**The Dangers of Procrastination**

**Procrastination:** **means** **to put off intentionally the doing of something that should have already been done.**

**The idea for this lesson came from a sermon I found on the web. I don’t have the name of the preacher. But it was a good lesson for me. So I thought I would share some insights on what he said.**

As one person correctly said “Procrastination never won a race, received a promotion or changed the outcome of any situation.”

There is no value to procrastination yet everyone does it from time to time. So the first thing I want to talk about this morning is procrastination in our everyday lives. I will be the first to admit that I have been guilty of procrastination. I haven’t called the gutter man to fix the church building yet. There is a plug that needs replacing in the back room. I need to paint the side door to match the other doors.

Of course none of things are going to cause any real problems but they certainly are examples of procrastination. All of us are guilt of this in our everyday life. For instance many times we put off going to the doctor when we should whether it is for a regular check up or for a pain that we are having. Many of us plan to build things or go certain places but we always manage to find a reason not do them.

Sometimes we suffer great heartache because of procrastination. For example we may have wanted to tell their mother, father, or someone close to us how much we loved them and appreciated them but we waited too long and never got the chance. The same thing has happened to family members who were angry at one another and then one day they decide their differences aren’t worth keeping them separated from each other but the decision comes too late and the person never knows that you had forgiven them.

Procrastination has always been a problem and in some instances it has cost people their lives and even won battles for people. For example an incident the author gave from the American Revolution illustrates what tragedy can result from procrastination. It was reported that Colonel Rahl, commander of the British troops in Trenton, New Jersey, was playing cards when a courier brought an urgent message stating that General George Washington was crossing the Delaware River. Rahl put the letter in his pocket and didn't bother to read it until the game was finished. Then, realizing the seriousness of the situation, he hurriedly tried to rally his men to meet the coming attack, but his procrastination was his undoing. He and many of his men were killed and the rest of the regiment was captured.

The British ambassador Nolbert Quayle said, **"Only a few minutes' delay cost him his life, his honor, and the liberty of his soldiers. Earth's history is strewn with the wrecks of half-finished plans and unexecuted resolutions. 'Tomorrow' is the excuse of the lazy and refuge of the incompetent."**

So, as we can see procrastination can be very dangerous as it can cost people their lives. Think about this for a minute, how many of us would want our fire fighters to procrastinate when our house is danger of catching fire from a nearby grassfire? How many of us would want an ambulance driver to procrastinate on getting to our home while our loved one is suffering from a heart attack? How many of us would want a police officer to procrastinate on responding to a prowler trying to break into our home? Of course all of us would say no, I wouldn’t want them to procrastinate. Yet that is exactly what we do over and over again. Procrastination is our enemy and if we ever want to get anything done in this life we have to learn avoid it.

One sneaky way that procrastination works in our lives is that we fool ourselves into thinking that because we keep busy everyday, we are being productive. This point hit me square between the eyes. However, a person needs to examine what they are busy doing and is what they are doing really that important. For instance some people become workaholics and they stay busy everyday working which leaves them no time to do those things they should be doing like spending precious time with their husband or wife and their kids. They have little time to study their Bibles or to reach out to the lost. Even though this workaholic is busy they are procrastinating because they are neglecting those things which are more important in life. It important the sit down and make a list either mentally or on paper and start asking ourselves what our most important priorities are in this life and then we need to make another list of what we are currently making our priority. If doesn’t match up then we need to start making the changes in our life so that we have our priorities straight.

So far we have examined procrastination in our everyday life, now I want to turn our attention to the dangers of procrastination in our Christian lives and what the Bible has to say about it. The first century Christians had this problem as well. For example in [2 Cor. 8](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Cor.%208) Paul does his best to encourage the congregation at Corinth to stop procrastinating. Notice what he tells them in,

[**2 Corinthians 8:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%208.10) **And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; 11 but now you also must complete the doing *of it;* that as *there was* a readiness to desire *it,* so *there* also *may be* a completion out of what *you* have. 12 For if there is first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what one has, *and* not according to what he does not have.**

In context Paul is talking about them taking up a collection for their brethren that needed it. You see they had promised to do a year ago but they still hadn’t done it and Paul is encouraging them to complete what they started. The key to doing this is found on verse 12 which first there must be a willing mind. If this church had a willing mind to do what they said they would do then it would have already been done.

This same thing happens in congregations today. They plan on doing this or that but winds up being a bunch of empty talk because none of their plans is ever implemented. This type of procrastination can be dangerous because it breeds a sense of laziness and once a church adapts this way of thinking nothing will ever happen because no one will have a willing mind to do anything and so as congregation we should avoid putting off those things the members would like to accomplish.

Now think about how many times we procrastinate in showing this love for one another. How many times have we thought to ourselves well I’m going to do such and such for brother or sister so and so but we keep putting it off? Or how many times have we told ourselves I’m going to get to know that Christian better but again we put it off. You see procrastination is opportunities greatest enemy because we have all had many opportunities to show our love for our fellow brother or sister but because we never do it. Let’s read:

[**Hebrews 3:12**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%203.12) **Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

The writer expresses the importance of taking of care of business today and not tomorrow. We have to realize that tomorrow may never come as James says,

[**James 4:13**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%204.13) **Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.**

We must train ourselves to have a willing mind to do what needs to be done today to show love toward our brethren. This same concept applies to reaching out to the lost.

Jesus said in

[**Matthew 28:19**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%2028.19) **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age."**

There is no is room for procrastination in the word “go”. One of our main purposes as a Christians is to try and lead other to Christ and we do this by our words and/or deeds, as Jesus says in,

[**Matthew 5:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%205.16) **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

Unfortunately, we procrastinate in this area. How many opportunities have wasted to tell someone about God because we convinced ourselves that we would talk to them another day? I personally know of several people that I wished I had talked to over the years but now it’s too late because that opportunity is not there anymore. Procrastinating in this area does not benefit those around us because what you might have said or done can possibly make the difference between that person being lost or saved. I know it’s difficult for us to muster up the courage to talk to people but we have to learn to overcome that fear because their soul is at stake. Notice what Paul says about this in,

[**2 Corinthians 5:11**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%205.11) **Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men**

Paul didn’t want anyone to have to face the wrath of God and so he always did his best to tell everyone about God and what happens if you do not accept him. He expresses this to the Ephesians Elders in,

[**Acts 20:26**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Acts%2020.26) **"Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men.* 27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.**

It is imperative that we learn to be like Paul in this instance and make sure that we teach all the truth and not just part of it. Not only must we teach it we must live it. We cannot successfully lead people to Christ if we procrastinate when it comes to our example. People are always watching us and so we have to careful that we live what we teach. Notice what Paul says about this in,

[**Philippians 2:14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Philippians%202.14) **Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.**

Another area is, are that we procrastinate is our prayer life and as Jesus says in,

[**Matthew 26:41**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%2026.41) **"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."**

When we procrastinate in our prayer life we are opening ourselves up to temptation and we will find ourselves growing further and further away from God. It is real shame when get the point in our lives when we can’t find the time to talk to our God. When we fail to pray as we should; we show a lack of trust and a lack of love toward our Father in heaven. We need all the help we can get to deal the problems that are in our life so let us never procrastinate in our prayer life.

As a Christian, Procrastination should never happen because it can make the difference between making it to heaven or spending eternity in hell. Jesus makes the very clear in,

[**Matthew 24:46**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%2024.46) **"Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,’ 49 "and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

Jesus is talking about the 2nd coming here and he saying in these verses that when he comes those who are serving him will be rewarded but those who think they have plenty of time before Jesus comes are going be treated like the hypocrite who will be cast into the fiery lake. Jesus reemphasizes this same concept in next chapter with the parable of the 10 virgins and the parable about the talents. So let us always strive not procrastinate in our Christianity or could lead us to spiritual death.

Now our third and final point this morning has to do with how some play the dangerous game of procrastination when it comes to obeying the gospel and becoming a Christian. Too many people have the attitude of Felix as we read in,

[**Acts 24:24**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Acts%2024.24) **And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."**

Felix was interested in hearing about Jesus because of Paul’s faith in him. But as soon as Paul started talking about how a person has to live a righteous life and exercise self control this was beginning to seem like to much trouble to Felix. Then when Paul started teaching him about what will happen at the final judgment day it scares Felix and he doesn’t want to think about such things nor does he want to make any changes in his lifestyle so he procrastinates and as far as we know he never became a Christian.

This is the typical attitude of many sinners today. They want to put off obeying the gospel because they are not ready to make that kind of commitment. They don’t want to know about details they just want to think that there is a loving God that will save them no matter what but this simply is not the case. One thing we as humans are great at is making excuses of why we shouldn’t obey God today. In fact this illustrated by Jesus with a parable in,

[**Luke 14:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Luke%2014.15) **Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed *is* he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" 16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 "and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' 18 "But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19 "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' 20 "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' 21 "So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the* poor and *the* maimed and *the* lame and *the* blind.' 22 "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "**

From this parable we can see that some who are invited to accept His Son will make up all kind of excuses of why they cannot accept his unmerited favor. Then it talks about those who were invited and they did accept it and they were allowed the privilege to dine with the master and those who choose not to go to the feast because of delaying or not coming will never be allowed to taste the masters supper. Does this apply to you this morning? Have you been putting off becoming a Christian because you are not ready to make the commitment to serve God with your whole mind, heart and soul? Don’t you think it’s time that you stop gambling with your soul and thinking that you will always have tomorrow. Peter tells us,

[**2 Peter 1:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Peter%201.10) **Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call an election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

Paul also stresses the importance of obeying the gospel call today in,

[**2 Corinthians 6:2**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%206.2) **Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**

Now the question becomes how does a sinner obey the gospel call?

Well first of all we can see that we must go to God’s word to find out how to be saved.

[**James 1:21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.21) **Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.**

But there more to salvation that reading God’s word because we must obey it and James says in the next verse.

[**James 1:22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.22) **But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

Please remember that just as Paul stated to Ephesians Elders we examine the whole council of God especially when it comes to something as important as be saved or being lost.

One thing that we must do is believe that Jesus is the son of God.

[**John 8:24**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/John%208.24) **"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He,* you will die in your sins."**

Now some folks stop here and they think they are saved by faith alone but this simply is not true in fact the only time that the term faith alone is used in found in the following verse,

[**James 2:14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%202.14) **What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?**

[**James 2:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%202.17) **Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.**

[**James 2:24**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%202.24) **You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.**

Again it cannot be stressed enough we must look at the whole council of God. The next thing we learn that we must do is repent.

[**Luke 13:3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Luke%2013.3) **"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.**

Now the type of repentance that talked about here is not merely saying I’m sorry. It means that you have a change of heart and you are going to do your best to live the way God wants you to. Paul explains this type of repentance in,

[**2 Corinthians 7:9**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%207.9) **Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.**

The Bible also teaches us that we must confess Jesus as our Lord.

[**Romans 10:9**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Romans%2010.9) **if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

Now this is not some one time confession but it is to a continuous one and we can do this verbal and by the way we live our life.

Now so far we have found out that we must look to God’s Word to find out how to be saved and we have learned that several things are mentioned to be saved such a believing, repenting and confessing but the Bible reveals one more crucial step that makes the difference of being saved and being lost and that step is to be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins. Peter makes it clear for that baptism also saves us in,

[**1 Peter 3:21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%203.21) **There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**

We also learn from the scriptures that a person still haves their sins until they are baptized and it should be obvious that if we are still in our sins then we cannot possible be saved before baptism. Notice a couple of passages,

[**Acts 2:38**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Acts%202.38) **Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Anybody with a sincere heart for the truth can understand this simply passage. It clearly says that a person must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins. No baptism = no forgiveness of sins which = separation from God. You also notice that the Holy Spirit is not given until these commands are followed. So again no baptism = no forgiveness of sin = no holy spirit given = separation from God.

Folks it doesn’t get any clearer than this that a person must be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sin or they will be lost. Now once you accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God and at the point of baptism you must then continue to live a faithful life to God.

So if you are here the morning and you are ready to top procrastinating when it comes to obeying the Gospel call then why don’t you come forward this morning as we stand and sing...