

CARPE DIEM

Texts: Proverbs 3:2, 16
Deuteronomy 30:19, 20
I Peter 3:10, 11

Carpe diem is a well-known Latin challenge that is translated into English as, “sieve the day.” Sunrise in Houston today was 7:17 AM; sunset was 5:40 PM. A day on Earth is roughly 24 hours long, or 86,400 seconds. In 1964 Jerry Bock composed the song and Sheldon Harnick wrote the lyrics to *Sunrise, Sunset*, from the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. The song likens the passing of time from sun-up to sun-down. These are some of the words:

Sunrise, sunset
Sunrise, sunset
Swiftly fly the years.
One season following another,
Laden with happiness and tears.
One season following another,
Laden with happiness and tears.

In the musical, Tevye and Golde sang this song at their oldest daughter’s wedding. They were in disbelief that the years came and went so fast. The song began with these words, “Is this the little girl I carried? Is this the little boy at play? I don’t remember growing older. When did they?”

Here we are starting another year in this winter season of 2025. Have you considered how you are going to spend the precious commodity called time? Are you determined to “sieve the day?” God reminds us in His Word of the brevity of life within the framework of time. James 4:14: “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Job 9:25, 26: “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.” Psalm 102:11, 12; Isaiah 40:6-8.

I. WE ALL HAVE THE SAME AMOUNT OF TIME.

John 11:9: “Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.” These words were spoken by our Lord in the midst of the

anxious moments of what appeared to be procrastination because of Jesus' delay in going to Lazarus. At the same time Christ's disciples were worried for the danger that awaited the Lord in Judea. But the Lord was not in a hurry, nor was He worried. He was operating on the Father's time. Our Lord took the time to rebuke everyone by saying, in essence, "I know what time it is. I know there are twelve working hours in any day; I have spent this day wisely and at the end of the day, all shall be well." I love the statement made by the people who had just witnessed a miracle by our Lord. Mark 7:37: "And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." Every day, Christ utilized His time wisely. Oh, that we, too, would "do all things well" within the course of the 24 hours God gives each and every one of us. Carpe diem!

II. THERE IS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF OUR DAYS.

Proverbs 3:2: "For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." Notice "length of days and long life." Many years ago, I heard Russell Anderson, the co-founder of my alma mater, bring Proverbs 3:2 to our attention in a chapel message. He challenged the students to not only have a long life (as God so wills), but to have length of days. He pointed out that when a life is surrendered to God, we would make the most of each individual day. In other words, some will get more out of their days than others. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Brother Anderson was a poor Kentucky country boy that started out plowing behind a mule, then in high school worked in the sawmill and then became a coal miner. Without a formal education, in his early adulthood he moved to Michigan and went into dry wall and the housing market. Brother Anderson gave his heart to Christ and became an even more successful businessman. Besides maintaining his businesses, he spent most of his life using his profits in financing soul winning enterprises in America and foreign missions abroad. Russell Anderson passed into glory at 91 years of age on April 18, 2023. Through his influence, he helped start ten colleges and over three thousand churches. It is estimated that directly and indirectly, Brother Anderson was responsible for the salvation of twenty-five million people around the world. It is difficult to give a solid figure on his personal monetary contributions, but those who knew him best have recorded that hundreds of millions of dollars in his long years of service had

been given to the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” I would say that this was a man who knew the value of one day. Carpe diem!

III. THERE IS A SWEET CALM TO DAYS WELL SEIZED.

Ephesians 5:15-16. Colossians 4:5: “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.” By God’s grace, He has dispersed gifts to His children as Romans 12:6a speaks of: “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us...” We will love doing what God has gifted us to do. Even people in the world can teach us something about doing what we love and loving what we do (Luke 16:8). Redeeming time is not always rushing our time.

In 1964 David McCullough purchased a second-hand 1941 Royal Standard typewriter for 25 dollars. He wrote all his books on this treasured old typewriter, including *Truman*, *The Wright Brothers*, *Mornings on Horseback (the early days of Theodore Roosevelt)*, *John Adams*, *The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914*; *The Great Bridge: The Epic Story of the Building of the Brooklyn Bridge*. To give you an idea of this famous author’s work ethic, it took him 7 years to write *John Adams* and 10 years to write *Truman*. Long after we entered the computer age, McCullough was asked why he still continued to write on his old typewriter. He answered: “I love putting paper in. I love the way the keys come up and actually print the letters. I love it when I swing that carriage and the bell rings like an old trolley car. I love the feeling of making something with my hands. People tell me if I used a computer, I could go so much faster. Well, I don’t want to go faster. If anything, I should go slower. I don’t think all that fast.” Four times in the previous quote David McCullough said, “I love.” He did what he loved and he loved what he did.

Never forget the words repeated by George W. Truett, “Success, what is success? Success is finding the will of God for your life and doing it.” Romans 12:2: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Once we are centered in God’s will, we will be doing what we love and love what we’re doing. Deuteronomy 30:20:

“That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” Colossians 3:4: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Carpe diem!

IV. WE SHOULD HAVE A GOAL TO MAKE EVERY DAY A GOOD DAY.

I Peter 3:10a, "For he that will love life, and see good days:

- A. Be sweet. I Peter 3: 10b: "...let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."
- B. Have a godly testimony. 1 Peter 3:11: "Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." Ephesians 6:15: "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Jeremiah 29:7: "And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."
- C. Live on praying grounds. I Peter 3:12: "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Carpe diem!

-Pastor Pope-