

Partnering With God Today

Sometimes we put off listening for God's presence today because we're all set to do it tomorrow. Does it matter if we start listening today?



John 16:5-7

"Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

Reflections

I have a T-shirt that says "I never put off until tomorrow what I can put off until the day after". True to form I am writing this after the deadline. Procrastination is so common that there are jokes about it. "The procrastinators meeting was delayed until tomorrow."

We procrastinate individually. We procrastinate collectively. Why do we put off what we know we should do? Sometimes we even put off what we know we must do. Sometimes the consequences are serious. Many people knew the levees surrounding New Orleans were not up to even a category 4 hurricane. But there were other needs and maybe the levees could be put off for another year.

When should I study the Bible? I'll start next week, after the meeting, or after the kids are in their school routine, or... So we delay, and the Bible stays on the shelf. The words of comfort remain unread. The prayer

remains unspoken. We continue our lives in spiritual poverty. And then we look back and say *where did all the time go?*

If we wait for the right time for spiritual development, it will always be put off until later. Perhaps that is the reason for the third commandment. ["Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."] God knows without a schedule we will put off spiritual matters just as we do other things in our lives. But if we only turn to God weekly we will only turn to God weakly.

Once, there was a ship that had trouble with its water purification system. Sailing in the tropics, the crew needed a constant source of drinking water. Without water they were in trouble and radioed for help. An alert radio operator on shore noted the ship's position, and radioed back "dip down and drink". Although far out to sea, the mighty Amazon river dumped so much fresh water that spread over the heavier

salt water, that the ship was literally sailing in fresh water.

The series "**God Is Closer Than You Think**" reminds us that God is here in our midst, close in space. But it is also a reminder that God is here now, close in time. The queue for prayer is short. No waiting. You can speak to God faster than dialing a cell phone. Jesus showed us how it is done. He was in constant communication with the Father, in constant communion.

Turning to God constantly may seem like trivializing prayer. But it can be a constant reminder of faith, an expression of trust. And it can lead to a closer relationship with God. At least that is what I'm told. And I'm going to try it...

—Dale Fixsen

Series Resource:

[God is Closer Than You Think](#), John Ortberg, 2005.

Readings

Sunday, October 18

John 16:5-7

Sometimes we procrastinate and put off living with a sense of God's presence today. Why does Jesus say it will be better for us to have the "Comforter"?

Monday, October 19

Exodus 8:1-12

In what ways do we behave like Pharaoh and put up with less-than-satisfying spiritual life when we could experience a rich, full life with God? Why do we procrastinate spiritually? What "frogs" are in your life that need to be removed?

Tuesday, October 20

Proverbs 27:1; James 4:13-17

What does God warn us about regarding "tomorrow?" What does God's assessment of procrastination mean for your spiritual life?

Wednesday, October 21

Matthew 4:18-22; Matthew 8:19-23; Matthew 25:1-10

What opportunities are lost when we procrastinate in our relationship with God?

Thursday, October 22

Ephesians 3:16-19; 1 John 2:15-17

In the movie "The Princess Bride," the hero faithfully responds to the princess' requests with "as you wish." Jesus said to the Father "Thy will be done." (Matt. 16:42) Who's will are you doing? What do we receive from God when we choose to align ourselves with him?

Friday, October 23

Lamentations 3:22-23; Psalm 32:5; Micah 7:18

The key to remaining in God's presence is knowing what to do when we fail [we sin, forget, or refuse to be a conduit of God's Spirit.] How do we know God is ready to forgive so we can try once again?

Saturday, October 24

Psalm 118:24

Reflect on this verse. List of what is valuable and important about this day. Ask God to help you value this moment, and to be present in everything you do through the rest of the day. Make this your spiritual habit.

Don't have a Bible? Access these scriptures at biblegateway.com.