

## Make the Most of the Time by Chris Garner

David wrote in Psalm 39:4-5, "*Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath.*" Life is short and yet we live as though we are guaranteed a tomorrow. Tomorrow is not guaranteed; God does not promise us *or* our loved ones a tomorrow. This was brought out especially well in the movie *Courageous* when the main character's daughter goes to a birthday party and dies in an accident on the way home. This family soon painfully discovered that there are no guarantees in this world.

This father's anguish over his daughter's death led him to rethink his life and his priorities. Why does it take major tragedies or catastrophes for people – especially men to finally evaluate their lives and their priorities? The Lord tells us to "make the most of every opportunity for doing good" (Eph 5:15-16); shouldn't this extend doubly to our own family? In the movie, the father was preoccupied with his job and *his* relaxation. We also tend to be consumed with our own lives; building, growing business, accomplishing great things, acquiring possessions; for what? A big name? Lots of stuff? A promotion? A ministry reaching the world for Christ? Do you live for the weekend? Football? Relaxation? Or that vacation, you've always wanted? We work ourselves to death and lose what is really important in the end; relationships with the people we love. We may or may not lose a child to death, but we could lose a child to drugs and alcohol or lose relationships due to our own self centeredness.

Friends I am not writing this from some vantage point of having it all together myself; this movie spoke to my heart. I live by a Randy Alcorn quote; "We have all eternity in heaven to celebrate our victories, we only have a short time on earth to win them." Being used by God to strengthen or save marriages is a passion, but I walk too fine of a line in attempting to keep balance ministry and the relationships that are important to me, especially my relationship with my wife. This movie spoke to me and changes will be made in my life and I pray that you also will take heed and make changes in your life. What is most important in your life? Jesus said that the most important commandment is to; "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." And the second greatest is to, "love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-40) Can we really accomplish this with the intense activity we tend to fill our days with? Can we love spouse and children (our closest neighbors) as God would want us to when we are consumed with such preoccupation outside our home?

A second, but integrated theme of this movie was the devastation of fatherlessness in our culture today. Fathers are either disengaged (like that of the lead character) or absent from their children's lives altogether. It is a travesty that is ruining our country and many other countries around the world. While working in Liberia, West Africa, we discovered that 80% of Liberian children today are born out of wedlock. This is a horrendous statistic! But is this where the United States is heading? We need to turn this trend around, but it is not about a lot of additional activity, we must work on ourselves and *our* children, not everyone else's children. There are others are making efforts in this direction. The producers of *Courageous* are asking men and women to get involved in their effort to make family a priority. Additionally, John Trent has teamed up with Focus on the Family to challenge people to bless one million children in the next few years. It seems that God is moving in the area of restoring relationships and especially relationships in the family. We need to get involved in God's movement!

Adam (the father in *Courageous*), as well as several of his friends made commitments to make the changes to become the husbands and fathers God wanted them to be. We also need to come to the

realization that relationships are the most important aspect of life. The quality of our relationships with family; parents, children as well as friends and our church family reflect the quality of our relationship with God. Scripture tells us that “whoever loves God, must love his brother” (1 John 4:10). Again, we are told that we are not to “love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth” (1 John 3:18). Kenn Kington says this wonderfully; “If you are looking for someone to meet your needs, make you happy, and make your life worthwhile, you will be greatly disappointed, quickly discouraged, and basically unhappy the rest of your life. But, if you will just be the person God has made you to be, and find out how you can give your life to someone else by meeting their needs and making them happy, you will discover fulfillment, joy, and peace in ways you can’t even imagine.” Living this out on a daily basis is living out the Gospel and it will also bring profound changes in all of our relationships.

Please go see *Courageous*, it is an outstanding movie; moving, faith filled, and challenging, this movie *will* touch your heart. Also, check out the *Blessing Challenge*, it can be a great vehicle to touch the lives of your children or perhaps a child who does not have a father. You need to do something; examine your priorities and make changes in life style where appropriate. Live for God and for your family – live as though you may not see your loved ones tomorrow!

<http://theblessing.com/>

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