

24 HOURS:

Part 2: Investments & Returns

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A popular opinion today is that twenty-four hours doesn't seem to last as long as it used to. Jobs, family and other commitments may consume up to 20 hours per day. Even if we increase the time that we dedicate to getting things done, it seems that we achieve less and less. Our response is to believe that even the simplest tasks cannot be completed in just one day, and depleting our days of meaning.

But what if we could fill our days with meaning...enough that we could accomplish the impossible within one day? Many have speculated if this notion is truly possible, and if so, how it could impact our world.

Jesus has already shown us how in a 24 hour period, we can literally change the world through living a life of meaning.

One major aspect of His life of meaning was a daily commitment to His priorities – passion, people and purpose.

Another aspect of Jesus' life of meaning was His investments, and the return He received from them.

Mark 1:29:31 “As soon as Jesus and his followers left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew.³⁰ Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever, and the people told Jesus about her.³¹ So Jesus went to her bed, took her hand, and helped her up. The fever left her, and she began serving them.”

Jesus chose to obediently do the will of God in His life by making a personal investment in other people.

His desired return was that God would be glorified through His life.

A Diversified Portfolio

Many financial counselors recommend diversity in our investments to satisfy three major goals:

...growth ...income ...protection

Jesus was devoted to similar goals throughout His ministry...

Luke 13:18-19 Then Jesus said, "What is God's kingdom like? What can I compare it with? **19** It is like a mustard seed that a man plants in his garden. The seed grows and becomes a tree, and the wild birds build nests in its branches."

...and as a result experienced:

- growth – He encountered people at their lowest point of usefulness, and encouraged them to reach their full potential.
- income – by helping seekers become believers and grow to be like Him.
- protection – by interceding for every believer by prayer while on earth, and by providing the Holy Spirit when He ascended into heaven.

Many financial counselors recommend diversity in our investments to take advantage of different opportunities.

Jesus displayed the same commitment while investing in people:

1. As a mentor.
2. As a guide.
3. As a conscience.
4. As an example.

Asset Management

Crucial to ensuring the success of our investments is keeping track of its progress and continue to invest.

Jesus on several occasions checked on the progress of His investment:

Matthew 16:13-18 When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his followers, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" **14** They answered, "Some say you are John the Baptist. Others say you are Elijah, and still others say you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** Then Jesus asked them, "And who do you say I am?" **16** Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** Jesus answered, "You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because no person taught you that. My Father in heaven showed you who I am. **18** So I tell you, you are Peter. On this rock I will build my church, and the power of death will not be able to defeat it.

When we take stock of our personal investments in others, we must, like Jesus ensure that:

- We are being received.
- We are being remembered.

- We are giving rewards.
- We are being responsive.
- We are being accountable.

While Jesus looked for evidence of a return of His investment in the **present**, his concern was for an **eternal** reward.

Matthew 6:19-21 "Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being."

The Nest Egg

The ultimate sign of a successful investment is the point where it yields a healthy return.

For Jesus the return was two-fold:

1. An **immediate** return.

As Jesus continued to invest Himself in others, He was able to realize an immediate return when He observed...

...a **commitment** to the things of **God**.

Mark 1:29 "As soon as Jesus and his followers left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew."

...a **recognition** of the **needs** of others.

Mark 1:30 "Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever, and the people told Jesus about her."

...a **response** of service.

Mark 1:31 "So Jesus went to her bed, took her hand, and helped her up. The fever left her, and she began serving them."

2. A **sustained** return.

The lasting legacy of Jesus' investment would be realized in the generations to follow...

John 17:6-26

*"I spelled out your character in detail
To the men and women you gave me.
They were yours in the first place;
Then you gave them to me,
And they have now done what you said.
They know now, beyond the shadow of a doubt,
That everything you gave me is firsthand from you,*

*For the message you gave me, I gave them;
And they took it, and were convinced
That I came from you.
They believed that you sent me.
I pray for them.
I'm not praying for the God-rejecting world
But for those you gave me,
For they are yours by right.
Everything mine is yours, and yours mine,
And my life is on display in them.
For I'm no longer going to be visible in the world;
They'll continue in the world
While I return to you.
Holy Father, guard them as they pursue this life
That you conferred as a gift through me,
So they can be one heart and mind
As we are one heart and mind.
As long as I was with them, I guarded them
In the pursuit of the life you gave through me;
I even posted a night watch.
And not one of them got away, "*

The Turning Point . . .

The foundation of a commitment to living a life of meaning is **shaped** by our **willingness** to invest ourselves in other people.

Each day of our lives that we dedicate to investing in others follows the example of Jesus in which we can expect **immediate** and **sustained** rewards.