

NOW  
 LATER

Procrastination  
Luke 9:57-62

# Procrastination

A procrastinator is a person who delays or puts things off — like work, chores, or other actions — that should be done in a timely manner.

- A procrastinator is likely to leave all the Christmas shopping until December 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Procrastinator comes from the Latin verb *procrastinare*, which means deferred until tomorrow.

## **Procrastination**

A scholar once surveyed the Scriptures to discover the most significant words in the Bible. He wanted to find the happiest word, saddest word, most emotional word and so forth

# Procrastination

When he came to the most dangerous word, he identified it as tomorrow

- The word is a thief that robs dreamers of their dreams and the talented of their greatest achievements
- It keeps people from coming to Christ and discovering the kind of love God longs for them to have

## **We have been looking at slaying the giants in your life**

- We have looked at fear, discouragement, loneliness, guilt, temptation, resentment, doubts and failure
  - All of these we would readily identify as giants that come against your faith and longs to drag you down
- I'm not sure I would have put procrastination in this list until I studied it

# We have been looking at slaying the giants in your life

The Bible has a lot to say about this

- **Ecclesiastes 11:4 NIV** Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.
- **James 4:17 NIV** If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.
- **Proverbs 10:4 NIV** Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.
- **Luke 9:57-62**

# Procrastination

- Someone - "There is no time like the present for postponing what you ought to be doing."
- Procrastination is a thief of time and the first question is how?
  - What does it steal? How does it steal? Why is it so important?

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

- How strict was Jesus on the issue of time-wasting?
  - He only had 3 ½ years to change the world
  - He was on a strict calendar



## Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service

- **vs. 57-58** If you're thinking about prioritizing your time for yourself, I have something greater for you
- **vs. 59-60** If you're thinking about waiting for some event to happen, I have something greater for you
- **vs. 61-62** Look ahead, I have something greater for you

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

- We must keep in check our own tendency to put the big things aside for the little ones
- Charles Hummel called it the “tyrant of the urgent – putting more important thing behind the more immediate thing”

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

- Stop to attend a funeral and you will find 5 reasons to change your mind about following Jesus
- Check in with your family and they will try and talk you out of your new path
- Commitment to Jesus means a radical reprioritization of one's life and values

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

**Matthew 13:44-46 NIV** 44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

- Jesus again and again: Your time is your treasure; spend it carefully
- God sometimes give us explicit instructions for the moment before us
  - Call this person, Go to that place, Pay that person's bill
  - Oh, the joy of obedience when we are

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities for service**

- But there are times we say in essence, “I need to bury my dead first”
  - We find we have missed something special God had for us
  - Because of procrastination we rob ourselves and others of blessings we may never realize

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful**

- You don't need to be a Christian to understand this point
- You need to be a Christian to enter heaven, live an abundant life here and escape punishment
- There is no successful person who is a procrastinator

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful**

- Management consultant named Ivy Lee and Charles Schwab hired him to come in and help him be more productive
- He immediately gave him an underwhelming simplistic plan –



## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful**

- Each evening, write down the six most important things you should do the following day
- List them in order of importance
- The following morning come into work and do whatever tops the list

## Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful

- When finished with that one, move down the list
- Use the plan strictly for several months then pay me what you think it is worth
  - He paid him \$25,000 at the start of the twentieth century

# **Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful**

- There must also be discipline in deciding the most important task
- Keeping it at the top of the list will allow your days to be successful

## **Procrastination robs you of opportunities to be successful**

- Arnold Bennett, “Time is the explicable raw material of everything. It’s the spiritual molecular structure of our world. Your career is composed of time. Your marriage and family success are measured by time. Your relationship with God is measured in time. Will the time chart of your life please you when you give an account of it?”

## Procrastination robs you of the opportunity for salvation

- **Acts 24:24-25 NIV** 24 Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 As Paul talked about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, “That’s enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.”

## Procrastination robs you of the opportunity for salvation

- Hear these excuses today – Call me back later, This is not a good time, I'll get with you later, I don't have time now
- **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:2 NIV** Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.
- Ask yourself the question, "Why is now so important?"

## There are two main problems with procrastination

- Procrastination does not take into account the uncertainty of life
  - Tomorrow is an uncertain proposition
    - **Proverbs 27:1 NIV** Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.

## **Procrastination does not take into account the uncertainty of life**

- Only today, right now, has been placed in your hands
- God set you in time called now
- He locked you into the present to cut you off from the past and the future



## Procrastination does not take into account the uncertainty of life

- **James 4:13-14 NIV** 13 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 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.

## Procrastination does not take into account the uncertainty of life

- If you pile up enough tomorrows, you end up with a lot of empty yesterdays, if onlys
- **Hebrews 3:13 NIV** But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

## **Procrastination does not take into account the uniqueness of conviction**

- Life holds its defining moments for each of us – times when God reaches into time and space and deals with us directly and personally
  - Maybe that was the day of your salvation
  - A day you heard his voice loud and clear
  - You may never again hear God's voice as clearly as today

## **Procrastination does not take into account the uniqueness of conviction**

- His timetable and planning are perfect and not for our personal convenience
- God is persistent, but your life is less predictable
  - You may not be as sensitive tomorrow
  - The ministry opportunity may have evaporated or given to someone else
  - Your window of opportunity may snap shut

## Procrastination does not take into account the uniqueness of conviction

- Today is the day God chose to get your attention and with God there are no coincidences
- **Isaiah 55:6 NIV** Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.
- Remember the nation of Israel going into the Promised Land

## Procrastination does not take into account the uniqueness of conviction

- God never ceases speaking; it is we who cease hearing in ever increasing deafness with each no or not now
- Our heart can become calloused
- **Psalms 119:60 NLT** I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands.

## **So, what are you waiting for?**

- Is it time to surrender to Christ?
- Is it time to say yes to something the Spirit of God has tugged at your heart to do?
- Is it time to get your house in order, time to mend fences with your spouse, time to guide your children back into the loving arms to Jesus, time to rebuild your family?

## **So, what are you waiting for?**

- Is it time to begin pleasing God with the work of your hands and eliminate the practices that bring Him grief?
- If you treat time well, it will return the favor



## **So, what are you waiting for?**

- Handle the present with honor, and you'll be honored by the future
- We call that legacy
- What kind of legacy are you leaving to the future?
- What are you waiting for?

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