



**Coptic Orthodox Diocese of  
the Southern United States**

**The Monthly Message  
to the Priests' Wives  
January 2018**

## **Procrastination and Postponing (2)**

### **Consequences of procrastination:**

- (1) Acquiring to oneself the Biblical curse, especially when it comes to procrastinating worship, spiritual practices, and service matters, “*Cursed is he who does the work of the LORD with slackness*” (Jeremiah 48:10).
- (2) Loss of important chances that would never come again like what happened with the foolish virgins and Felix the governor.
- (3) Loss of interest and cruelty of heart. As much as one postpones his repentance and listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit within himself as much as his weakness becomes endured, “Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 5:19).
- (4) Accumulation of stress due to accumulation of required tasks.

- (5) Weak performance as the rapid pace of fulfilling the required task is a crucial part of the evaluation of one’s performance. Good quality is not enough.
- (6) Low self-confidence and self-esteem due to the continuous guilt feeling produced by postponing many things.
- (7) The procrastinator loses his credibility because he is not committed to due dates and timetables to fulfil required tasks.
- (8) Loss of relationships and people due to loss of credibility.

### **Treatment of procrastination:**

- (1) **Hasten to repentance after fall:** “*Till now, you are promising yourself that you will repent saying I will repent tomorrow. From now on, push the sin away stopping it from coming to you tomorrow and telling her: go away today. Postpone the sin from day to day like you postponed repentance. Kick the sin out like you kicked repentance till today by excuses. Like you postponed doing good do the same with repentance to find victory*” (St. Ephraim the Syrian).

It was written in the *Paradise of Monks* that the thoughts of an elder told him: relax today and repent tomorrow. He replied: this will never happen. I have to repent today and the will of God be done tomorrow.

What applies to repentance is also applied to all spiritual practices that one is tempted to postpone.

**(2) Do not catastrophize the estimation of the size and difficulty of the work.** Many times, one postpones the work because he exaggerates in imagining the degree of its difficulty. One must learn how to make things easy instead of complicating them by his negative way of thinking. It happens many times that as soon as one initiates the work, he finds out that it not as much hard, boring, or time consuming as he imagined.

**(3) Be realistic.** One has to be realistic while estimating his abilities. He must not put on himself burdens that exceed his capability. This would push him to postpone many of them.

**(4) Break tasks into small parts.** When the required task seems to be hard or complicated, it would be beneficial to break it into many small steps. This would help to achieve and to avoid postponing the entire task.

**(5) Get rid of perfectionism.** Perfectionists tend to wait until things and preparations become perfect before they initiate the required task. They work according to the principle of *All or Nothing*. Therefore, in order for someone to get rid of procrastination, he must focus on achieving the work even with a less quality as this would be better than postponing it and not fulfilling it at all.

**(6) Get rid of distractors.** Being busy answering phone calls, browsing social media, and following news leads to losing time

and this in turn pushes one to postpone the required work. Therefore, it is beneficial for one, to fulfill his work without postponing, to decide not to answer phone calls or browse the websites during the time dedicated to finish a certain work.

**(7) Delegate and get help from others.** Delegating some trusted people to fulfill some required tasks or getting help from them to hasten the fulfillment of certain work is very beneficial. This prevents the accumulation of work and keeps one's credibility regarding his commitment to predetermined timetables.

**(8) Train yourself to manage your time well.** Bad time management leads to postponing a lot of tasks.

**(9) Determine your goal clearly.** When one loses the meaning of his life, and his interest in fulfilling his mission, he falls into slackness and carelessness and surrenders to procrastination.

**(10) Get rid of excuses.** One usually gets rid of the burden of guilt feeling produced by procrastination by using many excuses. He either blames others or the circumstances to justify himself. One must be honest in examining his inner motives lying behind procrastination and must resist them without surrendering to laziness and slackness.