

The Most Important Day of Your Life

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes the importance of living in the present to fully receive God's blessings and fulfill our purpose.

Duration: 31:40

Scripture: Matthew 6:9, Philippians 3:12-13

Topics: "Importance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of focusing on the present moment and not dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. He warns against allowing negative thoughts and images to rob us of joy and condemns Satan's use of such things to bring us down. The preacher encourages daily listening to God and waiting at His doorway for guidance and blessings. He also mentions his ongoing series on vital truths in the Bible, highlighting the significance of understanding essential teachings for salvation and growth.

Transcript

I wanna continue this morning on this series, which is something I've never tried before in my life, which is a vital truth series. I've been praying and studying and thinking since now, I don't know if this is the number nine, that I'm presenting the most vital truths in the Bible. The Bible has many kinds of truths and they're all important, they all have their place, but then there's vital truths and then there's not so vital truths that don't affect salvation and growth so much as others do, but all scripture is inspired by God and is profitable.

But Christians disagree on certain aspects of prophecy, let's say in the book of Revelation, and we can disagree about that, but you have to know the vital truths about salvation and growth and how to receive God's blessings and be a blessing. And the one today I'm giving you is of a very, very practical nature, very practical nature, and it's called the most important day of your life, the most important day of your life. For the text, I have two to show that this is a truth that is emphasized in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

We'll look at the Old Testament first. It's gonna be a bunch of verses jumping up at us today, so keep alert and watch. Exodus 16, then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you.

"The people are to go out each day "and gather enough for that day. "In this way, I will test them "and see whether they will follow my instructions." And then in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is teaching the disciples to pray in Matthew 6, verses nine. We'll say this passage together, okay? "This, then, is how you should pray.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. "Your kingdom come, your will be done "on earth as it is in heaven. "Give us today our daily bread." Because many of us don't know the most important day of our lives, we have a lot of wasted living.

And there's a lot of Christians who are spinning our wheels. We're not making much progress like we should. We're not receiving a lot of things God has for us.

And we're certainly not fulfilling his calling in our lives. And it's all because of this rather elusive truth, which is the most important day of your life. And that day is today.

In fact, I would like to inform you that the only thing you and I have is today. Everything else is either gone or unsure. And you can easily miss today because of yesterday and tomorrow.

And your todays keep going by and ain't a lot happening. And we're missing a whole lot because we're half anchored to the past. We're half afraid of the future.

And day after day after day goes by. And that's the only day you have. In fact, I'll go further.

That's your life. You know what your life is? Today. You can't go back and you're not sure about tomorrow.

So what do we have but today? Today is the only day you can receive anything from God. Forget about manana. You're not sure.

You can't receive anything yesterday from God because it's history. It's gone. Do you notice what Jesus taught the disciples? He said, pray this way.

Give us this day our what bread? That's the only bread you can get. You can go on one of these diet plans where they send you a month's of food. God doesn't operate that way.

God's only doling out what we need today. That's it. He's not giving me today what I need next Friday because I might not see next Friday.

What he's concentrating on is today. All blessings can only be received today. There is no blessing you can receive last Wednesday because you missed it.

It's gone. There are no blessings for next Wednesday because we're not sure we'll see it. So all we have, all we can focus on, all we can concentrate on, all we should be thinking about every morning that we wake up is God make today a masterpiece because it's the only day I have.

This is my life. Do you need wisdom? He'll only give it to you today. He's not giving it to you next week and you can't get it yesterday.

Do you need strength? Do you need endurance? Anybody need anything, direction? There's only one day you can get it is today. Everything else is elusive and seductive because I know enough from my own life and counseling thousands of people and reading a whole lot that there are people who actually lose their

lives, never grow, never get efficient in living because they're torn between yesterday and who did what and who said what and how I was hurt and conjuring up all this stuff about yesterday and then I wonder what will happen tomorrow. Who knows what could happen tomorrow.

I'm gonna lay awake at night and worry about tomorrow and I don't even know if tomorrow will come but I'm gonna worry about it anyway despite what Jesus said, despite what the Bible teaches. So between paralyzed by the past, afraid of the future, people let their todays go right by. The only day we can receive anything from the Lord is today, strength, provision.

You know the only day you can get saved and become a Christian in case you're here and you've never been born again, you just go to church but you've never been given a new heart and have a new life. The only day you can get saved, today is the day of salvation. You can't get saved yesterday, it didn't happen.

You don't say tomorrow. There's all kinds of warning in scripture. Never say tomorrow.

That's procrastination or living in denial. The only day I have to receive from God, please God, make God happy. What's the only day that you can tell God you love him? Today, you can't do it yesterday and tomorrow you're not sure.

Today. You would think we would focus, all of us, so much on today but the way life works out and the way Satan uses our memory bank and then attacks us with fear, we got one foot in the past and one foot afraid of the future and then you can't even get a good stance for today. You don't even concentrate on the opportunities of today because yesterday's gone, tomorrow is uncertain and so many people miss today.

I told my wife, write a song if you can. Let's pray she'll get a melody for this and words. Don't miss today because of tomorrow.

You miss your today. Procrastinate. What's the only time you could read the Bible? So just stop telling God about one day you're really gonna draw near to him.

It's total fantasy. Today's the day. What's the only day I can pray? Today.

I don't, ah, I'm gonna really give myself to prayer. No, you won't. Pray today.

You can't pray yesterday and tomorrow you're not sure of. What's the only day that you can share Christ with someone? Don't say no, God, use me to reach me. Today, today, keep open.

Who are you talking to? Who does God give an open door to? Who can you speak to? Who can you invite to church? Eternity is looming. What's the only day we have? Today. What's the only day we can work for Christ? Today.

What's the only day we can tell people who have meant a lot in our lives that we love them? Today. The only day we can show mercy. It's the only day we can hear from God.

Did you know that God might have a word for some of us? A word of direction, a word of correction, a word of comfort. You know, a word for us. How many believe God has like a word for us sometime? How many have ever been spoken to by God? Just, you know, he makes something real or he speaks by his spirit.

Look what Proverbs says about it. Look at Proverbs. Proverbs 8, 34.

Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. How do they watch? Daily. Because that's the only time you can hear from God, is today.

I can't hear what he's gonna say next Friday and I'll need something different on Friday. Should I see it? And what he said last week, last month, you can't live in the past. You cannot live in the past.

Negative or positive, and I'll get to negative later, but even positive. I grew up in a denomination and among people, and I've seen this all my life, everywhere I've been, and I don't want to be this way, where people are telling stories and legends of what it once was when they were young. But they ain't all that today.

But oh, if you only knew the meeting I was in and how God came. All right, that's great, but what are you doing today? Oh, back in Trinidad, when I was in open Bible church and was 17, and we had, oh, I remember, that's great, but how about today? Because that's gone, that's ancient history. And if it really was that good, it would affect you today.

You know, there's a song a friend of mine wrote years ago. I'm so tired of being stirred, but not being changed. Stirred, stirred, stirred, stirred, but my today's never changed.

I'm still living in the past or living in the future. I grew up around that. So the testimony used to be, I want to thank God I'm saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost.

I want to thank God that 22 years ago, he met me at an altar and all of that. And I knew some of those people. They hadn't read the Bible in a week.

They never opened their mouth for the Lord, but they were talking about stuff 22 years ago. Hey, today is my life. I thank God for every blessing.

How many thank God for every blessing in your life? But today is a new day. And God says, behold, I do a new thing. You can't live off of what happened 20 years ago, 40 years ago.

Heard that all my life. The Bible tells us also that not only can we only hear from God today, if God wants to tell me something, I can only hear it today if I listen today. But you know, part of Christianity is taking up our cross and denying ourself.

You know that. Part of Christianity is denying the selfish nature we all have in us. That didn't get one amen.

But how many know it's part of Christianity? So listen to what Jesus said. Then he said to them all, whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross dearly and follow me. The will of God is difficult many times for us like it was for Jesus when it came to the cross.

But we have to take up that cross dearly, dearly. Whenever it's difficult, you gotta face it dearly. Don't worry about next week, it's enough for today.

That reminds me, I laughed when it happened. Just step up here for a second. I was once much younger and I was with a minister watching from the side and his wife was there.

And he said, well, I think I'm gonna be going. And he said goodbye to the minister. I was just watching, I was a kid.

And he said, okay, don't be afraid, I'm just gonna lift you. And he went to his wife, he went like this and he hoisted her up and he said, well, the Bible says take up your cross and follow me. She didn't think that was funny.

She gave him one of those looks. How many husbands know when your wife gives you that look, it just freezes everything. Even your tie just goes out straight and stands there.

But you can only do that daily. Only can do that daily. Okay, but what about yesterday and what about tomorrow? Past simple, I got a memory bank and I live in a world where people have plans for tomorrow.

There is a tomorrow, should the Lord let us wake up. So let's talk about that as I close. I wanna tell you about the secret.

I've learned it in the past but I'm learning it more now. How to make your yesterdays and tomorrows work for your today. But you can't take your eyes off today.

That's the only day you have. My wife can't say, well, I'm gonna, you know, God has to give me some songs. You gotta listen today, that's the only day.

Everything else is illusory. Today is the day. So a lot of us get frozen by the past.

We have memories. Yesterday can be used to bless our todays but what it involves is remembering and forgetting. Forgetting and remembering.

And a lot of us really need a lesson from God and revelation and help from the Holy Spirit to know how to forget and know how to remember. There are certain things we're always to remember and there are other things we are never to remember, we're only to forget them. But if you remember what you should forget and forget what you should remember, you're going nowhere very quickly.

That's for all of us. Well, let's talk about remembering. The Bible says, because we do have a history, that we're to remember all the good things that God has done for us.

Over and over in the Old Testament, you'll see it in the Psalms, you'll see it in the prophets. They go back hundreds and sometimes a thousand years and they'll say, remember when we were in Egypt. This is generations later.

Remember when we were in Egypt and he stretched out his hand and he delivered us from Pharaoh and his authority and power. Remember when we came to the Red Sea and there was nowhere to go. What did he do? He opened the Red Sea and God is saying to them, the same God who brought you out of Egypt and the same God who opened the Red Sea, he will help you again today.

So remember all of his faithfulness. Remember every answered prayer. Remember every blessing he ever gave you.

How many have a past full of blessings from God? Faithfulness. Can we put our hands together and just clap real loud? We can remember, I can remember. Remember answered prayers, mercies, deliverances, God's faithfulness, God's provision.

And then there are things we are never to remember even though they're part of the same memory bank. We're never to remember them. You remember them only at your own risk.

Never to remember them. The scripture that I wanna put up is found in Philippians. Look, Philippians 3, 12 and 13.

Not that I've already obtained all this. The apostle says I have already arrived at my goal but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of everything.

In other words, that God has called me to do. But one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. Everybody, whoever hurt you in your life, forget it.

How will that help you? How will that help me? Who said what? He said, she said. When the bottom fell out, when there was a disaster, when there was a loss, when there was a heartbreak, when the guy did something horrible or the girl did something horrible. Our own moral failures.

We're never to think about them. They're under the blood. What are you thinking about them for? They're under the blood.

God forgot them. Why are you remembering them? Yeah, that deserves a hand clap. Come on, God forgot them.

What are we remembering them? They're negative. They're negative. Scenes and snapshots of evil things that we were involved in or saw.

Images that are not wholesome and good. We're never to remember them. Come on, brothers and sisters.

It's your sucabesa, it's your head. You can control it by the grace of God. You can't have people walking in and out of there.

Don't you lock your door at night? Well, then lock that door at night. Come on, can we say amen? People dwell on these things and then whatever you think about produces emotions. And then people can get depressed with nobody talking to them.

They get depressed by just thinking. I've seen people transform, sitting in the same chair, get depressed and you wonder what happened. It's because of the videos that they're playing in their head.

Negative stuff, wrong stuff, filthy stuff, evil stuff. Satan uses that to condemn us. He'll rob your joy in a second if you think about those things.

There are things to remember but then forgetting those things that are behind. There's lots never to remember. I've had people tell me different kinds of testimonies, especially if they're newer Christians, they have to be careful even as they give their testimony because they go back and start to relive some of that stuff.

It's not positive, it's not wholesome. The Bible tells us that you gotta be careful what you start going back into. Look, you wanna know what you should think about about your past? Here's what you should pick out about your past.

Look, Philippians, finally, brothers and sisters, whatever's true, whatever's noble, whatever's right, whatever's pure, whatever's lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. Come on, can we praise the Lord? We all have nasty things in our past. We have to

think about them.

God saved us from that, did he not? He's washed us in the blood. How must God feel? What must the angels think when we're dwelling on things God forgot? I just wonder how that all works out. Like how they must be scratching their wings or whatever they scratch or their heads and saying, like what is up with these people? They're thinking about things that he died to wash away.

He delivered them and they're thinking about it. Or who hurt who and who did what? And listen, some of this stuff is very delicate. You ask God to help you.

Molestations and all of that, I've heard every kind of sordid thing, but you gotta get out of that. You can't, forgetting those things that are behind. Those things are, forget about it.

You gotta do it like that New York thing, right? Forget about it, right? Forget about it and remember his faithfulness. How many can all right now, just close your eyes for a second, everybody close. How many can think of some blessing God gave you in the past? He came through for you like big time.

Lift your hand right now with your eyes closed. Look at that, look at that. Open your eyes, look at all these hands up here.

That's what you should think about. That's the way your past can help your today. But don't focus too much on the past.

Just use it to help you today because today's the only day, you got today. Today's the only day you have. Ask God, God make today a masterpiece.

Don't let me have one wrong word. Let me not displease you in any way today, all right? I'm not telling you I'm gonna be perfect for the rest of my life because I'm not gonna tell you about any tomorrows. I don't know about it.

Today is the day I need you. Today's the only day you can help me. So who can I help? Who can I be kind to? Who can I walk carefully before the Lord? What day can I do that? Only today.

How can I lift somebody up? I might have my problems, but what are they going through? Who can I help? Just today, God. I heard a man pray this when I was maybe a year in the ministry. And it struck me, stayed with me till this day.

I shared it with one of the most renowned Bible teachers and authors in the whole country yesterday on the phone. The man prayed this way as we were all praying. And he said, God, thank you that we're alive today.

Now make today a masterpiece. Make my today a masterpiece for your glory and to help others. A masterpiece.

Look how it simplifies life. Just today. Otherwise you get overwhelmed by the past and the future, which we'll get to in a second.

What if, what if, what if, what if, what if? Just make today a masterpiece. How many believe God can help us till midnight tonight? Lift your hand if you believe he can help. Then should you wake up in the morning, do it again.

Now your tomorrow becomes a new today. But let's close by talking about people who always live in manana, always live in manana. They live in the future and it's usually fear, anxiety, what if? What if my husband dies? What if my wife dies? What if this happens? What if one of my children or grandchildren gets ill? Well, that's a great way to live today, worrying about tomorrow.

And you know what? That's in straight disobedience to the Lord. Look at Matthew. Matthew 6, 34.

Therefore, ooh, let's say it together. Let's rock and roll together on this verse. Therefore, come on loud.

Do not worry about tomorrow. Keep going. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

How many have found that to be true? I'm thinking back to like how when we moved. We moved from Atlantic Avenue where we had the church, then we rented the Y for a while, and then we made this huge step of buying a theater on Foppish Avenue. That was a big project to me.

I had never done anything like that. We're talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars. Well, that was just nickel and dime stuff compared to when we moved here.

Well, that involved dozens of millions of dollars and complexities. We had to sell the last building. We had to buy this building, but there were tenants in some of the other buildings on Livingston Street.

How do you get them out? And then there was this problem, and how are you gonna get the finances? But wait a minute. Then there's the building department, but then there's an architect. You think I'm used to that? I'm not used to any of that.

So it was overwhelming, and then I learned I can only do it day by day. I can only take a card and prayerfully say, God, what can I do today? I can't look at the end result. There's too many steps.

It overwhelms me. Listen to me now. This will help you.

The biggest project, you know the old Chinese proverb that says the longest journey begins with the first step. You can only do what you can do today. How could I do today what I'm gonna do on Wednesday? You can only do.

So I had to start living day by day. Otherwise, it would have totally overwhelmed me. I wouldn't have slept at night, but God gave me sleep through it all.

You can ask my wife, and it was just, Lord, daily, give us this day our daily bread, because that's all he's giving. That's all he's giving, and don't try to save what he gives you today for tomorrow. Should you wake up? Don't live off of what he did for you Sunday, because if they did that in the Old Testament, the manna that came down, if they saved it, it rotted.

People who live off of yesterday's blessing, there's a rotting feeling in the whole thing, smells. They're trying to live off of stuff that God did, who knows, months, years ago, decades ago. So today, I can face anything.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, and I don't have to worry about tomorrow, because I got the best one for you. Oh, yeah, Jesus Christ is the same. How many, wait, wait, wait, yesterday, how many saw him work in your life yesterday? Wave your hand at me if he ever did anything for you, yesterday, that he can do the same today, and should you have a tomorrow, he'll be there.

He doesn't change. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. I love you all.

Did you know that? I really love you. I was out in California this week preaching, and very nice people, but boy, I missed you. I was in a praise and worship service, but I missed you.

I miss hearing the way you sing, and I wanna help you today, and this is the most practical thing. I would say in my life, this is one of the 10 most important things God has shown me. You can only live it on a daily basis, and it leads to such peace, because if you look at the whole picture, and my life, and then when I die, who will bury me? What song should they sing at my funeral? I have people talk to me like that.

Don't laugh. They're people, they're whack. They're talking all kinds of things about that.

Like, what does that got to do with today? Today is the day that the Lord has made. If you're not a Christian here today, please, please ask God to forgive you of your sins, and give you, put your faith in Christ. Please do that today.

Don't say tomorrow. You might not hear his voice. If he's speaking to you, you know calluses build day after day.

You might not hear his voice anymore. That's for all of us. Whatever his will is, don't do it tomorrow.

You don't know. Do it today. Be open to his will today.

That's the only day we have. What's the only day you can praise him today? Only day you can tell someone you love him. I have a friend who passed away, and I kick myself, my wife knows this, when I hear his name mentioned, because he became a friend, and he lost here.

There were three brothers, and one died in a plane crash years ago, many years ago. His name was James, my name. And this person who worked with Carol, and helped the church, he told me one day, you know, you call me, and you help me so much.

Out of nowhere, you call me, and I'm shy to call someone I don't know, but I felt God prompted me. And he said, you know, I believe you're the brother that, you're the brother that I lost. God gave me a replacement.

And to this day, I was so busy, and he's busy, and we lived in different cities. And then he up and died. And of course, we spent time together, and I called him, but I wasn't the friend I should have been.

I wasn't. I kick myself to this day. They asked, the wife asked me, the widow asked me to speak at the funeral.

I did. But my heart was broken, because I had todays that I let go by, and said, manana, I'll call him. Manana, I'll tell him that I love him.

And it was just the anniversary of his death, couple weeks ago, and the other brother, the other brother called me, and we talked on the phone. I said, why are you calling me? He said, because you know, my brother passed away. It's been X number of years, whatever, couple years.

It was just hard for me, so I thought you could help me and encourage me. And we just talked. And if you love someone, tell them today you love them.

Tell your children you love them every day, because they could be taken, or you could be taken. Tell anyone you care for, I love you, today. Don't say manana, or they know.

Tell them today. We should all do that. How many say amen? Because you never know, today's the only day you could love them.

Do you wanna praise the Lord? Well, praise the Lord today. Because he's worthy, he's worthy. Close your eyes with me.

I'm gonna ask you, I'm gonna be bold. I'm gonna ask you to lift both your hands up. And I'm gonna ask you to open your mouth now and just give God praise for today.

You can't praise him yesterday, and you don't know about Monday, you don't know. Could you praise him out loud today, everybody in the building? Thank him for something. Praise him, adore him, magnify him, exalt him.

We praise you today, God. This is the day that the Lord has made. I'm gonna rejoice and be glad in it today.

Today, you love me. Today, I can praise you. Today, you can speak to me.

Today, I can help somebody along the way. Help us, God, not to live in the past. Help us not to be afraid of the future.

Help us to live today, hoy, hoy, hoy, today, Lord. No manana. No manana.

Today, Lord, we love you. We praise you. We magnify your name.

Today's the only day we can give him a hand clap of praise. Let's do it, come on. Fuerte, fuerte aplauso.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. You are worthy, Lord. You are worthy, you are worthy.

You are worthy. Lord, make today a masterpiece for all of us. A masterpiece of a day.

Today. Yesterday, it's gone. Tomorrow, not sure, but today we have.

Today, we're alive. Today, we're breathing. Today, we can love you.

Today, we can help somebody. Today, we can pray. Today, we can study your word.

Help us to do it, focused by the Spirit on today, the most important day of our lives. Bless your people now. Let your smile be upon us all day.

We pray it in Christ's name. And everyone said. Amen.

Today, hug somebody and tell them you love them with the love of the Lord.

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