

## Opportunity

### Time-Life Part 2

Difficulties are the raw materials of opportunities.

When we meet a difficulty we must ask God what He wants to do.

He will provide steps to discover the opportunity.

**Ann Landers** wrote, "Opportunities are often disguised as hard work,  
so most people fail to recognize them."

Edison and his team of researchers in Edison's laboratory in Menlo Park, N.J., tested more than 3,000 designs for bulbs between 1878 and 1880. In November 1879, Edison filed a patent for an electric lamp with a carbon filament. Later on they developed the tungsten filament, which has the highest melting point of all the elements. Thousands of failures led to success – the incandescent bulb.

A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities;  
an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.

Reginald B. Mansell

"When written in Chinese, the word "Crisis" is composed of two characters One represents danger and the other represents opportunity."

John F. Kennedy

When I was much younger I went through a disappointing experience and spoke with a counselor. His words helped me face what I perceived as failure,

'Life isn't as much what we make of it, as much as it is how we take it.'

The final part of Moses' prayer appeals to God for his people:

<sup>12</sup>So **teach us** to number our days,  
That we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

<sup>13</sup>Do return, O Lord; how long will it be?  
And be sorry for Your servants.

<sup>14</sup>O **satisfy us** in the morning with Your lovingkindness,  
that we may **sing for joy** and **be glad** all our days.

<sup>15</sup>**Make us glad** according to the days You have afflicted us,  
and the years we have seen evil

<sup>16</sup>Let Your work appear to Your servants  
and Your majesty to their children.

<sup>17</sup>**Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;**  
and **confirm** for us the work of our hands;  
Yes, **confirm** the work of our hands.

Moses begins this section of Psalm 90 by turning to God as the only solution to man's brief lifespan and the negative consequences they faced.

## **A Prayer of Restoration -- "Restore us, Lord"**

- Diligent use of time
- Restoration and joy
- Desire for permanence

### **1. Diligence**

Diligent use of time.

<sup>12</sup>So **teach us** to number our days,  
That we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

Being diligent with time is to make the most of opportunities.

Alexander Graham Bell said,

"When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

### Perspective

- Perspective: Life is short.

I received this bar of soap for Christmas. I love its scent (show bar); I never want it to be gone, but gradually, slowly it's getting smaller. Soon it will be a thin memory, with nothing left but the fragrance. That's how life is; no matter how good it seems, it will soon pass.

Old age – tend to think more of the 'hereafter'.

*"I wander into a room and wonder what I'm here after."*

For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night. (Ps. 90:4).

**Numbering our days** – making our time here count for eternity, eternal values.

- Perspective: Opportunities must be embraced or they will be missed

**Time is like a coupon;**

it does nothing for us until we exchange it for something of value.

We get the most value for it when we invest it in eternal treasures.

Diligence is accepting each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to do it quickly and skillfully.

- **Manage time well**
- **Budget**
- **Leave margins**

The outcome of diligence: ***a wise heart.***

This is what God wants to see when we stand before Him.

Wisdom is seeing life from God's point of view.

- Wise Counsel: Cheap experience Vs. making all your own costly mistakes.

The idea of learning is to "Be informed before we leap over a wall."

The idea of being undistracted.

Have devotions without a phone in the room.

Attend church and leave the phone in the car.

Solomon wrote,

"By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong, and a man of knowledge increases power. For by wise guidance you will wage war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory." Pr. 24:3-6)

Two kinds of wisdom

- Wisdom of salvation
- Wisdom of transformation – give growth priority.

## **2. Joy**

Moses needed assurance of God's restoration for His people.

<sup>13</sup>Do return, O Lord; how long will it be?  
And be sorry for Your servants.

He prayed for joy.

<sup>14</sup>O **satisfy us** in the morning with Your lovingkindness,  
that we may **sing for joy** and **be glad** all our days.

<sup>15</sup>**Make us glad** according to the days You have afflicted us,  
and the years we have seen evil

Joy provides the strength to endure in any situation.

Nehemiah encouraged all the people as they were rebuilding Jerusalem's wall,  
"...the joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. 8:10)

Moses knew that the greatest motivation in life was joy.

David prayed:

"...Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and uphold me with a willing spirit." (Ps. 51:12)

Consequences Vs. Compassion

The basis of joy is a restored relationship with God.

The Law of God cannot please God because it cannot be kept.

We cannot say to the policeman: I know that I ran a red light but I stopped at 25  
red lights, and expect to get off the hook.

We can't say to a judge I know that I killed that man but just think of all the  
people that I let live.

God's law will always show us where we have sinned.

We must come to God through Jesus Christ and repent of sins.

The key to restoration is repentance – turning from self to God,

--Giving up ruling my life in complete surrender to the will of God.

Romans 12:1-2 is a clear reminder of this commitment:

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your  
bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your  
spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world,  
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may  
prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and  
perfect."

Isaiah also urged his readers to,

“Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.  
 Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
 and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him  
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” (Is. 55:6-7).

Though consequences may be great, God’s love and grace is greater.  
 David spoke of the Lord’s presence as being the place with “fullness of joy.”  
 Only when a child of God is living for Him do we experience a satisfied life.

Living for the Lord is a life well-lived.

Goal: Be someone who longs for the Lord, Be someone the Lord longs to bless.

### **3. Permanence**

**<sup>17</sup>Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;**  
 and **confirm** for us the work of our hands;  
 Yes, **confirm** the work of our hands.

**Confirm** – “to establish”, “to give permanence.”

So much of what people do will be left behind when they die.  
 They will have lived an empty life if they are not rich towards God.  
 The concept of making something permanent or eternally significant goes beyond  
 worldly standards of success.

Palaces, stadiums, airplanes, or wealth or fame, will all fade into nothing.  
 They will only last the length of men’s applause.

If God leads us in how we live, then everything we do will have eternal reward.

**The favor of the Lord** is His grace.

Grace is free sovereign favor to the ill-deserving  
 Benjamin B. Warfield

Our Established, Permanent, and Confirmed works will be accomplished by grace.

- **Permanence through grace living**

Paul wrote,

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” (1 Cor. 15:10).

Francis Chan talks about a room full of rope, several feet deep;  
– long and all coiled up with just a few inches of one end painted.  
The painted portion represents this life and the rest of the rope, eternity.  
Most people live for these few inches of the painted rope, and ignore eternity.

Our works here will be made permanent if we do them for eternity’s sake.

### **How does this happen? How will God confirm our works?**

#### **Reminder:**

There are three ages to mankind, youth, middle age,  
and ....My you’re looking good.

#### **Reminder:**

Before you know it you’ll be old too.  
Don’t give it too much thought, just know that it’s true.

How to tell you’re growing old: {Interviews with elderly people}  
Bill Dana says, “He’s so old his blood type was discontinued.”

Maurice Chevalier says,  
“Growing old isn’t so bad when you consider the alternative.”

Agatha Christie says, “I married an archeologist because the older I grow,  
the more he appreciates me.”

#### **Reminder:**

A Christian martyr, Jim Eliot, wrote in his diary,  
Only one life to live, will soon be past;  
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

Diligent use of time, Joyful relationship with God, Permanence through grace.