

Activity Name: Priorities – So Much to Do, So Little Time

Objective: When our priorities are in order we can live a more fulfilling life

Scriptural Foundation: Psalm 90:12; Ephesians 5:15-17; James 4:14

Warm-Up: How Much Is Too Much?

Divide students into teams. Ask the following trivia questions about how the average person spends their time. The answers are in bold.

1. How much time per month does the average American spend social networking?

1. 2 hours
2. 1.7 hours
3. 9.3 hours
4. **6.9 hours**

2. How much time per month does the average American spend watching television offline (meaning on an actual television, not on Hulu or Netflix)?

1. 12.5 hours
2. **59.4 hours**
3. 17.3 hours
4. 23.9 hours

3. The peak time for watching television online is:

1. On a lunch break
2. Right before bed
3. **During the workday**
4. Right after work

4. According to a report by NBC News, if you added up the minutes spent on social media in July of 2012 in the United States, how many years would they add up to?

1. **230,060 years**
2. 9,612 years
3. 143,462 years
4. 64,586 years

5. How much time does the average American spend on Netflix per month?

1. 14.2 hours
2. **10 hours**
3. 7.6 hours
4. 13.7 hours

Information found on: <http://www.cnbc.com/id/100275798>

We live in a generation that demands instant gratification, yet spend hours and hours on things that don't really matter. This can leave us with little to no time to focus on what's important and the stuff that actually need to get done. Learning time management is biblical.

Lesson:

There's no arguing that we live in a day where everyone desires instant gratification.

If we have to wait too long in a drive thru, we get mad. We get impatient while waiting on our food to come out of the microwave, because when you're craving popcorn, three minutes seems like an excessively long time. Any amount of waiting time at a doctor's office or a restaurant seems unbearable.

At the same time, one could say that this generation wastes more time than ever before. That doesn't make sense, does it? In fact, it seems like an oxymoron. If having to wait more than 90 seconds for a cheeseburger and milkshake is something that upsets us, surely we must hate wasting time.

Yet, as we learned a few minutes ago, the average American spends 94.2 hours per month on social networks, phone, email, and watching television. Think about that—that's almost **four days a month wasted on things that probably have no significant importance.**

So we act like we hate wasting time, yet we gladly give away four (maybe even more!) of our 30 days a month. With that in mind, I think it's safe to say that we could all benefit from learning to manage our time better.

High school is the best time to learn good time management, and the beginning of a new school year is the perfect time to learn something new. If you want to actually graduate with grades above D's this year, you're going to *have* to learn time management. If you learn good time management now, it will be easier to manage your time when you go off to college. If you can do that, it will be easier to manage your time when you graduate college and get thrown back into the real world. And if you think time management is essential in high school, just wait until adult life hits you.

As with any issue, the first thing we should do is see if the Bible has anything to say about it.

Read Psalm 90:12: "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Read Ephesians 5:15-17: "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."

Read James 4:14: "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

Ask teens what each verse above mean and how they can use it in everyday life.

Here are three simple ways to get the most out of your time.

1. Make God your number one Priority.

No matter how busy you get, no matter how much you have to do, no matter **what**, spending time with God needs to be your number one priority. If that means you have to get up earlier, then wake up earlier. If that means you have to sacrifice something extra, then so be it. This is one choice you will not regret making.

2. Prioritize the things in your life.

Regardless of how you may feel, high school is a priority right now. That means that for the school year, classes, tests, papers, and projects come before late night movies and weekends spent doing nothing with your friends. One of the best ways to remember your priorities is to get a planner or a calendar and write down when things are due, when you need to study, etc.

3. Hold yourself accountable.

After you know what your schedule should be, pray over it. Ask God to help you achieve all you need to achieve in the time that you need to achieve it. Ask Him to help you manage your time better. Then, find someone who will hold you accountable to this. Maybe that's a leader here, or maybe it's another person who's also trying to manage their time better. Either way, getting a weekly text asking how you're doing with your time can be a great motivator! Another way to hold yourself accountable is to write these verses down—the ones that talk about how we should spend our days—

and put them somewhere you can see them. After all, spending hours on twitter isn't really enjoyable when you're looking at a verse that reminds you of how short your life is.

Wrap-Up questions:

High School is only four years of your life. If you want to make the most of those four years, learning to manage your time is one of the best places to start.

Why do you think it is so easy to waste time?

When you're wasting time, do you think you're taking time for granted?

What effect does wasting time have on your relationship with God?

In the past, is time management something you've taken seriously?

Have you ever thought about time management as something that God would want for you?

What are some steps you could take this week to help you manage your time?

Do you think time is a gift from God? If you do, does that change the way you think about spending your time?

Would you say that the way you are managing your time now is bringing honor to God?

What is the biggest challenge you face in your personal life when it comes to managing your time?

One of the verses compares our life to, "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." How does that make you feel when you think about the way you currently choose to spend time?