

# “I’ll Stop Procrastinating... Tomorrow”

By Paul R. Blake

## Introduction:

- A. Procrastination is a common cause of waste and failure.
  - 1. It is defined as, "to defer action, delay, to procrastinate until an opportunity is lost" (RHCD, p. 1056).
  - 2. It makes Christians ineffective and weak, and paralyzes local churches.
- B. "Procrastinators play games with time all the time. They tend to think that time is going to operate under their direction. There's always the sense that there's going to be more time." (Lenora Yuen, a clinical psychologist in Palo Alto, CA)
  - 1. Procrastination is about immediate gratification. "Hard work has a future payoff. Laziness pays off now."
  - 2. When you procrastinate you allow yourself to be drawn into a web of inaction that holds you by the thing you love most: your comfort zone.
- C. Procrastination can be overcome with a determination and effort. The standard advice; you've heard them before:
  - 1. Just Do It
  - 2. Break the unwanted task into smaller tasks
  - 3. Do the hard task first
  - 4. Reward yourself AFTER you finish
- D. Common reasons why people procrastinate:
  - 1. It is a mechanism to deal with stress
  - 2. You do not want to do it
  - 3. You have no interest in the task
  - 4. Your fears are holding you back
- E. How you really overcome it. You will not take action without motivation. Motivation is the force that drives action
  - 1. Do you want to know the real answer on how to stop procrastinating?
  - 2. Get offended and angry with yourself. Tap into your emotions. To everything there is a season, and that includes anger.
  - 3. You will be tempted to rationalize to soothe your disgust with yourself; others will try to smooth it over by saying everyone does it; mental health experts will say that you should be nice to yourself; the Adversary is happy when you quell anger at yourself when you put off what you should have done long ago
- F. Be offended by your choices because you deserve better than you have been treating yourself
  - 1. You've wasted time - Think of all the time you've lost thinking about what you do not want to do. All the wasted energy could have been used to complete it by now.
  - 2. You've probably lost opportunities - Think of what could have been and what you stand to lose if you stand around thinking about what you lost. Opportunities can be lost while thinking about opportunities lost
  - 3. You've allowed your thoughts to hold you prisoner. You are what you think about most. You have literally frozen progress, because you are

so busy thinking about why you do not want do get something done.

Your thoughts just keep reinforcing why you are not moving into action.

G. Emotion: use it for overcoming procrastination. Get offended with yourself for allowing your will to join the other side. You have enough to contend with without adding to it.

1. Now, do not get bogged down in self-recrimination to the point where you are immobile because you are still angry.
2. Now, forget the past, what you did or did not do, and put your hand to the present, to the first task at hand.
3. Doctor in the aftermath of Hiroshima atomic bombing: Dr. Fumio Shigeto was waiting for a streetcar only one mile from ground zero, but he was sheltered by the corner of a concrete building. Within seconds after the explosion, his ears were filled with the screams of victims all around him. Not knowing what had happened, Dr. Shigeto stood there for several minutes shocked and bewildered, wondering how he as one man could ever handle the mountain of patients. There are too many; where does one begin? Then, still somewhat stunned, Dr. Shigeto opened his black bag, knelt down, and began treating the person nearest to him.
4. Action will destroy your procrastination.
5. The really happy people are those who have broken the chains of procrastination, those who find satisfaction in doing the job at hand. They're full of eagerness, zest, and productivity.

## **I. PROCRASTINATION IN THE BIBLE**

A. Luke 14:15-24

1. Everyone has a reason or multiple reasons for procrastinating
2. Only those who put them aside as not relevant or unimportant will get to the task and complete it

B. Acts 26:28, 26-29

1. Everyone has a war going on within them between the flesh and the spirit, between what they know is right and the wrong they want to keep
2. Only those who choose the spirit will overcome. Choose before the crisis and there will be less time between the crisis and resolution

## **II. ADDRESSING PROCRASTINATION**

A. Introspection - 2Cor. 13:5

B. Make a descending order of priorities - 2Cor. 8:9, 5:14-15, 21; Matt. 6:33

C. Cultivate a sense of immediacy - Acts 10:33, 16:33

D. Postpone gratification and personal comfort.

1. Understand that it will come later and be better appreciated without the feeling of impending deadlines
2. It will be accompanied by the empowering feeling of accomplishment

E. Refuse to accept excuses from your own rationalization

1. Be honest with yourself. "Methinks thou dost protest too much."
2. Who are you trying to convince with excuses?

### **III. SCRIPTURES EMPHASIZE TODAY, NOT TOMORROW**

A. We are told to act today - Heb. 3:15; 2Cor. 6:2

B. We live in the present - Matt. 6:34

C. We should develop disgust and disdain for procrastination, knowing that it produces failure

1. Ecc. 11:4-6

2. We need to start viewing procrastination as the enemy that it actually is.

D. We should act immediately when opportunity arises - Acts 10:7-8, 24, 33, 48