

## Discussion Questions: Time Well Spent

Today's format will be a mix of questions and Scripture.

**1)** What if you knew that you had a fixed amount of time left and that somehow, God magically told you the date of your death:

**2Kings 20:1**

In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah

son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because

you are going to die; you will not recover."

**2Kings 20:2**

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, "Remember, LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

**2Kings 20:4**

Before Isaiah had left the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: "Go back and tell Hezekiah, the ruler of my people, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the LORD. I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.'"

**2)** Could you share a time where you've prayed and wondered if it affects anything? Could you share a time or times when you know it has?

**2Kings 20:7**

Then Isaiah said, "Prepare a poultice of figs." They did so and applied it to the boil, and he recovered.

**2Kings 20:8**

Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, "What will be the sign that the LORD will heal me and that I will go up to the temple of the LORD on the third day from now?"

**2Kings 20:9**

Isaiah answered, "This is the LORD'S sign to you that the LORD will do what he has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps?"

**2Kings 20:10**

"It is a simple matter for the shadow to go forward ten steps," said Hezekiah.

"Rather, have it go back ten steps."

**2Kings 20:11**

Then the prophet Isaiah called on the LORD, and the LORD made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

**3)** What was on your list of what you would do different if you knew you had a short time to live?

**2Kings 20:12**

At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of Hezekiah's illness. 13 Hezekiah received the envoys and showed them all that was in his storehouses—the silver, the gold, the spices and the fine olive oil—his armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

**2Kings 20:14**

Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?" "From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came from Babylon."

**2Kings 20:15**

The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

**2Kings 20:16**

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: 17 The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. 18 And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." Babylon isn't Judah's enemy yet, but they're about to be. Hezekiah was indiscrete in showing Babylon everything he had. All that he showed them could be categorized as "the blessing of God." God had given him extra time and all this wealth and strength and he let Babylon right in to see it and then they took it.

**4)** What is it about human nature that tends to squander the blessing of God? ie, God gives us something, we're deeply grateful but we can soon forget and squander it. Have you seen this pattern in your life or someone else's?

**5)** So if we take Hezekiah's story metaphorically, he 'shows' his blessing to someone indiscreetly and then they 'take' it all but he never really had the chance to 'give' it. Do you think one reason we feel so stretched and pinched is because it gets taken before we can give it?

**6)** Where is an area in your life where you feel your time, money, energy is 'taken'? Work? Youth Activities?

**7)** One way to guard or redeem that time is to view it through a difference lens. How might you see your work place or the youth sports as an opportunity to serve rather than something taken?

**8)** Is there something you want to do for God, or for your family that you would do if you didn't feel so

pinched and stretched? How might you 'take back' the blessing God has given you (money, time, energy) and reallocate it?

**2Kings 20:19**

“The word of the LORD you have spoken is good,” Hezekiah replied. For he thought, “Will there not be peace and security in my lifetime?”

**9)** Perhaps Hezekiah was indiscrete because he didn't have eternity, or even the next generation in mind - he was consumed only with self. What would you do different knowing it would make a difference in eternity or even in the next generation?

**James 4:14** Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.