

Seize the Day

Time is more valuable than money. It is the only commodity that you can't make more of. Why would you ever want to waste it by not doing what you really want to do?

(Norm Stoehr)

In the film, *Dead Poet Society*, Robin Williams plays the part of Mr. John Keating, an idealistic English Professor at an elite prep school for boys. In the opening scene Mr. Keating takes his poetry class into the hallway. Standing in front of the school's trophy case, filled with awards and team pictures, he says, "Now I would like you to step forward and peruse some of the faces from the past. If you listen real close, you can hear them whisper their legacy to you. Go on, lean in." Then in a raspy voice he whispered in Latin, "Carpe Diem! Carpe Diem! Carpe Diem! Seize the day, you boys. Make your lives extraordinary." Then he quotes poetry, "Gather you rosebuds while you may—old time is still a flying. And this same flower that smiles today—tomorrow will be dying." "Suck the marrow out of life," Keating continues, "believe it or not, each and every one of us in this room is going to stop breathing, turn cold and die. We are all food for worms."

Seizing our days and learning to manage priorities is an unremitting challenge. Once while praying for an individual I said, "Lord, help this lady to put first things first, last things last, and in between things in between." She was struggling, not because of wrongdoing; she was struggling because her priorities were misaligned. She was breaking Buster Rothman's first commandment for peace of mind, "Do not let the good things in life rob you of the best things."

Carpe Diem! Do not put secondary concerns first, align your life by priorities—in the order of their importance. It's a good idea not to major on minor things. The Bible says (Romans 8:5), "Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit."

C. S. Lewis offers these insights, "The moment you wake up each morning, all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first priority each morning consists in shoving it all back; and listening to that other voice, taking the other point of view, letting that other, larger, stronger quieter life come flowing in." Our thoughts oscillate from one thing to another in green and barren pastures. Your mind will wander but remember that concentration is you simply returning to the same thought—over and over again. Carpe Diem! Seize the day! Spiritual things will take the center stage of your thinking as you direct your attention to them.

December 31