

## Things To Remember This Summer

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Last week was the unofficial beginning of summer. School is out. The warm (hot) weather is here. People are looking forward to going on vacation, cooling off in the pool, sleeping in, grilling out, and enjoying other summertime activities. Since many of us are out of our normal routine in the summer, there is a tendency to let that affect our spiritual lives as well. Just because we may be more carefree and lazy in the summer doesn't mean we can be carefree and lazy with our spiritual life. Let me suggest some things that we need to remember this summer in this regard.

**Summer is not all about “me time”.** It sure feels like it though, especially in the first few weeks after school is over. No more getting up early for school. No more homework. No more band, league sports, or Scouts. Freedom!

While we have more free time during the summer, let's make sure that we don't use it all on “me”. Don't be selfish with your freedom. Now is the perfect time to look for opportunities to serve others. There shouldn't be near the amount of excuses for not being able to serve in some capacity, whether it is serving those in the church or those in the community. Don't wait for someone to ask for help. In my experience, I've found that most people don't ask. Instead of waiting, be proactive and genuinely look for those opportunities; be the one doing the asking. *“For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me”* (Matt. 25:35-36).

Our free time should also be used in helping to spread the good news about Jesus Christ. Make a commitment to participate in one of our Neighborhood Bible Studies. Help to set up a one-on-one class with me and a friend of yours. There is no better use of our time than teaching others the gospel! *“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one”* (Col. 4:5-6).

**Don't take a break from personal time with God this summer.** Since our routines might be much different in the summer, it's easy to get out of our spiritual routines. Our days can be filled with so much fun, or with absolutely nothing at all, that we forget to spend time reading God's word, meditating on it, and praying to our Father. We may “run out of time”, yet we all know that we make time for what's important. This should be one of the non-negotiables on our schedule. It's that important to our spiritual growth! Don't forget to set aside time each day for these important spiritual exercises.

It may be that you haven't been in the habit of spending time daily with God, both in his word and in prayer. Summer is the perfect time to get in that habit. There is not as much that is trying to pull you away. Resolve to make it part of your daily routine. You will certainly be better for it, and find your day that much more meaningful.

*“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper”* (Psalm 1:1-3).

**Summertime is not a license for immodesty.** With the summer comes hot weather and opportunities for swimming. May I strongly urge you to consider how you dress for these activities? While God has

not specifically stated what we are allowed or not allowed to wear, there are definitely principles in Scripture which help us make these decisions.

Girls and ladies, *please* be considerate of how strongly you affect boys and men just by what you wear. It is absolutely your responsibility to not be a stumbling block to us. Jesus said that lusting after a woman is sinful (Matt. 5:28), so why wear something that you know easily causes men to lust after you? You will be held responsible for causing someone to sin: *“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!”* (Matt. 18:6-7).

There will be temptations to wear bathing suits in mixed company this summer, whether at the beach, pool, or river. But there’s not a single modest bathing suit in existence. Anything that shows as much skin as modern bathing suits do cannot be modest (in mixed company), considering the vast problems it causes for us men.

Guys, you have a responsibility too. Don’t put yourselves in situations where you know there will be temptations to lust. *“And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire”* (Matt. 18:9). In other words, do whatever you have to do to keep from sinning, and that includes not frequenting places where there will be plenty of immodestly dressed women. You’re simply asking for trouble if you do.