

# I Declare War on Procrastination

Message 1 of 6 in the series: "I Declare War"

## A. Procrastination is bad.

"Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it's in your power to help them. If you can help your neighbor now, don't say, 'Come back tomorrow, and then I'll help you.'" Proverbs 3:27-28 (NLT)

"Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it." James 4:17 (NLT)

## B. Five common reasons we procrastinate:

1. Overload: I put too many things in my life, and I refuse to let anything go because I want to keep all my options open.

"I have no peace! I have no quiet! I have no rest! And trouble keeps coming!" Job 3:26 (GW)

2. Perfectionism: Everything needs to be perfect before I can begin or before I can move on to something else.

"Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest."  
Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NLT)

3. Fear: I can't do this. I will fail. I'm not even going to try.

"...We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey... But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak! ... We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" Numbers 13:27-28,31b (NLT)

4. Pride: I'm too important to do this!

"...Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha's house. But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: 'Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy.' But Naaman became angry and stalked away. 'I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!' he said. 'I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the Lord his God and heal me!' ... So Naaman turned and went away in a rage. But his officers tried to reason with him and said, 'Sir, if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn't you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, "Go and wash and be cured!"' So Naaman went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed!" 2 Kings 5:9-14 (NLT)

5. Laziness: I just don't want to do it.

"I walked by the field of a lazy person, the vineyard of one with no common sense. I saw that it was overgrown with nettles. It was covered with weeds, and its walls were broken down. Then, as I looked and thought about it, I learned this lesson: A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber." Proverbs 24:30-34 (NLT)

## C. Six ways we can declare war on procrastination:

1. We can stop making excuses.

"But Moses pleaded with the Lord, 'O Lord, I'm not very good with words. I never have been, and I'm not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled.' Then the Lord asked Moses, 'Who makes a person's mouth? ... Is it not I, the Lord? Now go! I will be with you as you speak, and I will instruct you in what to say.'" Exodus 4:10-12 (NLT)

2. We can say "No" to at least one negative or positive distraction today.

"Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. Later Simon and the others went out to find him. When they found him, they said, 'Everyone is looking for you.' But Jesus replied, 'We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came.'" Mark 1:35-38 (NLT)

3. We can take a few small steps today.

“Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin...”  
Zechariah 4:10 (NLT)

4. We can establish meaningful routines.

“So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12 (NKJV)

- Regular bedtimes/wake-up times
- Regular mealtimes
- Regular work/study hours
- Regular exercise/workout sessions
- Daily devotions: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

5. We can get help/accountability from a friend.

“Let the godly strike me! It will be a kindness! If they correct me, it is soothing medicine. Don’t let me refuse it.” Psalm 141:5a (NLT)

6. We can ask God to help us face our fears.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”  
2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)

“For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.” Isaiah 41:13 (NIV)

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#### Questions for Self-Examination:

1. What God-given tasks have I been putting off? Why? What can I get done if I spend 15 minutes working on one task today?
2. What bills do I need to pay? What difficult conversations have I been putting off? To whom do I need to apologize? When will I get started?
3. Am I refusing to do something that I know I need to do simply because someone insulted me? How long will I allow my wounded pride to stop me from doing what’s right?
4. What can I say “No” to today?
5. What meaningful routines do I need to establish (regular devotional times, worktimes, bedtimes, etc.)? What distractions/bad habits are hindering me (television, social media, staying up too late, etc.)?
6. Who pushes me? Who looks me in the eye and says, “You could do better!”? Who would be willing to do this if I ask?
7. What dreams have I put on hold? What circumstances have I allowed to keep me from even trying to chase them? Why?
8. What excuses have I been making for not getting things done?
9. What fears have been holding me back? When will I surrender them to Jesus?

#### Thoughts for Reflection:

“There are two traps of procrastination that are easy to fall into: The first trap is **overestimating** what we can do in the short-term. So, when things get tough, we get discouraged and quit. The second trap is **underestimating** what we can do in the long-term. So, when projects look big or complicated, we never get started.”

“Inch by inch life’s a cinch. Yard by yard it’s much too hard.”

“The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The next best time is today.”