

## Time and Patience

Creative communicators, here's advice that was given to me in my 20's. It has proven invaluable:

*Don't pick the fruit too soon.* Don't be in a hurry to write when you're young. You may spend your older years correcting what you said when you were too young to know better.

My advice to young writers is this: don't focus on writing for publication. If the opportunity comes, take it, but don't go looking for it. Instead, write for your own local situation. As a publisher, I've worked with many, many songwriters—successful songwriters. Some were well-trained technically, and some were not, but they all had one thing in common: somewhere, sometime early in their life, they wrote for their own local situation. There's nothing like that hands-on experience! Be your own toughest critic. Listen objectively to what works and what doesn't work. Learn to look into the faces of those needy human beings in front of you and love them. Care about them. Share Jesus Christ with them.

In my experience, God's call to service comes early in the process. It is not a promise of immediate fulfillment. If God has called you to write songs, don't assume it's going to come to full bloom anytime soon. More often, the call is part of the preparation and the direction setting. It points us down the right road. The journey to the destination may be a long one. God spends far more time preparing His servants than we ever expect. Even for his own Son, facing the most important mission in history, his training and waiting lasted 30 years. His ministry lasted only three. Leave your time in God's hands.

*I trust in you, O Lord;  
I say, "You are my God."  
My times are in your hands.* (Psalm 31:14-15, NIV)

That same truth applies to our daily, hourly lives. Leave time in His hands. Like most of us, in some periods of my life I felt severe time pressure. I tried to ensure productivity and balance by rigidly scheduling my life.

But eventually God taught me that anxiety about time is as foolish and fruitless as anxiety about material resources. Matthew 6 applies equally to time. "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" (Matthew 6:27, NIV). As a result, I had to unschedule my life. In order to bring consistency, productivity, and balance to my life, I have to listen to God, not the clock. Yes, we all have obligations in our schedules that we must meet. God understands that better than we do. He still wants you to trust your time to Him. Day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, make yourself available to Him. Turn to Him with each few minutes of available time and ask for His guidance. "Lord, this time is Yours. I am Yours. What do You want me to do?" If you listen and obey, He will guide you and bring a natural, fruitful balance to your life that no schedule ever could.

In big ways and little ways, leave your time in God's hands.

Hymn: [I Leave It in Your Hands](#)

© 2008 by Ken Bible, c/o LNWhymns.com