

## **“WHY ARE YOU WAITING?”**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. In another study (“The Excuses of Moses”), we saw...
  - a. That when God called Moses he tried to excuse himself by offering several objections
  - b. Yet God answered every objection, declaring them invalid
2. I applied the lesson to those in the church...
  - a. Who are called to take the gospel to the lost
  - b. Yet often make excuses for not doing so
3. Let’s take this idea of offering excuses a step farther...
  - a. Directing it toward those who are not Christians
  - b. Whom God is calling through the gospel to obey Jesus Christ
  - c. If you have not yet obeyed the gospel...
    - 1) It may be you think you have a valid reason
    - 2) But just as God answered every objection raised by Moses, so His Word answers any reason you may give for not obeying today!
4. Indeed, one might properly ask the same question Ananias asked Paul...

*“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16)*

[Why does one wait? Whatever the objection, the Lord has an answer. To illustrate, consider some of the objections often raised for not obeying the gospel, beginning with...]

#### **I. “I WILL LATER...BUT NOT NOW. LET ME WAIT AWHILE.”**

##### **A. PROCRASTINATION IS ONE OF SATAN’S GREATEST WEAPONS...**

1. He delights in using it on us at every stage of life; e.g., he gets the:
  - a. 12 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too young to think about God”
  - b. 18 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too smart to think about God”
  - c. 22 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too happy to think about God”
  - d. 25 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too busy to think about God”
  - e. 30 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too smug to think about God”
  - f. 40 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too tired to think about God”
  - g. 50 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too worried to think about God”
  - h. 60 year old to delay by saying “I’m much too old to think about God”
2. Much too often, death comes unexpectedly, and then it is too late to think about God!

##### **B. THAT DELAY IS FOLLY SHOULD BE EVIDENT...**

1. Would you delay in taking appropriate action if you knew...
  - a. There was a bomb in your house that could explode at any moment?
  - b. You had a terminal disease if left untreated?

2. Why then have this concern for the body, but not for the soul?
  - a. The soul is much more important than the body – **Matthew 10:28** (“*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*”)
  - b. If you know what to do, don’t delay; your soul is at stake!

[But then some say...]

## II. “I DON’T KNOW ENOUGH YET”

- A. A DESIRE TO LEARN MORE IS COMMENDABLE
  1. There is a lot more that I would like to know!
  2. But being a Christian involves a growth process...
    - a. A lot of the teaching takes place AFTER we become disciples – **Matthew 28:19-20**
    - b. In fact, one can become a Christian with very little knowledge
- B. HOW MUCH DOES ONE NEED TO KNOW?
  1. Consider the examples of conversions in the Book of Acts...
    - a. Most conversions resulted after just one lesson; how many lessons or sermons have you heard?
    - b. E.g., when the Ethiopian eunuch wanted to be baptized after just one lesson, it was “faith” that was necessary, not extensive knowledge” per se – **Acts 8:35-37**
  2. If you understand, and are convinced in your heart...
    - a. That you are lost in your sins
    - b. That Christ offered Himself on the cross for your sins
    - c. That you can receive the benefits of His death through:
      - 1) Believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God – **Acts 8:37; 10:43; 16:30-31**
      - 2) Repenting of your sins – **Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31**
      - 3) Confessing your faith in Christ – **Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37**
      - 4) Being baptized for the remission of your sins – **Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21**
      - 5) Remaining faithful to the Lord – **Revelation 2:10**
        - o Then you know enough to receive salvation and begin the Christian life!

[Then there are those who admit they know enough, but say...]

## III. “I WANT TO WAIT UNTIL I AM SURE I CAN LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE” OR “I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH YET, I WANT TO IMPROVE MY LIFE”

- A. THIS IMPLIES A MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE...
  1. Some mistakenly believe they are expected to act like mature Christians right away
    - a. They look at those who have been Christians for years
    - b. They know they cannot act like that immediately, so assume they must change themselves completely before becoming Christians
  2. Again, they forget that being a Christian is a growth process
    - a. We start out as “babes in Christ”, often often till carnal in behavior – cf. **1 Corinthians 3:1-4**
    - b. But we are to grow, gradually putting off the “old man” and putting on the “new man” – **2 Peter 3:18; Colossians 3:8-10**

- B. IN FACT, ONE CANNOT LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE WITHOUT CHRIST!
1. If you wait until you can live the Christian life to become a Christian, you will be waiting forever!
  2. It is only in Christ that we receive the strength to overcome the struggles of the flesh – cf. **Romans 6:17-18; Romans 8:12-13; Philippians 4:13** (*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”*)
  3. To delay obeying Christ until one’s life is in order...
    - a. Is to “put the cart before the horse”
    - b. We need Christ and His strength in order to truly reform our lives!

[Then, some are bound to say...]

IV. **“THERE ARE HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH”**

- A. TRUE, BUT THERE ARE HYPOCRITES EVERYWHERE...
1. In the PTA, civic clubs, etc.; do hypocrites in the stadium prevent you from enjoying a good sports event?
  2. Their sin of hypocrisy is no excuse for you to continue in YOUR sins (remember, two wrongs don’t make a right!)
  3. Which is worse...
    - a. To spend A FEW YEARS in a church with a FEW hypocrites?
    - b. Or to spend ETERNITY in hell with ALL the hypocrites?
- B. SOME OTHER THINGS TO REMEMBER...
1. Jesus did not refuse to worship in the synagogues though the religious leaders were hypocrites
  2. Peter, James, John and the rest of the apostles did not leave Jesus because Judas was a hypocrite!
  3. If you let the hypocrite come in between you and God...
    - a. You let the hypocrite become bigger than God!
    - b. You can’t see God for the hypocrite! How tragic!

[To our list of excuses, we can add yet another...]

V. **“I WANT TO WAIT FOR MY SPOUSE OR PARENTS”**

- A. YOUR CONCERN IS COMMENDABLE, BUT...
1. Will you help them by waiting?
    - a. They may be waiting for you to obey first
    - b. Your delay can only hinder their own obedience
  2. Your example of obedience can be a powerful influence for good – cf. **1 Peter 3:1-2**  
 *(“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear”)*
- B. WHEN YOU STAND BEFORE THE LORD, IT WILL BE AS AN INDIVIDUAL...
1. It will not be in family groups, you will have to answer for yourself! – **Romans 14:12**  
 *(“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God”); 2 Corinthians 5:10*
  2. As much as you may love them, don’t let them lose your soul for you!

[Finally, let's consider an objection that is somewhat similar to the one we've just discussed...]

**VI. "I AM AFRAID OF WHAT MY PARENTS OR SPOUSE MIGHT THINK"**

- A. WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND WHAT JESUS TAUGHT...
  - 1. The Lord must come first – **Matthew 10:34-37**
  - 2. He has made it clear that we must be more concerned about what He thinks than what our loved ones might think
- B. SOMETHING ELSE TO BEAR IN MIND...
  - 1. At first they may think you are disregarding their feelings or beliefs
  - 2. But in reality you are likely acting upon the fundamental principles they themselves taught you!
  - 3. Did they not teach you...
    - a. To do what is right?
    - b. To not violate your conscience?
    - c. To stand on your own convictions?
      - o So they really have no basis to think evil of you, do they?

**CONCLUSION**

- 1. There may be other excuses, reason, or objections one might give for not obeying the gospel...
  - a. But this should suffice to illustrate that there is really no justifiable reason to put off your obedience to the gospel
  - b. There is really no justification for not accepting the grace God offers you through Jesus Christ!
- 2. So if you know what you need to do, why put it off any longer?

Together with Ananias, the disciple the Lord sent to tell Saul of Tarsus what he needed to do, we ask:

*"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."* (**Acts 22:16**)