

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

How to Get Rid of Procrastination Once and For All

Do you procrastinate too much? Are you waiting for your "big break" to take the next (or first) step towards your big goal? If so, then it's time to get rid of procrastination once and for all. Here's how.

This is part of a year-end countdown of my top 5 posts of 2014. This was my 5th most popular post of the year and one of my favorites. I hope that you find value in it if you are new or just needed a reminder. Don't worry...not all of my content for the rest of the year is "Best of." Stay tuned for some other great posts and offers.

The irony of this post is that I procrastinated in writing it.

I had a cooler post that I wanted to write. One that had me more excited than this post. One that was more fun to write. So I started down the path of writing that one. (It's worth the wait, trust me.)

Then I realized I would be a hypocrite of the worst kind. So here I am; writing this post about procrastination. Talk about applying the principles I write about. Admittedly, taking my own advice is much harder than giving it.

Start at the beginning

Tony Evans writes in his book, *Kingdom Man*, about a frequent experience in his life as someone with millions of radio listeners and television viewers.

Young pastors approach him and want to know the "secret to his success." Evans replies by asking them to name the last time they ministered to a small group of teenage boys or spoke at a prison. As you can imagine, most people don't like those questions in response. They want to know his secret sauce, not be confronted with reality.

The reality is that Tony Evans spent years speaking to individuals and small groups before he was reaching millions. He says in his book:

...if you aren't willing to start at the beginning and be responsible where you are, then how do you expect God to give you more?

Put differently, how could you possibly expect to be able to handle speaking to millions when you've never spoken to one, or tens, or hundreds?

Stop making excuses

Ultimately, procrastination comes to down to making excuses.

You make excuses why you should check Facebook instead of writing that business proposal. You justify five more minutes of reading the news when you know that you could sneak in a quick workout. You rationalize why you spend an hour working on something that is neither urgent nor important, but it sure feels productive, when you could finish the project that is due Friday.

Those excuses seem ridiculous, and even though you might make them often, you know that they aren't productive.

But what about the excuses you make for procrastinating because you want more?

You put off caring for your lawn until you have a nicer house on a nicer property. You don't bother to get up thirty minutes earlier to work on your side business because it's only thirty minutes and your business isn't even growing that much. Much better to put that off until you have more money or connections.

The answer to all of this is to stop making excuses for why you don't start. Stop belittling where you are today and "work with what you've got."

Go create opportunities

When Tony Evans was just getting started as a preacher, he could have come up with a thousand excuses why he wouldn't preach.

He had no experience.

He had no church.

He wouldn't be paid.

No one had asked him to.

But he didn't wait.

He preached at bus stops. Every Friday.

He writes:

There was no honorarium. There was no pay. Half the time, no one even looked at me. But based on where I was at that point in my life, that was the best congregation I could locate. Churches weren't inviting me to come preach to them. Yet God had called me to preach, so I wasn't about to wait for a church to invite me. I had to go create one.

If Tony Evans hadn't preached on Fridays at bus stops in Atlanta when no one was paying any attention, he wouldn't be speaking to millions today.

He created opportunities. He didn't wait for the perfect opportunity. He didn't wait for the situation to improve. He didn't make excuses why it wouldn't work. He didn't wait for an invitation.

He did what he was called to do, without hesitation.

The right tools

Until you have that mindset, you will continue to procrastinate.

Until you decide once and for all that you will do what you are called to do without hesitation, all of the tools, tricks, apps, and books in the world won't help you stop procrastinating.

Procrastination is an attitude. It's a disease. It's not something that goes away with 10 steps, an accountability partner, a to-do list, or an extra cup of coffee.

It ends when you stop waiting for an invitation. It ends when you create your own opportunities and pounce on them like a lion on a gazelle. It ends today...if you decide it does.

What has caused you to procrastinate?