

No Time for Time-Outs



Exodus 6:1-13

In baseball when the team faces a tough decision, the coach often calls for a time-out. In basketball when the press is on, the captain can call for a time-out. In soccer when the team is bushed, they can gain a few minutes respite with a time-out. But, life and recovery does not work that way. There is no way that we can stop that clock of time to think about our problems. We cannot save, store, go back or stretch time. We may use or we may abuse time, but the clock keeps on ticking—inexorably. *Time is unyielding.* Daily we must plan and purpose how to spend that game time God has given us and we must always remember that His true desire is to be our Lord, our coach and our team captain, *if we let Him.*

1. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could say we have completely recovered from active addiction? We have arrived into our Promised Land and we can finally take a *Time-Out* from seeking God and recovery. **Wrong!**
2. *There is no time for Time-Outs!* We have seen the truth demonstrated again and again. Commencing to go back into the game of drinking or drugging even after a long period of sobriety or abstinence, we are in a short time as bad as before and loosing the game.
3. We are not playing a game in which a loss is a temporary setback. We are dealing with something for which Satan is daily lurking to take us out. *We are dealing with a time-bomb and Satan does not play fair!* The Word in: *2 Cor 2:11 reminds us that Satan is here to take advantage of us.*

John 10:7-10 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

1. Throughout our time here on earth whatever our body is repeatedly exposed to, that's what it will practice. It can practice righteousness or it can practice unrighteousness. *Example:* When you took your first slug of whiskey—I would imagine it just about got you good. It was hard to swallow and burned all the way down; particularly if you drank it straight. You had to learn how by repeating the procedure.
2. When you smoked that first joint you probably coughed and spit and carried on, because it's unnatural to put that smoke and substance inside your lungs. You had to repeat the procedure to learn to do it. You had to practice until *you thought* you had it right.
3. Before coming to Christ we daily practiced the excuses for our worldly behavior. Whether it was drinking, drugging, over eating, adultery, fornication, viewing pornography, etc. "I got fired today," "I got a great job today." "I had a fight with my spouse," "My kids are driving me crazy," "I'm broke or I have extra money." On and on we take *time-outs* from our relationship and commitment to God to find "*nothing but excuses*" for our actions, attitudes and our worldly choices. *Some even went as far as finding excuses for their excuses.*
4. If you are clean and sober today, does any of this craziness or any of your old excuses make sense? Today; *Addiction and Addictive Thinking and Behavior* should make no sense at all.
5. As a Christian and in recovery when the push is on and we have a tough decision to make there is no time for us to call for a "*Time-Out.*" *This is where we must learn to press into God's strength, press into His wisdom, practice it daily and finally start getting it right because the clock is ticking and time is unyielding*

2 Chron 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

1. Since addiction has defeated us in mind, body, soul and spirit and has caused a breakdown in our lives, we are going to need God's strength to rebuild that which was broken and *that which the enemy has destroyed or stolen.*
2. In order to rebuild with God, "*No more time-outs!*" We must remain steadfast in this battle and must acknowledge several things. (a) God knows the beginning and God knows the end. (b) God will direct our steps if we just ask Him to, and (c) follow His instructions *one-day-at-a-time* with "**No Time-Outs for good behavior!**"

3. Look around. *"You are not alone in this battle with the enemy of active addiction."* Others you know and others you care about may be battling and struggling just as you are. *"Not One"* of us can afford to take a *time-out* with the enemy waiting to take advantage of us by knocking that ball out of our hands and back into his court



1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

1. Recovery and spiritual growth are never easy. Progress requires that we remain steadfast in the faith by following God's game plan (*His will*) and the principals of disciplined faith on a daily basis. Like athletes we need to stay on God's playing field and we need to put aside *"All"* obstacles to our spiritual growth...our dependency, our pursuit of worldly pleasure and above all else: *"Our denial."*
2. Satan won't ever stop in his relentless efforts to distract you. *He's a thief. He's a killer.* He will take what he can get by simply knocking you out of bounds or snatching that ball right from your hands.
3. Just remember if you remain sober, if you remain vigilant and if you remain steadfast in the faith you have the power to take that ball back and win this game. *You have the game power and the knowledge to continue playing and doing what God has already told you to do.*
4. It is that simple. Continuing to play with *"No Time Outs"* will put you over that end goal. Don't quit believing and acting on God's Word.....*Remain Steadfast...*because you have the best coach (*God*) and defensive line (*The Word*) anyone in the game could ask for.

STEADFASTNESS: Stability in commitment or belief. The apostle Paul referred to "the steadfastness of your faith in Christ" (Col 2:5). The loss of stability may be avoided if one will "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary,

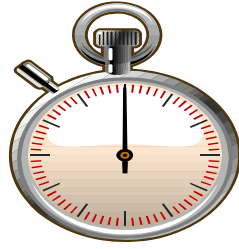
2 Peter 3:17-18 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

1. Have you ever felt like forfeiting the game? Ready to throw in the towel? Or, maybe you've already given up...felt that there were no answers and that you were simply trapped right where you sit. Well, according to God and His Word, you do not have to stay just sitting on the bench.
2. According to the Word, hopelessness isn't caused by lack of money. It isn't caused by lack of education. It isn't caused by the negative circumstances in your life, *including active addiction or relapse.* Hopelessness comes from being without God in your game. *It comes from taking a time-out or being a stranger to His covenant.*

Eph 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

1. Anybody, anywhere including those of us struggling with addictive personalities can have hope if we know Jesus and the covenant promises of God.
2. Your background, race or financial status does not matter. You can live in the worst slum in the world and still have hope in God because He is not limited by man's resources. God isn't limited by man's prejudices. God is an equal opportunity employer! *Mark 9:23 Jesus said, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."*
3. *No more time for time-outs!* If you have God than you have the best head coach and everything it takes to be a winner in this game of life and recovery. You have everything you need to be a part of the glorious, victorious end-time team of God. *Get aggressive! Press in! Play hard and lay hold of the kingdom of God with all the playing force you can muster.*

4. That is the price you will pay to win in this game. But one thing is for sure, you not only have the present victory, but also the eternal victory you gain will be worth it all.
5. If you need hope today, ask God into your heart and if you are already a believer, take authority over the devil and cast all hopelessness away from you. Get back into the game of recovery with *“No More Time Outs.”* *Not even for good behavior...* Get back into the game by standing on God's goal line. *His Word, His personal promises to you, and let hope rise up within you!*



The Time Clock is ticking so ask yourself on whose court are you going to be a team player.