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DON'T PUT IT OFF.

Most men agree that something must be *done* in this life. It is not enough to *know*, and *purpose*, and *promise* something. It must be *done*.

Nor is it generally doubted but *every man* has something to do. Every man must die, and every man must give account of himself to God. Should not every man, then, prepare to die and be judged?

Nor is it impossible for us to learn *what* we must do. In all essential things our duty is exceedingly plain. To forsake wicked ways, and words, and thoughts; to repent of all sin; to believe with the heart in Jesus Christ; to be led by the Holy Spirit; to love God's name, people, Sabbath, word, and worship; to be humble, meek, gentle, contented, forgiving, and holy—are duties so plain that few intend to leave this world without attending to them. Men are kept from embracing religion by deferring it. To such I say, DON'T PUT IT OFF.

Don't put it off—for, decide as you may, *others will be likely to follow your example*. When Zaccheus, and Lydia, and the jailer embraced Christ, salvation came to their households. Christ notices it as a mark of peculiar guilt in the Pharisees not to repent, when they *saw* the publicans and harlots believing John. "One sinner destroyeth much good." No man perishes alone.

Don't put it off—for *the appropriate business of time can not be done in eternity*. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose." It would be as wise to expect harvest in midwinter, as to suppose that the next life would afford opportunity for doing the business of this. This life is in order to that which is to come. This is the seed-time; the next is the harvest. Now we run a race: if successfully, we shall in the next world wear the unfading crown; if unsuccessfully, we shall fall into shame and everlasting contempt.

The work to be done is great. A soul is to be saved, countless sins are to be pardoned, vicious propensities eradi-

cated, bad habits broken up, good habits established, Jesus Christ to be formed in the soul, God to be pleased, the fear of death to be expelled, hell escaped, and heaven won. In building the ark, Noah did a great work. This work, "the mighty work of life," is greater.

Time is short. Like a post, time travels night and day ; like a weaver's shuttle, it flies so fast that it cannot be seen ; like the shadow of a cloud falling on the earth, it goes on the wings of the wind ; like a vapor, it vanishes, none can tell how.

" A point of time, a moment's space
Removes you to yon heavenly place,
Or shuts you up in hell."

Life is uncertain. One man died in the midst of a demonstration, another in the midst of an argument, another reading the newspaper, another walking in his garden, another laughing at a ludicrous picture. Many fall asleep and never awake in time. Many, in health one hour, are at God's bar the next. Rest not thy soul's eternal well-being on such an uncertainty.

Now is the best time. Even if you should live half a century, you will have no time so good as the present.

There is much at stake. A deathless soul, an eternity of bliss or woe, the withering frown or life-giving smile of Jehovah are concerned. No cherub or archangel can compute the worth of that which you risk by delay.

It may become disagreeable. Religion thought of, but not embraced, will make you very unhappy ; languidly or reluctantly attended to, nothing is more unprofitable. Its first and great demand is, *Give me thy heart.* Until this is done, the ways of wisdom are irksomeness. Hope deferred, makes the heart sick. Religion deferred, is death to the soul.

Religion delayed, is religion rejected. To postpone the matter a day, is to postpone it indefinitely. To hesitate about receiving Christ, is to despise him. All pretences of obeying God by and by, are hypocritical. To yield *immediately* to his claims, is as much a duty as to yield at all. Who would think him sincere, who, in promising amendment in habits of honesty, or sobriety, or truth, should propose to begin his reformation a month hence ?

The difficulty of your salvation is continually increasing.

Satan is always adding new chains or riveting old ones on all his captives. The world entwines itself around the soul by a new fold every day. The unregenerate heart is always waxing worse and worse. Especially does delay make it dreadfully hard. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, *harden not your heart.*"

You will grieve the greatest goodness. To requite the Father's love with coldness, the Son's compassion with indifference, and the Spirit's wooings with resistance, is to be a vile ingrate. Call me ungrateful, said a *heathen*, and you can call me nothing worse.

The Bible warrants no delay. "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." In a matter involving eternal interests, be not so daring as to act without scriptural warrant.

Don't put it off, lest you be lost. None ever got to heaven by delaying the surrender of their hearts to God. Waiting to become better or less wicked, never does any good. Delay is disobedience, disobedience is sin, and sin can never fit the soul for being saved.

Don't put it off, and you shall be saved. This was the way in which the thief on the cross, Saul of Tarsus, and all the redeemed have come to Christ. Yea, before the coming of Christ, this was the way men were converted, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*" Thus did David, and success attended his holy speed. They who hasten after another god, multiply their sorrows. But they who hasten after the true God, shall have more abundant joys than sinners have when their corn and wine abound. They shall be saved from sin, and guilt, and hell, and raised to heaven, and holiness, and eternal bliss.

Don't put it off; for God, who now waits to be gracious, may withdraw his Spirit. Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me."

"Admit him ere his anger burn,
His feet, departed, ne'er return:
Admit him, or the hour's at hand
You'll at his door rejected stand."

God's Spirit, on whose agency your salvation depends, will not always strive with man. Had not Bartimeus called just when he did, and earnestly as he did, he would have remained blind for life. The opportunity of repentance, once gone, is gone for ever.

Don't put it off, and you will never regret it ; but delay will, sooner or later, fill you with the most poignant grief. "I am dying," said one who has just left the world, "but I am happy. I am going to Jesus. Thanks to God, who did not let me put it off." "I am dying," said a youth recently, "and I am going to hell. Tell them all from me, that it is a dreadful thing to die a sinner. Tell them not to put it off, as I have done." Very recently another said, "In the midst of the terrors of dissolution and despair, I say, God will punish the wicked. O, if I had taken good advice when it was given me—but now it is too late." Yield now to God, "lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me." Pull not away the shoulder, nor refuse to hearken. More mournful words are not to be found than those which delaying sinners will use in the end: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Oh, what words!—NOT SAVED—WE ARE NOT SAVED!

Dear reader, decide. Decide now. How long will you hesitate? Let not thy *death* decide thy case. *Choose life*, that you may live. God invites, hell threatens, conscience urges, thy soul is perishing. Oh, DON'T PUT IT OFF.