

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:15-20

Lost time is never found again. —Benjamin Franklin

In verses 15 and 16 of today's Ephesians reading, the apostle Paul urges his readers to "be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil."

Most of us probably think that making the best use of our time is a good thing. The question is *how*. This is especially difficult if you are homebound or living in a long-term care facility. I know personally about this, because my mother was just such a person. Perhaps like many of you, she had many hours in her day with time on her hands. What could she do to make "the most of her time"?

I encouraged her to do what many of you no doubt already do: read, pick up a new hobby, invite friends over to discuss books or play board games, participate in the activities offered by the lovely facility where she lived, keep up her correspondence, establish routines, and so on.

But the apostle Paul also suggests that we discontinue some bad habits. He tells us to "be careful." He advises us to avoid doing things that suck the time out of our days like:

- being foolish,
- being unwise,
- being intoxicated.

Making the most of our time during long days means that we need to be *time-conscious* and *time-effective*. Our time must have *meaning*, and for it to have meaning there are things we *must do* and things we must *not do* (like being foolish, unwise or inebriated all the time).

To make the most of our time, the apostle Paul counsels us to:

- understand the will of the Lord,
- be filled with the Spirit,
- sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
- give thanks to God the Father at all times.

Today might be a good day to be conscious of how we spend our time. Discuss this matter with your friends and family. Using your time wisely will make you a happier and more satisfied person.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, thank you for the gift of time. Help me to use it wisely, In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** James 3-5
- Monday:** Jeremiah 27-29
- Tuesday:** Jeremiah 30-32
- Wednesday:** Jeremiah 33-36
- Thursday:** Jeremiah 37-39
- Friday:** Jeremiah 40-42
- Saturday:** Psalms 88-90

VERSE TO REMEMBER

*Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. — Psalm 90:1-2*

Compound Creation

Directions: You are given two clues, one each for two words. Take those two words and create a well-known compound word. A hint is given for each answer.

Example: Slang word for “dad” + what you might eat by the ear
We’re looking for a snack at the movies: **POPCORN**

1. To the rear + to tell someone that his employment is terminated.
We’re looking for the noise when there’s a car exhaust explosion: _____
2. Below + a common pet.
We’re looking for a team or person who’s expected to lose: _____
3. Symbol of Christianity + what you might tie with a ribbon on a present.
We’re looking for a medieval weapon: _____
4. A long weapon sharpened to a point + the place where coins are made.
We’re looking for a chewing gum flavor: _____
5. The color of night + what you might need when you have a flat tire.
We’re looking for a card game: _____
6. What bees make + Earth has one, but Jupiter has many.
We’re looking for a vacation after the wedding: _____
7. The absence of color + what you do to clothes when dirty.
We’re looking for a coverup of wrongdoing: _____
8. Pull the trigger + a human limb.
We’re looking for a weapon: _____

Answers to COMPOUND CREATION: 1. backfire, 2. underdog, 3. crossbow, 4. spearhead, 5. blackjack, 6. honeymoon, 7. whitewash, 8. firearm.

