

Managing Life



TIME



STRESS



FAMILY



ANGER

A Bible Study in Four Sessions
by Mark Zimmermann

**Creative
Communications
Sample**

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Introduction

This Bible study is about managing life, which is an often difficult task in this world in which we live. Time constraints, high stress levels, family problems and angry feelings are inevitable aspects of any life. There's no getting rid of them for the most part, but we can learn to manage them, with the help of God and his Word, as this Bible study will show.

Each session begins with an Opening Prayer and a short synopsis of how each type of life management plays itself out in our world today. A topic for sharing as an Ice Breaker follows. Participants will read the Scripture selected for the session that gives advice on how to manage time, stress, family and anger in healthy and God-pleasing ways, answering questions on these verses after each reading. Then participants will look at how Christ managed his life and how other people of God managed life in various ways as well. Topics for discussion are included to apply the Bible passages to our daily living, and each session ends with a Closing Prayer that provides insights into what was learned in each session.

Tips For Using This Study Guide

1. Always begin each session with a prayer. One is included for each session. You are encouraged to expand each of them with prayer concerns from the group.
2. Feel free to follow the format of each session as presented here or rearrange and adapt the material to meet the needs of your group.
3. Have your Bible handy for referencing verses in this study guide. It may also be interesting to have a different translation of Scripture than you are used to using to get a fresh perspective and perhaps broaden your understanding.
4. As you work through the material in this study guide, be sure to write down in the margins any questions that come to mind or any thoughts that arise in the course of the discussion.
5. Throughout each session, think about ways in which you could apply these management principles to your daily life. The section entitled "Discussion/Application" will help you focus your reflections on this. If there is not time to get to that section, it would be ideal for use in your personal devotional time during the week.
6. If you are using this guide in a group setting, consider assigning Bible verses to various people in the class to look up and read aloud at the appropriate time, rather than having everyone look up every verse. This will move the session along more efficiently.

Note that some of the questions ask for facts. Typically, the answers to these questions will come from the Scripture verses just read. Other questions are more subjective, asking for your opinion or an example from your own experience. Since your life experiences are different from anyone else's, answers to these questions are neither right nor wrong.

A Leader's Guide that accompanies this material is available from Creative Communications for the Parish (Code NAL).

Session One **Time Management**



Opening Prayer

Dear God of all time, you have given us the gift of time to use and manage. But it is a gift we have so often taken for granted. Forgive us for the ways we have misused and mismanaged our time on this earth, and help us to manage our time in ways that are more pleasing to you and that advance the work of your kingdom in this world. Help us through this Bible study to listen and learn from you in Scripture about how to approach the organization of schedules, calendars, appointments and deadlines from a spiritual perspective. In the name of Jesus, who came at just the right time to save us. Amen.

Time Management In Today's World

People seem pressed for time more than ever these days. Though the number of hours in a day has not changed, it seems we have less time to get things done. The introduction of day planners, BlackBerries and calendar software allows us to keep better track of where we should be at any given time, but the drive to pack our calendars with more and more activities has made it difficult to stay on schedule at times. Only when we turn to the Bible do we get a better handle on managing our time. The Bible helps us to see that time management is directly related to the priorities we have set for ourselves. And only in the Bible do we discover what priorities God desires us to set in our lives so that our time might be managed more wisely.

Topic For Sharing/Ice Breaker

Discuss what products or devices you currently use to manage your time and why you feel these products or devices are helpful to you.

The Bible's Perspective On Time

- Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.
1. What do these verses say to us about the concept of time?
 2. Do you find these verses comforting or disheartening? Why?
 3. How can these verses be applied to the idea of time management?
 4. Compare this Ecclesiastes reading to this quote on time management from author Julie Morgenstern: "Time management is about how you spend your time working and relaxing, recognizing that what you do in one fuels your energy for the other." How are their concepts similar?

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In this 21st-century world, life seems harder to manage than ever. Everything and everyone are clamoring for our attention these days. We are pressed for time. We are stressed out. We are strapped for cash. We are at odds with our loved ones. Where do we turn to come up with strategies for dealing with the challenges of life? The answers come in this four-session Bible study, where participants gather around God's Word to find practical, effective and sensible solutions to coping with the daily grind while still enjoying the blessings God has given us of our time, our families, our talents, our work, our home and our church. Each session begins with prayer, follows with an in-depth study of examples and advice in Scripture that can be applied to our lives today, moves to discussion questions, and ends again with prayer. The message remains clear throughout that God is our Life Coach.

- Session 1 • Time Management
- Session 2 • Stress Management
- Session 3 • Family Management
- Session 4 • Anger Management

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