

The Gift of Time

By T.M. Leonard

When we are all born, each of us is bestowed a wonderful gift. It's the gift of time. This gift is not usually recognized right away. For many of us it takes many years to comprehend how truly remarkable time is. Some will never understand or appreciate what are given.

As children, we want time to rush by, so we grow up and do what we want. We have little appreciation of it, and want it to go as fast as possible. From toddler through college, the minutes and hours can't go quick enough. Our minds and days are filled with school, sports, and social events. We are constantly looking forward to what comes next.

Young adulthood is not much better. Finding the right mate, the career struggles, and raising children, along with all the other events that make young adulthood a trying period of life.

Middle age is when most of us start understanding that the gift of time is not endless. This is when most start losing parents, relatives, and friends. Our careers and family life may not have turned out exactly as we expected. These are the years when most start thinking about time. Either we think about time past or the future and come to the conclusion that our time is not endless.

At some point almost all of us will stop working leaving an additional 40- 60 hours per week to fill. A number of us will find a second or third career. Others may just sit home and watch re-runs on cable. Many of us will fill those newly available hours with classes and learn new skills or volunteer for projects that we feel are a good cause. Almost all of us will have realized what time means to us at this age.

No matter how well you have managed your career, family, and all other aspects of your life many of us may feel that we could have done a better job with some of them. We could have spent more time with our parents, before they left us. Now that our children have grown up many wish we could go back and recapture or redo those years. Some of us have lost spouses or children and deeply miss them. We now wish we could go back and take better advantage of the time we had with them. They are all sorely missed.

When our calendars have more yesterdays than tomorrows, we all have some regrets. How will we use the balance of the time we have? Will we be good stewards of those precious hours or will we not make the best use of that time. Each day when we wake we all have a new chance to be better. The question is how will we use this precious gift?

After all, there are only two certainties in life. They are death and taxes.

