

What Time Period Do You Live In?

by Joshua Welch

No, we are not talking about those who wish they could revisit the Roaring 20's or dress like a hippie from the 1970's or any of those kids from the 90's who remember those MC Hammer pants. There are four basic time periods we may be living in ... the Bible has something to say about them.

Yesterday. Some people spend too much time living in the past. They spend time wishing things could still be the way they were. They regret decisions made and relive old mistakes. Sometimes others bring up our old lives of sin and it puts us back in a dark place. Satan wants you to live in the past. But, the great thing about Jesus is He offers forgiveness of those past sins (Ephesians 1:7). So, Paul's philosophy was, "...one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind..." (Philippians 3:13).

Tomorrow. There is surely some sense in planning for tomorrow. Yet, for many, it often leads to a sinful worry over events we cannot control. Do you get consumed with the election, your children's future, or worry of an economic collapse? The devil likes it when we are living there too. Notice the future tense questions Jesus uses in Matthew 6:31, "*Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'*" These are just carnal future concerns. He adds, "*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things*" (Matthew 6:34).

Today. Tomorrow is out of our control right now. Yet, "*sufficient for the day is its own trouble*" (Matthew 6:34). We cannot go back and relive the past. The future is still out of our grasp as well. However, we can do something with our opportunities today. So, Hebrews 3:13 says, "...exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Eternity. There is one more time period. We cannot live in it now, but it should be a part of our daily focus — eternity. The goal of eternity in heaven is that our hearts should cause us to **forget** the past, not **fret** about tomorrow, and **live with purpose today**. For this reason, James offers this principle to those only focused on "today" or "tomorrow." He writes, "...you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'" (James 4:13-17). Let's make sure today's actions are motivated by eternity's hope.

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