

HOLY PROCRASTINATION!

pro·cras·ti·na·tion

The act or habit of procrastinating; or putting off or delaying, especially something requiring immediate attention. (Source: dictionary.com)

FIRST OF ALL...

This is the last time I ever write about procrastination! UGH! I've done just about everything under the sun EXCEPT write this column. I mean, since when do I suddenly have the time and energy to change my bedroom furniture around, or clean out my car in 10 degree weather? For crying out loud, writing this article has been a "battle royale." (1. An intense altercation. 2. A battle involving many combatants. 3. A fight to the finish.)

PROCRASTINATION - IS IT ALWAYS NEGATIVE?

I know procrastination is usually a negative thing, but did you notice the word, "delaying" in the definition of procrastination? In this column I will show you that sometimes delaying can actually be in the will of God. For example, in chapter 11 of the book of John, we see the event of Lazarus getting sick. Lazarus' sisters, Martha & Mary, have already sent word to Jesus that His friend, their brother, is sick. His situation is so dire that his sisters summon Jesus back to Judea, a place where the Jewish leaders had recently wanted to kill Him. (John 11:8) In verse 6 we have a holy delay, "*So when He (Jesus) heard that he (Lazarus) was sick, He (Jesus) then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.*" WOW! Jesus just fulfilled our dictionary.com definition of procrastination! "...delaying, especially something requiring immediate attention." After a brief misunderstanding with the disciples that kind of went like this: (Jesus: "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep." Disciples: "If he's sleeping, he will wake up; what's the big deal?" Jesus: "Lazarus is dead." Disciples: "Oh..."). Thomas still doesn't get it, so



he says to the other disciples, "Hey guys, I've got an idea, let's go with Him so that we can die too." WHAT? Squirrel!

SOMETIMES THE HOLY DELAY WILL BE MISUNDERSTOOD

Jesus, knowing all things, knows that Lazarus will not be dead for long. By the time Jesus arrives on the scene Lazarus has been dead and buried four days. Immediately, Martha goes out to meet Jesus where He is in Bethany, just a couple of miles outside of town. She says, "Lord, if YOU had been here, my brother would not have died." Ouch! I'm sure she didn't mean it like it sounded. Still, she believes that Jesus can heal the sick, because she has seen Him heal people time and time again. From Martha & Mary's perspective Jesus wasn't there when they needed Him the most, and Lazarus died. In fact, Jesus even missed the funeral of His good friend. Mary also comes to Jesus and says the same thing as her sister, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died." The people from the town are all saying the same thing, "This Man who opens the eyes of the blind, could He not also have kept this man from dying?" These people are no longer wondering about why He wasn't there in time. Now, I think, they are questioning His ability! At this point Jesus says, "Take Me to where you have laid him." Now, for the shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept." (John 11:35)

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Remember, this whole event is taking place because Jesus delayed in coming when He was told that his friend was

deathly ill. It was a holy delay. When the procrastination turns out for the glory of God, I think we can safely call it a holy delay. It was certainly the perfect timing in this case because the result was a MIRACLE! At Jesus' command, Lazarus came out of the tomb ALIVE!

THE POINT OF ALL THIS

The whole point of this writing is to let you know that sometimes we, as Christians, are called to delay. It may seem like procrastination to others, but there are times when you and I just don't have total peace about moving forward on something. We need to check our own hearts, but there are times when delay isn't even sinful. Yea! I don't always have to feel guilty when I procrastinate! We should however, know ourselves well enough to discern whether we are being lazy in our flesh or being led by the Spirit. We should also remember that just because God is delaying in answering our prayer, doesn't mean He's disinterested or we aren't worth His time, or He doesn't love us. Sometimes, as we've seen, it may be necessary to delay in order to effect a greater purpose.

In any case, I hope you've gotten something out of this writing, unless, of course, you're putting off reading this column for some reason:).

I say, if we must procrastinate, by all means, let it be a Holy Procrastination!

Thanks for reading.

Shalom! Big D