY exercise is our Christlike character. Our character reflects our PRIORITIES. Whoever is around you should feel the spirit of Christ in you.

<sup>6</sup>Be anxious for nothing, **but in everything** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

• This CONSISTENCY exercise is the development of an URGENT prayer life - prayer for *all* things - both in good times and bad times.

<sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses **all** comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

• This CONSISTENCY exercise develops our VISION through which we are always protected.

<sup>8</sup>Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

• This CONSISTENCY exercise is all about PERSPIRATION and the effort it takes to stay above the fray and on target.

Never let yesterday use up today. - Richard H. Nelson

Unless yesterday is the stepping stone of growth, it becomes junk in our life.

CONSISTENCY

Consistency in an effort is the least glamorous of all its elements. There is no excitement of an idea, no newness of a project, no giddy anticipation of a beginning.

Consistency shines in the quiet times of monotony,

in the bruised moments of failure, and in the darkness,

when the unknown and unsung perseverance of will beckons us to

get up one more time and press on, by the grace of God.

This is the idea between loving the "idea" of Christianity and loving the Christian life. We can rest in the fact that God is bigger than our trials.



# How do we remain consistent when it seems like there is so much work involved?

<u>Exodus 20:8-10</u>: (NASB) <sup>8</sup>Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work.

The Sabbath was created so Israel could stop and rest.

# Israel had a built-in rest to their Law, and we Christians can LIVE that built-in rest:

<u>Hebrews 4:9-11</u>: (NASB) <sup>9</sup>So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup>For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. <sup>11</sup>Therefore let us **be diligent to enter that rest**, so that no one will fall.

We have been given the rest of Jesus Christ in our lives. This should be with us all the time.

<u>Hebrews 4:15-16</u>: (NASB) <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but **one who has been tempted in all things** as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup>Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

One of the reasons we have such deep confidence in Jesus is because of his consistency. He never wavered in his human experiences. He understands the human frame.



Do not let your Christianity be a waste. There is so much value to it. We need VISION, PRIORITIES, URGENCY, INSPIRATION, PERSPIRATION and CONSISTENCY in our daily lives. This makes our Christianity the most valuable part of every day.

What we do with our time creates our destiny. Use your time to serve God!



So, Is MY Christianity a waste of time? For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions... Think about it...!

And now <u>even more</u> to think about... only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!

How we spend our time is reflected in how we communicate with others. This includes texting, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

### What are you saying? Where is your heart?

<u>Matthew 12:33-37</u>: (NASB) <sup>33</sup>Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup>You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. <sup>35</sup>The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. <sup>36</sup>But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup>For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

Time is what we want most, but what we use worst. -William Penn

### Another text that relates to the investing of our time with consistency:

<u>Colossians 3:12-17</u>: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. <sup>14</sup>Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup>Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

We thought it might be helpful to do an exhaustive study on the words used for slothful, sluggard, etc. in the Old Testament. The following is a list of the words used and their definitions. Read, absorb and run away from the examples!

Sluggard: Strongs #6102: indolent KJV - slothful, sluggard

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary: Indolent

1 a: causing little or no pain

b: slow to develop or heal: indolent tumors indolent ulcers

- 2 a: averse to activity, effort, or movement: habitually lazy
  - b: conducive to or encouraging laziness: indolent heat
  - c: showing an inclination to laziness: an indolent sigh

indolence: inclination to laziness: sloth

Proverbs 6:6: (KJV) Go to the ant, thou sluggard <6102>; consider her ways, and be wise:

<u>Proverbs 6:9</u>: (KJV) How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard <6102>? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?



<u>Proverbs 10:26</u>: (KJV) As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard <6102> to them that send him.

<u>Proverbs 13:4</u>: (KJV) The soul of the sluggard <6102> desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

<u>Proverbs 15:19</u>: (KJV) The way of the *slothful* <6102> man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

<u>Proverbs 19:24</u>: (KJV) A *slothful* <6102> man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

<u>Proverbs 20:4</u>: (KJV) The *sluggard* <6102> will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore, shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

<u>Proverbs 21:25</u>: (KJV) The desire of the *slothful* <6102> killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor.

<u>Proverbs 22:13</u>: (KJV) The slothful <6102> man saith, there is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

<u>Proverbs 24:30</u>: (KJV) I went by the field of the *slothful <6102>*, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

<u>Proverbs 26:13</u>: (KJV) The slothful <6102> man saith, there is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

<u>Proverbs 26:14</u>: (KJV) As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful <6102> upon his bed.

<u>Proverbs 26:15</u>: (KJV) The *slothful* <6102> hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

<u>Proverbs 26:16</u>: (KJV) The sluggard <6102> is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

**Slothful:** Strongs #6101: to lean idly, i.e. to be indolent or slack

<u>Judges 18:9</u>: (KJV) And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not **slothful <06101>** to go, and to enter to possess the land.

**Slothfulness:** Strongs #6103 (as abstraction) indolence

<u>Proverbs 19:15</u>: (KJV) Slothfulness <6103> casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

<u>Ecclesiastes 10:18</u>: (KJV) By much *slothfulness* <6103> the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

Idleness: Strongs #6104, indolence

<u>Proverbs 31:27</u>: (KJV) She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of *idleness* <6104>.

Finally, a look at some texts that focus on being mindful - paying attention:

<u>1 Chronicles 16:15</u>: (KJV) Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;



<u>Nehemiah 9:17</u>: (KJV) And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

<u>Psalm 8:4</u>: (KJV) What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

<u>Psalm 111:5</u>: (KJV) He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

<u>Psalm 115:12</u>: (KJV) The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

<u>Isaiah 17:10</u>: (KJV) Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

<u>2 Timothy 1:4</u>: (KJV) Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

<u>Hebrews 2:6</u>: (KJV) But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

<u>Hebrews 11:15</u>: (KJV) And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

<u>2 Peter 3:2</u>: (KJV) That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior: