



## EXCHANGE THE “SMALLER YES” FOR THE “GREATER YES.”

“If we fail to plan we plan to fail.”

Q: What are my top goals?

Q: What *should* be my top priorities?

Don Whitney, “At the root of all discipline is the disciplined use of time.”<sup>1</sup>

### What are smaller and Greater yes’s?

- Finances: Paying down the debt for the Greater Yes of financial freedom rather than taking the bait of the smaller yes by buying things we don’t really need.
- Health: Choosing the Greater Yes of temporary exhaustion from exercise rather than the smaller yes of the sedentary sofa.
- Relationship with God: The Greater Yes of committing to weekly be under the teaching of God’s word and serve with God’s people for the smaller yes of a million other things.

“...the little foxes . . . spoil the vineyards” (Song of Solomon 2:15).

### God’s Word on Time

Ephesians 5:15-16

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*

Psalms 39:4

*“O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!”*

*And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?*

- Jesus, Luke 9:23-25

*Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather **train yourself for godliness**; <sup>8</sup> for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come (1 Timothy 4:7-8).*

*But solid food is for the mature, for those who have **their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil*** (Hebrews 5:14).

*For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been **trained** by it* (Hebrews 12:11).

*How do we train ourselves for the Greater Yes?*

### Next Steps of Time Management

- Recognize our **natural** tendency towards the path of least resistance. “Two of the gravest general dangers to survival are the desire for comfort and a passive outlook. You must recognize that these dangers represent attitudes—attitudes that follow lines of least resistance, that overrule your effort or desire to cope with stress, that make your primary concern the immediate situation rather than the overall problem of survival.”<sup>2</sup>  
US Army Survival Manual (FM 21-76)
- Make no **excuses**: We all have time for what we value.
- Make room for God’s **direction** in your life.<sup>3</sup>
- Make time to reflect on your Greater Yes.
  - Inventory your use of time.
  - See yourself as a Steward of time.
  - Read Jonathan Edwards, *The Preciousness of Time and the Importance of Redeeming It*.<sup>4</sup>
- Make time for God: Except for emergencies, commit to **weekly** be under the teaching of God’s Word with your faith family.

### Recommended reading

Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*.

Jonathan Edwards, *The Preciousness of Time and the Importance of Redeeming It* (free online).

Jonathan Edwards, *Resolutions* (free online).<sup>5</sup>

Key: natural/excuses/direction/weekly

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<sup>1</sup> Don Whitney, “Pursuing a Passion for God Through Spiritual Disciplines/ Learning from Jonathan Edwards,” *Desiring God 2003 National Conference*, October 11, 2003, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/pursuing-a-passion-for-god-through-spiritual-disciplines-learning-from-jonathan-edwards>.

<sup>2</sup> FM 21-76: *US Army Survival Manual: Reprint of Department of the Army Field Manual* (New York: Dorset Press, 1998), 1:3.

<sup>3</sup> J. C. Ryle: “The true secret of spiritual strength is self-distrust and deep humility. “When I am weak,” said a great Christian, “then am I strong.” (2 Cor. 12:10.) None of us, perhaps, have the least idea how much we might fall if placed suddenly under the influence of strong temptation. Happy is he who never forgets the words, “Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” J. C. Ryle, *The Gospel of John* by J. C. Ryle (Prisbrary Publishing, Kindle Locations 4989-4992).

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Preciousness of Time and the Importance of Redeeming It*, <https://www.apuritansmind.com/puritan-favorites/jonathan-edwards/sermons/the-preciousness-of-time-and-the-importance-of-redeeming-it/>.

<sup>5</sup> “The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards,” December 30, 2006, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-resolutions-of-jonathan-edwards>.

*Jonathan Edwards' resolutions on Time Management:*

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

7. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.

17. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of things of the gospel, and another world.

19. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour, before I should hear the last trump.

37. Resolved, to inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself: also at the end of every week, month and year. *Dec. 22 and 26, 1722.*

40. Resolved, to inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating and drinking. *Jan. 7, 1723.*

41. Resolved, to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better. *Jan. 11, 1723.*

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world. *July 5, 1723.*

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age. *July 8, 1723.*

55. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments. *July 8, 1723.*

61. Resolved, that I will not give way to that listlessness which I find unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on religion, whatever excuse I may have for it—that what my listlessness inclines me to do, is best to be done, etc. *May 21, and July 13, 1723.*