



A Time for Everything

Lesson 4

A Time to Pause

Prayer

Introductory Activity

A clock for what is most important

In an old Swedish cartoon about a bear who becomes strong when he eats “thunder honey” (kind of like Popeye the Sailor Man with spinach), one of the supporting characters is a turtle. This turtle has a clock which he follows religiously. But “Skalmann” the turtle’s clock does not have times on it; it has activities. Whenever it rings, he does exactly what it says, no matter how inconvenient the timing may seem.¹ Looking at Skalmann’s clock below, come up with your own clock and draw/write in at least three different activities that always seem to take up time in your day.



¹ <https://youtu.be/ZK3wlvjqBOU?t=560> This video shows one of the moments when it’s time to sleep at an inconvenient time.

Discuss the activities on your clock with people/the person next to you. Some questions to think about: How important are those activities? How beneficial are they? How much do they “add” to the busyness of your day? How much do they take away from other good things? What would happen if you stopped doing them?

An advertisement for a toy version of Skalmann’s clock says, “Hurry is the ugliest word Skalmann knows, and it is good to take a pause once in a while. That’s why you need this clock!”

Agree/Disagree: My life would be too busy to use a clock like Skalmann’s where I have to stop and rest several times a day.²

I’m Too Busy for...

1. “Sabbath” is a Hebrew word that means “rest.” In the Old Testament, God’s people had particular times when God told them they had to rest (those rules no longer need to be followed because they were fulfilled in Jesus—Colossians 2:16). **Based on the passages below, share at least two of God’s purposes for the Sabbath day.**

- Exodus 20:8-11
- Exodus 23:10-13
- Leviticus 23:3-8
- Mark 2:27-28

² For those who disagree, Skalmann’s clock is available as an app!

- Luke 13:10-17
2. God meant to give his people incredible blessings through his “rest” (and he still does today). **Read the passages below and identify some reasons God’s people did not enjoy this rest.**
- Exodus 16:21-30.
 - Amos 8:3-12
 - Hebrews 4:1-2, 6
3. Pick one reason from question #2 that you think is common still today and explain why.
4. Read Luke 10:38-42. Then read the excerpts of a survey below. **Compare the experiences of Mary and Martha to most people in modern day America (or your own experience).**³
- In a 2016 survey, about half of Americans (52%) said they’re usually trying to do two or more things at once. But just 11% of Americans said the fast pace of their lives was harming their health. In a 2018 survey, 60% of U.S. adults said they at least sometimes felt too busy to enjoy life.

³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/05/how-americans-feel-about-the-satisfactions-and-stresses-of-modern-life/> & <https://www.barna.com/research/americans-just-want-a-good-night-of-sleep/> & <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/smartphone-usage-stats>

- Seven-in-ten U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 said in a 2018 survey that anxiety and depression were a major problem among people their age in the community where they live.
- Seven out of ten adults (71%) said they look forward “a lot” to having a refreshing snooze.
- On average, people spend 3 hours and 15 minutes on their phones per day.
- Individuals check their phones an average of 58 times each day.
- 22% of Americans attend church every week. 50% never or seldom attend.
- 45% of “Scripture-reading” Americans read Scripture never or seldomly. 8% read it “several times a year.”

I'm Too Busy Not To...

1. Martin Luther is quoted as saying, “Work, work, from morning until late at night. In fact, I have so much to do today that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer!” **Read the passages, then discuss the questions below.**

- Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, 8
- Ecclesiastes 2:24-25, 3:9-13
- Psalm 62:1-2, 5-8

- Matthew 11:28

- Hebrews 4:6-11, 14-16

When is “busyness” good?

When is “busyness” bad?

Pick at least one favorite verse/truth from Scripture that motivates Christians to pause and enjoy God’s rest.

“Too Blessed to Be Stressed”

“Work, work, work, from morning until late at night!” Describe how a Christian’s “busy” day/week is different when he or she is “resting” in God’s word.

Closing Activity

Brainstorm!

Take a few minutes to think about Skalmann's clock again. Fill in at least three things (and you can even include actual times if you want) that you can include (or exclude) in your day to help you find *time to pause* in God's Word.

