

Published based on [Does Anyone Really Know What Time It Is?](#)

Does Anyone Really Know What Time It Is?

I made it to the mall today by 6 a.m. Some of the stores opened at 4 a.m., but I was afraid my angel would not be awake by four so I slept in. I didn't set my alarm clock since I am an early riser. I awakened at 5 a.m. and headed for the coffee. Before 6 o'clock, my daughter Kara Beth and I were at the mall along with most North Alabamians.

Last night, I protested a little. "Let's don't go this year. I'm tired. Let's don't get up so early. There's nothing I really want." Kara Beth said, "Oh, Mom, you know you don't mean that." And I suppose she was right. I have been a part of the "Day After Thanksgiving" morning ritual for years. I have taught my daughter how to operate in the shopping anointing. It is one of my stronger giftings – you think I jest – just ask my friends. I have most of my Christmas shopping finished by March every year making the most of my dollars. I don't know if the anointing is receivable by the laying on of hands, but I will be glad to offer lessons to those of you who aren't as skilled.

But this year is different for me. I really didn't even look at the ads in the newspaper on Thanksgiving Day. I didn't lay out my normal spread sheet that said what store I should arrive at before 4 and then 5 and then 6 and then 7 – well, you get the idea. I skipped the list of gifts I planned to buy at Wal-Mart, Target, Belk, etc. I forgot all about comparing the items features and warranties. I just arrived at the Regency Square Mall.

The crowds of people had already been shopping for quite some time so we didn't have to fight to get into the door of the store and rush to the items we planned to buy. We just perused, meandered, moseyed about. I spent \$12 the first hour. It just seemed unimportant in the grand scheme of life that I get the best buys in town and one-up all the other fellow shoppers by out planning them, proving my shopping anointing skills.

I noticed that I was having a lot of fun. I was glad I allowed Kara Beth to talk me into coming (it just took a gentle nudge).

In a while, hunger took over and we got in the long, long lane of traffic at Chick-Fil-A (where I certainly missed Mark and Jana Jordan, the former owners, who often offered their cow costume to me). We bought one biscuit and got one free. Ever notice how powerful you feel when you use a coupon and get something free? (Maybe I need counseling on that point???) We sat in the parking lot and ate our biscuits while we added honey to them and licked our fingers.

And I thought of how different time seems to me this holiday season. I don't have my Christmas tree decorated yet. It is up but naked. Usually by now, the entire Lawrence house is a winter wonderland. I guess some of it will happen but the train is not behind me pushing – if you understand what I mean.

This past February, I took my watch off. The battery actually died, and it just never seemed important to replace it. Deep in my spirit, I had known that my life was too busy, yet it seemed impossible to make changes. Everyone needed me for something. Sometimes, I had looked at my calendar and said, "Lord, what should I take off?" and it just seemed that everything was vital.

So a few months later, I remember vividly taking my eraser and erasing months of planned activities and thinking that I guess they weren't as important as I'd believed. And I discovered that all those people who really needed an appointment with me, a slice of my life, just a lunch, just..... well, most of them didn't need me anymore. That was a good thing since I didn't have anything left to give.

So in thinking of the holiday season this year, I know there are going to be some things I will really miss like spending a night celebrating Christmas with the Hope Haven residents and with Jason who has been my guy to provide Christmas gifts for during the last several years. I know he will miss me and my family, and I hope he will be able to understand that he must be adopted by a new family from Faith Church this year.

I will miss all the wonderful Christmas parties that I loved so much. From the senior adults to the middle-agers like me, I will miss the gifts swaps and endless food. Oh, and I'm sure, I will go to a party or two but it will be very different this year.

So I pray for grace for the season and I sense that grace as I realize I have lived for months without a watch.

Although I did my share of shopping today, there was nothing rushed or competitive about it. I saw some faces I hadn't seen lately. I exchanged some greetings – some more emotional than others. I took time to actually talk to the sales clerks – and pay attention to their stories.

And I began to meditate upon the words to an old song. I think God speaks to me a lot that way. Of course, I missed all the eighties and nineties hit music because I was too godly to listen to it. If you think I am being a little cynical, it is because I am – but just toward myself. And if you wonder why I have some secular music on my website, it is because I have realized that there is a lot of wonderful music out there that represents a lot of life and many artists who have great contributions to make.

I began to hear this old song in my mind. It was written and performed by Chicago, a group who remains something of an oddity in the music industry – a large band of up to eight members at times with three lead singers and a fluid pop style featuring jazz-influenced sounds of trombone, trumpet and woodwinds. Chicago became famous not only for their unique sound and the dozens of hits released over four decades, but also for their nearly un-interrupted string of self-titled albums featuring the name of the band in a new artistic interpretation. Interestingly enough, Chicago albums were often anticipated for their artwork as much as their songs. My husband, Eddie, loves Chicago's music, and he and I went to one of their concerts when I was 16.

Now I know that you are totally shocked that I was a teenager in the seventies. I hope you are shocked that I am that old. That would make me feel better. But anyway, the music of the seventies is the best bar none. One of my great joys and senses of destiny is the fact that we now live in the Shoals where so much of the awesome seventies music was written and recorded. Music continues to come forth from the Shoals today and musicians and artists are knee-deep here – good musicians and artists.

Well, back to the song. I began to hear the words to this song by Chicago entitled, "Does anyone really know what time it is?" Would you take a moment and think about the words?

As I was walking down the street one day
A man came up to me and asked me what the time was that was on my watch, yeah
And I said
Does anybody really know what time it is
Does anybody really care
If so I can't imagine why
We've all got time enough to cry

And I was walking down the street one day
A pretty lady looked at me and said her diamond watch had stopped cold dead
And I said
Does anybody really know what time it is
Does anybody really care
If so I can't imagine why
We've all got time enough to cry

And I was walking down the street one day
Being pushed and shoved by people trying to beat the clock, oh, no I just don't know
I don't know
And I said, yes I said

(background)
People runnin' everywhere
Don't know where to go
Don't know where I am
Can't see past the next step
Don't have time to think past the last mile

Have no time to look around
Just run around, run around and think why

Does anybody really know what time it is
Does anybody really care
If so I can't imagine why
We've all got time enough to die

You know I felt a deep confirmation as God reminded me of the words of this song. We are all too busy. We are all too tied into the world's system of time. We allow the system to push and shove us and we push and shove everyone else. And no one really knows what time it is (spiritually) and most don't even care. None of us are exempt from the process of time; we all have time to cry and we all have time to die

Watches and calendars – perhaps I will learn to use them to help me stay in the boundaries God has established for me – and not the boundaries others will try to establish. Hopefully, I will not live runnin' everywhere and yet not knowing where I am, without being able to see the next step. I think of the words of the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter three.

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:

*a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain,
a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.....*

*He has made everything beautiful in its time. **He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;** yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*

I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.

That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil--this is the gift of God.

*Time – may I understand better next year than I have in the past that it is a gift to be used, and not only used, but **ENJOYED**.*

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