

Where Did the Time Go?

Russell Kemp—August 24, 2024

Whenever I'm at the Feast of Tabernacles, and we're actually approaching the fall Holy Days here pretty soon, I began to wonder just how long before we actually get to enjoy that thousand years of peace on earth with Satan being bound.

But I often realize that we may have some time to go before the end of this age. Don't know. I'm not going to rationalize and try and make guesses. But then I get to thinking that at my age, as you can tell by looking at me, I'm not real young, but at my age, that time may be closer than I think.

Now, I need to be more concerned about what I do with the time that I have left. We all need to be thinking about the time that we have and how we allocate it. You know, we can't do anything to hasten the Millennium, since that's in accordance with God's schedule, not ours. But we can make better use of our time, individual time.

I often recall a song that was sung by Roy Clark [also note that Glen Campbell was the originator] many years ago called: *Yesterday When I Was Young*.

Music tends to inspire us, and it certainly does me. A lot of times you ever, all of a sudden a tune comes to your head and you start singing it. But anyway, let me go through some of the lyrics of that song. I think it'll give you an idea. It goes like this:

Yesterday When I Was Young

{<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-l-e&q=SONG+LYRICS+Yesterday+When+I+Was+Young>}

Yesterday, when I was young
The taste of life was sweet like rain upon
my tongue
I teased at life as if it were a foolish game
The way an evening breeze would tease a
candle flame
The thousand dreams I dreamed, the
splendid things I planned
I always built to last on weak and shifting
sand
I lived by night and shunned, the naked
light of day
And only now, I see how the years have
run away

Yesterday, when I was young
There were so many songs that waited to
be sung
So many wild pleasures that lay in store for
me
And so much pain my dazzled eyes refused
to see

I ran so fast that time, and youth at last ran
out

And I never stopped to think what life was
all about

And every conversation that I can recall
Concerned itself with me, and nothing else
at all

Yesterday, the moon was blue

And every crazy day brought something
new to do

And I used my magic age as if it were a
wand

I never saw the waste and emptiness
beyond

Very inspiring words when you think about that. I was a lot younger when I heard him sing this song. I was actually, I'm pretty sure I was in the Philippines, which would have been probably in the 1960s, I guess.

But I realized when I heard the song, it hit home with me because he's singing about my life. You know, as a young child, I just couldn't wait to be a teenager like my older brother and sister. I'm sure we all go through things like this. Then not long after that, I couldn't wait until I was 18-years-old, and I could leave home and I could take care of myself.

Then came the big hurry to be 21 so that I could vote and I could drink. You know, back then, if any of you my age will remember, back then you couldn't vote until you were 21. I don't think it was until sometime in the early 1970s when they actually dropped the voting age down to 18.

Anyway, after that, I was in the military, and at that point I couldn't wait to put in my 20 years and retire.

Then a second career started. Once again, it was work, work, more work. Is it starting to sound familiar to anybody else out there?

You know, I don't even need to mention the time it takes to care for house and property, and I've got 35 acres and a house to take care of. You know, in many ways, and I admit to this, especially when I was younger, I was a workaholic. I guess there's some good to that in some aspects. It's made me very successful in any job that I've encountered. You pour your life into it.

Nevertheless, there is a tremendous drawback when you look at how, in many cases, I allocated my time. Did I use it appropriately?

When my five children were young and my wife didn't work, and my income was less than desirable, military income, and it wasn't a lot, I took a second job, especially when I was on shore duty. A lot of times I was overseas and going for almost a year at a time. Not just a second part-time job, but a second full-time job. I actually took a second full-time job.

I would get up early in the morning. I'd go to work. I'd come home from that job. I'd change clothes and then go to my second full-time job. I'd get about four to five hours sleep, and then I'd start all over again the next day.

As a result, I will say my wife and children lived a little bit better. I could afford to do a little bit more as far as where we lived and stuff like that. But sad to say, I had very little time. I had very little time to be a husband and to be a father, *and what I wouldn't give if I could go back and reallocate a lot of that time that I used!*

Why do I tell you this? *Recently I thought about:*

Psalm 90:10: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they are fourscore years..."

In other words, we're given approximately 70 years to live, and if we're lucky, could be 80 years. I'm sure I'm not the only one, but many of us are beyond even the 80-year mark. But I wonder:

- Where has the time gone?
- How have I used that time over the years?

Psalm 39:4—*King David said:* "O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am. Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth, and the span of my days is as nothing before You. **Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity.** Selah" (vs 4-5).

Pretty interesting statement. But let me read that again out of the *New International Version*. I just like the way that it's put in the *New International Version*. Let me read that:

"Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath. Selah" (*NIV*, vs 4-5)

Pretty profound statement!

You know, the world looks a lot different at this age than it did when I was young. I'm sure many, many of you would make that same

statement. You come to realize that one of the most valuable things that God has given us is our time.

That's one of the most valuable things we have. It is worth more than gold and silver. Time is not, I repeat, ***time is not a renewable resource!*** God gives us a limited amount of time.

- How do we spend that time that we're given?
- How much time do we spend, for example, in front of a mindless television set?

I don't do much television watching, quite honestly. I do watch news and a few other things, but I did when I was younger, I'm sure.

- Do you fill your minds with the fantasies of Hollywood?
- How much time do you spend on
 - ✓ the Internet?
 - ✓ cell phones
 - ✓ playing video games
 - ✓ reading novels

Let me be clear here about some of the use of our time.

Work—and I mentioned I did a lot of that—is a necessity. We all need to feed and care for our families and ourselves. God expects that of us. Watching certain things on TV is certainly okay if it's not abused.

Unfortunately, *unfortunately*, many times while visiting my children, their TV set seems to never go off. They often even eat in front of the TV set.

Now, mealtime in my home when we had children at home, was always family time. The family discussions took place at the dinner table; sometimes this is the chagrin of my kids.

- What are some of the things we should be spending our time on while we still have the opportunity while we still have the opportunity?
- I wonder how many of you remember the Lee Iacocca? *He was the one that rescued the Chrysler Corporation from bankruptcy many years ago!*

He made this statement; this is an interesting statement:

If you want to make good use of your time, you've got to know what is most important, and then you give it all you've got.

- Is your spiritual life important to you? *If so:*
- How much time do you devote to your spiritual life?

1-Timothy 4:13: "Until I come, devote

yourself to reading, to encouragement, *and* to doctrine. Do not neglect the *spiritual gift that is* in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood. Meditate on these things; give yourself wholly to them so that your growth *in the faith* may be apparent to all. Be diligent with yourself and with the doctrines; continue in them. For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (vs 13-16).

1. How much time do I spend on reading the Bible and Bible study?

- ✓ *remember that* the Bible is God’s handbook for human behavior and for development
- ✓ the Bible defines our relationship with God and with each other
- ✓ it tells us what lies ahead and what God’s Plan is for mankind
- Is this important enough for us to spend some of our time?

Paul tells us what to do:

2-Timothy 2:15^[transcriber’s correction]: “**Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God**, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.” *Very profound statement.*

2. How much time do I spend in prayer?

Not a ridiculous question. If you want to stay close to God, you need to talk to Him. You need to ask Him for help in developing the Godly character that He wants for us. Paul tells us:

Philippians 4:6: “Do not be anxious about anything; but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God in everything.”

3. How much time do I take for meditation?

We live in a rapid-paced world, and how time does fly. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve made the statement, ‘I wish the world would stop, let me get off for a few minutes, it just flies by.’ Sometimes we just need to stop. Think about life and get it together.

1-Timothy 4:15: “**Meditate on these things...**”

4. How often do I fast?

Hopefully we all fast during Atonement; I’m pretty sure we all do. But if you really want to show God that you’re humble and you trust in Him to supply your needs, maybe we need to fast more than once a year.

You know, I’m as guilty as anybody, I get to go on a couple months at a time without even thinking about it. Now, I won’t turn to all the Scriptures concerning fasting, they’re numerous throughout the Bible. Just look up fasting and go through, but they are numerous examples, and in the Bible it describes all the effectiveness of fasting, *and it does work!*

5. How much time do I spend praying for, sending cards to, and visiting the sick?

Are we so wrapped up in ourselves that we can’t find time for those in need? *That’s expected of us, we should be doing that!*

6. How often do I visit the widows, the fatherless, and those in prison?

I will tell you, there was a period of time when my wife and I lived in Jacksonville, Florida, and we used to go to Stark, Florida, where the maximum security prison was, and we would visit frequently with a young man who was put in life in prison at the age of 16, the youngest person to be put in that prison at the age of 16. We took him a lot of materials, spent a lot of time down there talking to him.

James 1:27: “**Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this:** to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

7. Finally, how much time do we spend with our family?

I’ve already mentioned my shortcoming in this area, and I sure regret when I look back on those days.

- Do we spend time as a family studying and expounding on the Word of God?
- Am I teaching my children?

Of course, my children are all adults, and now I’m not only talking about grandchildren, I’m talking about great grandchildren. ***But:***

- Am I teaching my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, principles, ***Biblical principles***, and the value of God’s way of life?
- Do I dedicate time being a good father, a good husband, a good father, or a good wife, a good mother?

It’s so important to have that family relationship!

If you’ve been blessed with a family, you need to care for it; You need to help it grow as God cares for His Family.

God has given us a specific period of time to try us. When you look back through the history of the world, that is not the time that we have is not a

lot of time. But He uses it to test us and to see if we will develop the Godly character that will be acceptable in His Kingdom.

- Are we spending that time wisely?

When our time runs out:

- Will we be able to look back and feel confident that we did all that God expected of us?

or

- Will we be disappointed that we wasted too much time of the valuable time that we were given?
- Do we procrastinate and put off prioritizing our time?

James 4:13: “Now listen, those of you who say, ‘Today and tomorrow we will go into such a city, and we will spend a year, and we will conduct business and make a profit.’ **You do not even know what will happen tomorrow!** Any of you for sure? **For what is your life?...**” (vs 13-14).

We read this when we went back into and talked about three score and ten.

“...It is even a vapor that appears for a little while, and then disappears” (v 14).

Do not put off those important things in life! Each day is a new opportunity!

Now, let me close with something and I don’t even remember where I got it.

{[https://riteacademy.com/2015/09/24/this-is-the-beginning-of-a-new-day-heartsill-wilson-quote-of-inspiration/.](https://riteacademy.com/2015/09/24/this-is-the-beginning-of-a-new-day-heartsill-wilson-quote-of-inspiration/)}

“This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for good.

What I do today is very important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving something in its place I have traded for it. I want it to be a gain, not a loss—good not evil. Success, not failure, in order that I shall not regret the price I paid for it.”

—Heartsill Wilson

When Roy Clark sang that song *Yesterday, When I Was Young* he sang it at the funeral of the great baseball player Mickey Mantle
{<https://www.themick.com/royclarkesong.html>.}

Clark closed with the following verses to the song, and I hope that none of us ever has to sing the last part of this song.

There are so many songs in me that won’t be sung

I feel the bitter taste of tears upon my tongue.

The time has come for me to pay for yesterday when I was young

Pretty poignant words!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 90:10
- 2) Psalm 39:4-5
- 3) 1 Timothy 4:13-16
- 4) 2 Timothy 2:15
- 5) Philippians 4:6
- 6) 1 Timothy 4:15
- 7) James 1:27
- 8) James 4:13-14

Also referenced:

Song Lyrics for *Yesterday, When I Was Young*
{<https://www.themick.com/royclarkesong.html>.}

OR

{<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-e&q=SONG+LYRICS+Yesterday+When+I+Was+Young>}

Quote by Heartsill Wilson:

{[https://riteacademy.com/2015/09/24/this-is-the-beginning-of-a-new-day-heartsill-wilson-quote-of-inspiration/.](https://riteacademy.com/2015/09/24/this-is-the-beginning-of-a-new-day-heartsill-wilson-quote-of-inspiration/)}

RK:bo/po

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