

Every person is allotted 24 hours in a day. Some of those hours will be consumed by necessary events like eating, sleeping, working, etc. The remaining hours result in what I like to call “Discretionary Time.”

The advancements in technology have greatly increased our discretionary time. In the past laundry, cooking, cleaning, and doing the dishes could consume an entire day. Now, we throw a load of laundry into the washer, and some prepackaged food into the microwave for dinner, and all of 20 minutes are gone. With the contemporary conveniences available to us today, we can accomplish so much in so little time. Why, then, do we find ourselves constantly complaining of not enough time?

*“Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time; for that’s the stuff life is made of.”*

-Benjamin Franklin

If you’re finding there aren’t enough hours in your day, consider meditating upon the following three concepts: focus, priority, and perspective. These principles can be used as fundamental guidelines for how we govern the time allotted to us. In Matthew, Jesus teaches the parable of the talents. Three men are given a certain number of talents. Two men take accountability for their talents. They focus on a goal, make it a priority, and have long term perspective. They are successful in making the most of the talents given to them. The third man squanders away his talent. He buries it and wastes the opportunity that is given to him to excel. (Matthew 25:14-30)

## Focus

Modern technology, with its amazing time-saving capabilities has also created what I call ‘Time-thieving faculties’. I’ve known people to have spent the afternoon lounging in front of a television set, or exploring the vast void that is the internet, only to look at the clock and wonder where the past 6 hours have gone. The amount of information available at our fingertips is remarkable. It is wonderful. But without



proper focus, it can be detrimental to our souls. It is possible to dive into the ocean of information, and never resurface--our time can be vacuumed into the black hole of worldly wastefulness. Without focus, we become as those individuals prophesied of in 2 Timothy 3:7, “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”. A few focused and concentrated hours spent honing in on the valuable information available will change time-thieving faculties into time-saving capabilities, and your hours will increase in quantity and quality.

## Priority

Work and business are important, yes, but family and testimony are essential. In the scriptures, we are taught Prioritizing 101. Jesus taught in Matthew 6:33, “Seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness and (then) all these things shall be added unto you.”

A frequently used object lesson includes a jar, golf balls, marbles, and sand. When the sand and marbles are placed in the jar first, there is no way to include the golf balls. But, when the golf balls are placed in the jar first, followed by the marbles and then the sand, everything fits. If we prioritize our time by filling our hours first with the essential things, everything will have a place.

## Perspective

Lastly, keep in mind an eternal perspective. When evaluating time and making decisions, consider, “What will be the eternal impact of this choice?” Consider this question when making the choice of sitcom vs. scripture study; surfing the net vs. serving others; listening to the car radio vs. listening to your child. Consider this question when deciding between what Elder Oaks calls ‘good, better, and best’ choices; the gray areas of time management such as volunteering away from the home vs. serving within

*...Continued on other side*

...Continued from other side.

the home. An eternal perspective turns our hearts toward the Savior and his teachings when making decisions. We remember the commandment, “thou shalt not idle away thy time” (D&C 60:13). However, we also remember that there are only 24 hours in a day, and it is OK if we can’t do everything; King Benjamin also realized this when he instructed us to “see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength” (Mosiah 4:27).

Each of us is given the same amount of time; each of us is held accountable for our use of that time. Keeping focus, remembering to prioritize, and having an eternal perspective will help us make good decisions regarding the use of our time.

**Helpful Ensign Articles:**

- “*Wisdom and Order*”  
Neal A. Maxwell, June 1994
- “*This Day*”  
Henry B. Eyring, May 2007
- “*Living a Balanced Life*”  
Robert F. Orton, February 2008

**Time Organizer**

For one week fill in this time organizer—Don’t leave anything out! After the week is over, take a look at where your time is being spent. Evaluate your time and see what you can change and where you can improve.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							

**Time Management Tips**

- Establish routines, and stick to them as much as possible.
- Set time limits for tasks—take care to be honest and dedicated in keeping those limits.
- Say no to non-essential tasks and requests if they require too much of you.
- Take the time you need to do a quality job the first time; it saves time in the long run.
- Break large, time consuming tasks into smaller tasks.
- Get plenty of sleep and exercise. Your mind is more alert and motivated when you’re healthy!
- Take a little time for you; allow yourself to rejuvenate.
- Organize tasks into optional, important, and urgent. Complete more stressful tasks first, to clear your mind for future tasks.
- Make a To-Do list the night before; that way, you start the day with a plan.