

The Heart of Procrastination

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Introduction: The Lord wants us to accurately see ourselves.

- A. God knows us through and through. **(Heb 4:12-13)**
 - 1. Men often play “hide-and-seek” with *their true thoughts and motives*.
 - 2. Decision making, priorities and what really motivates us are things that reveal our hearts. Often, we are the last to see what others can!
- B. What *moves us to act*? What hold us back from what we “should” do?
 - 1. Conversion involves an opening of the heart and yielding to repentance. **(Acts 2:37)**
 - 2. Proper edification in a local church also opens hearts that have drifted. **(Rev 3:13, 18-19)**

I. Procrastination comes from a false view of self and of God

A. What is procrastination?

procrastinate - verb, intransitive, To put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness... verb, transitive To postpone or delay needlessly. [Latin *procrâstinâre*, *procrâstinât-* : *pro-*, forward + *crâstinus*, of tomorrow (from *crâs*, tomorrow).] - American Heritage Dictionary

- 1. The root ideal is to put something off in a needless or careless way.
- 2. Rooted in the origin of the word is tomorrow!
- B. Procrastination comes out of irrationality – flawed thinking.
 - 1. It is like one that Satan has blinded. One can “oppose himself!” **(2 Tim 2:25)**
 - 2. It is not uncommon for one who has struggled with depression to also have struggles here. One can be very intelligent but struggle with self-awareness.
- C. Where is our real identity? This is a key foundation in overcoming temptation!
 - 1. At conversion one begins a lifelong process of conforming to God’s way of thinking. **(Jer 9:23-24; Gal 3:26-29)**
 - 2. How did Paul once view himself and his purpose in life? **(Phil 3:4-8)**
 - 3. I have seen weak members find purpose in things the world will applaud. When one’s purpose changes, then attitudes towards brethren will also change.

II. Why do people procrastinate?

A. Some are not honest with themselves about who they are serving. **(Rom 8:5-6)**

- 1. What and whom do we really love? **(1 Jn 4:16-19)**
- 2. When you passionately love something, you will pursue it.
- 3. Why do we become fearful and paralyzed in doing God’s will?

B. We must come to understand our past and our emotions.

“People engage in this irrational cycle of chronic procrastination because of an inability to manage negative moods around a task.”

- 1. Can we say that “..we love Him because He first loved us?” **(1 Jn 4:16)**
- 2. Here is where an honest, personal study and reflection of God nature and our past can help us! **(Ps 22:3-4, 9-10)**

3. Outside of the knowledge of God, we have been “programmed” to have a self-image *depending on our family and past experiences*.

C. *Fear, worry* and the “imposter syndrome.” (Rev 21:8; Mt 25:25)

“No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.” -

1. Our *fear of the thoughts of others* can be enslaving. Some homes are like this.
2. When we know God, we are not afraid of what is true and real.
3. Many run from Jesus because of the fear of others! (Jn 9:20-23; 12:42-43)
4. “What are brethren thinking about me?”
5. Our emotions often make a task *much bigger than it really is*.

D. *Overcommitment* and the pressure of the expectations others. (Mt 11:28-30)

1. God knows what we can handle and will not over burden us.
2. Why do good people say yes to commitments that go beyond reason?

E. *Perfectionism* and one’s own expectations.

“Procrastinators are often perfectionists...They're so afraid of not doing something perfectly that they just don't finish it.”

1. What does God expect? What does our pride demand?
2. God urges us to take *one step at a time*. What we consider as weak and flawed, God can turn it into something powerful! (2 Cor 12:8-10)
3. When we let go of pride, we can break down a project *into manageable parts*.

III. Seeking the real expectations of the Lord

A. God wants us to open our hearts and *love His ways*. (Josh 22:5)

1. Things and people the world rejects, *we come to cherish and love*.
(1 Cor 1:26-27; Jn 13:34-35)

2. Our choices will prioritize *the things that God loves!*

B. Why did many *refuse* the great supper of the Lord? (Lk 14:15-24)

1. How could one refuse a supper prepared by the Lord?
2. Underlying this delay is *a heart that cannot see what is valuable*.

C. Consider *the empty fruits* of self-centered procrastination.

1. Projects are not finished. (Lk 14:28-30)
2. A kind of character (heart) is formed. (Lk 14:24)
3. There is little joy of accomplishment.

Mr. Meant-to has a comrade
And his name is Didn't-do,
Have you ever chanced to meet them?
Did they ever call on you?
These two fellows live together
In the house of Never-win
And I'm told that it is haunted
By the ghost of might-have-been.

4. You are not honest with yourself. (1 Cor 8:1-3)

5. You lose the respect of friends and family. (Lk 14:29-30)

D. Consider the blessed life of the one that fully gives himself to God! (Heb 11:35-38)

Conclusion: Heaven is a place for those who loved the Lord above all else.