

Time

“A nonspatial continuum in which events occur in apparently irreversible succession from the past through the present to the future” (AHD 1271). When is the last time you thought of *time* in those terms? The definition of time brings out some interesting thoughts about our existence here on earth. The irreversible succession of events through past, present and future contains the lives of both you and I. We cannot change the succession of events in the past but we may change those actions of present and future. Yet making a change in the present requires planning to have occurred in the past. The change you desire may not ever take place unless you at some point in time make a decisive decision. Truly it takes time to become the person we want to be at some point in the present and future. Notice the following areas in life that take time and planning to achieve:

It Takes Time to Grow in Christian Wisdom:

Spiritual growth and wisdom have a beginning point in time. Solomon said, “*The fear of Jehovah is the **beginning** of knowledge...*” (Prov. 1:6). When an individual first “fears” Jehovah he or she will begin a journey of gaining wisdom. The present tense verb “*study*” or “*give diligence*” in II Tim. 3:15 indicates ongoing activity. So if we want to set a future goal to be wise and full of understanding then “*It Takes Time*” to achieve this goal. The important part is the initial fear of Jehovah that motivates the giving diligence or studying. When the motivation continues so does the objective!

The apostle Paul renounced the poor study practices of the Corinthians as did the author of Hebrews to the Hebrew Christians (I Cor. 3:1ff; Heb. 5:11ff). There was nothing they could do to change what they had done in the past regarding their poor study habits; however, they could change those practices in the future. What about you and me?

It Takes Time to be a Good Husband or Wife:

When a couple fall in love and make the decision to be married, they have begun a new relationship at a point in time. They set goals together and help each other to achieve those goals. When that initial fear of Jehovah is within, their goals are going to be based on that fear. They will set out to love, honor, submit and consider one another in tenderness and compassion (cf. Eph. 5:22ff; I Pet. 3:7 etc.). Each takes into consideration that they do not have what they set out for at the beginning of their marriage. These things “take time.” When two enter into a relationship with this knowledge they will be patient with each other as each develop and achieve the set goal.

At times, the marriage will not meet the high standards that God places upon it. The couple may argue, separate, and in many cases even divorce. Once these types of events occur in time we cannot change them. We can; however, prevent such event by planning for our future together.

It Takes Time to be a Good Parent:

When a man and wife have children, another beginning occurs. Spiritual goals will be set due to their mutual fear for Jehovah God; yet again, they cannot expect to be model parents at the beginning point of parenthood. As the child's mind develops, so the parents in their responsibilities. When the child is able to understand speech, the parents begin teaching (Eph. 6:1). When the child needs discipline, the parents administer it (Prov. 13:24). The child will learn through time to honor his or her father and mother through the parent's diligence.

Other Areas of Time:

We could add other areas to the list. It takes time to become a consistent prayerful person. It takes time to develop skills to teach a bible class, preach, or become an elder or deacon in the body of Christ. It takes time to develop a character of "*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control*" (Gal. 5:22-23). These areas of life do not occur over night but require effort on each individual's part.

What Causes Bible study, Marriages, Parenting or any Other Area of Christian Development to Fail?

The reason we sometimes fail in these areas may be multifaceted; however, often it is because we forget the fact that time marches forward and passes quickly (cf. Jam. 4:14). A specific relationship fails not because of good intentions, but because of a failure to follow through with these intentions through time. That beginning point of motivation and fear for Jehovah God must keep burning if the present and future goals are to be met. We cannot go back in time. If I'm not willing to put time into any relationship or goal it will not be achieved. Have you checked your watch lately? What are you doing with your time?