

Study Series: Joyful Surrender

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 Lesson Title: “The Discipline of Time” (pp. 145-156)

Session 11

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The main point of this lesson is: The discipline of time is essential for the believer’s life.

Focus on this goal: To help adults practice the discipline of time

Key Bible Passage: Psalm 90:2-14

Before the Session

On a large writing surface positioned where all learners can see it clearly, write: I’m always late for . . .; I never have enough time for . . .; If I had an extra hour in the day I would . . . (Step 1)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

As learners arrive and start to fellowship, **guide** them to consider the prompts you have written and displayed. **Challenge** learners to share one statement aloud with the group.

**Say:** *So far, we’ve been digging into* Joyful Surrender *and have considered the discipline of our bodies, our minds, and our places. As you might have guessed, today we’ll consider the discipline of time.*

Step 2. Time, Part 1

**Use** the content from the first paragraph of Day One (p. 145) to **explore** the two Greek words that are translated “time” in the New Testament: *chronos* and *kairos*. **Ask:** *How do these two words point to different aspects of God as bing the Ruler of all time?*

**Read** the Day One paragraph (p. 146) that begins with the quote, “I don’t have time.” **Share** a recent experience in which you said or thought that or something similar. As time allows, **invite** a few volunteers to do the same.

**Ask:** *Do we really not have time? Or do we poorly manage the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week we’ve been given?*

Step 3. Time, Part 2

**Instruct** learners to open their Bibles and read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 silently. **Engage** a few volunteers into summarizing those verses in their own words. **Say:** *We see clearly here that every moment falls into a time and a season, and they are all ordained by God. We can’t really grasp that, but we know it’s true.*

**Invite** a volunteer to read Psalm 90:2-14. **Point out** that this psalm was written by Moses. Briefly **summarize** his long, full, wild life and how his perspective of time may have been different and more God-focused than that of another. **Ask:** *How did Moses see the time that had past? How did he view the time yet to come?*

Step 4. Timing

Briefly **recount** the author’s examples of God’s perfect timing at the start of Day Three (pp. 148-149). **Engage** volunteers in discussing some other examples of God’s perfect timing that come to mind from their own personal Bible study or personal experiences.

**Help** learners consider the phrase “My times are in Thy hand” (Ps. 31:15), that the author explained “has become a part of my life” (p. 149). **Ask:** *What does that phrase mean? How can this phrase help us to be more intentional with our own times, whether they are full or empty, rushed or slow, alone or with others?*

Step 5. Enough Time

**Invite** a volunteer to read John 17:4 from his or her Bible. **Read** the Day Four paragraph (p. 150) that begins, “There were endless demands on Jesus’s time.” **Say:** *Most everyone feels they have a very busy life, but if we honestly consider our responsibilities and compare them to that of Jesus, we should readily admit that we choose to have a busier life than required.*

As a group, **consider** how to best structure our days, our plans, and our family life so that God’s will, and God’s presence, is our top priority regardless of the stage of life we are in.

**Read** Matthew 11:28-30. **Ask:** *How does this passage help us keep perspective on the planning of our days?*

Step 6. Worry vs. Worship

**Ask:** What does the Bible teach about worry? How well do we observe what the Bible teaches?

**Enlist** a volunteer to review to the group the six reasons why worry does not fit into the framework of time that God has given us (pp. 151-152). **Ask:** Do we think of worry as a sin? Should we?

**Use** the illustration of Daniel in Day Five (pp. 152-153) as an explanation of how to put God’s plan above those things that would cause us to worry.

**Help** learners understand that we can’t avoid worry, but when we feel it we must redirect our thoughts, our feelings, and our focus toward God and turn our worry list into our prayer list.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Say:** The author saved the best for last: in considering the discipline of our time, we conclude with our time spent alone with the Lord.

**Direct learners’ attention** to Day Five, activity 2 (p. 153), **inviting** any who feel comfortable doing so to share which elements may be missing from their daily time of private worship.

**Engage** a few volunteers to share what their daily quiet time might entail. **Say:** There is no one way to spend time reading, studying, and engaging God’s Word. There is no one way to pray, worship, or confess. But all these elements are required if we want to grow in our faith and bask in the presence of Jesus.

**Close in prayer.**

