

# Sinners Delay Concerns the Soul

by Jonathan Edwards

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*Sinners delay in putting off the great concern of their souls due to various reasons, leading to exceeding wickedness and foolishness.*

**Scripture:** Job 20:12, Proverbs 27:1, Isaiah 55:6, Matthew 6:33, Acts 24:25

**Topics:** "Spiritual Procrastination", "Salvation Urgency"

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## Description

Jonathan Edwards preaches on sinners delaying concerns of the soul, focusing on how individuals often postpone addressing their spiritual needs for what they perceive as a more convenient time, exploring the reasons behind this delay and the detrimental effects it has on their lives. He highlights the wickedness and foolishness of such procrastination, emphasizing the risks and dangers involved in continuously putting off seeking God and salvation, urging listeners to heed the warning and not fall into the trap of delaying their spiritual well-being.

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## Transcript

Sinners Delay Concerns Of The Soul

(Dated Aug, 1752)

Acts 24:25

And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

- I. The subject of the Apostle's preaching.
- II. How Felix was affected by it.
- III. How he conducted himself in these circumstances.

Subject: Sinners delaying in putting off the great concern of their souls till a supposed more convenient season.

1. How sinners oftentimes do delay.
2. The reasons or causes why sinners do thus.

### 3. The end of it.

I. I would briefly observe how sinners do frequently delay and put off the great concern of their souls till a supposed more convenient season.

(1.) They sometimes put off to certain times they set, when they intend... Children sometimes... Shall know more -- Know better how to pray and perform other duties of Religion that grown-up persons perform.

'Tis a common thing for young people. Till settled in the world.

"More convenient season:" a better inclination... not so much inclined to mirth and youthful vanities... fewer temptations... out of the way of young company... more in the way of those who are solid and serious persons.

They esteem the present season very inconvenient for religion... being so very convenient for other purposes... Now a very convenient time to take liberty in mirth and youthful delights.

Many that are past their youth put off to a supposed more convenient season... when got through such and such particular affairs wherein they are now involved... when they hope they shall be more at liberty... or till in this and the other respect they are got into more convenient circumstances.

(2.) There are many that delay and put off without fixing any time in their mind... hoping for a more convenient future time...

The present time appears peculiarly inconvenient... feel a great opposition... have many temptations... hope it will be better with them... not feel such an aversion... fewer temptations...

Wait to have the Spirit of God strive with them.

Now a time of general deadness, and very inconvenient on that account... all the talk is of other things... put off till a time of the outpouring of the Spirit of God...

Or, perhaps, they are hoping for some greater advantage in other respects, some better means than now they enjoy, or a better concurrence of circumstances to favor a design of seeking God and their salvation.

### II. The cause of persons thus delaying.

1. Stupidity... senselessness of their danger and necessity.

Insensible of the reality... insensible of the greatness... senseless of the heinousness of their sin... a brutish stupidity...

2. The importunity of lust... Job 20:12 -- "Wickedness is sweet in his mouth; he hides it under his tongue; he spares it, and forsakes it not, he keeps it still in his mouth."

3. Aversion to their duty.

4. Ignorance of themselves and self-confidence.

Trust in wisdom...strength...steadfastness...

5. A spirit of self-blinding... The blinding influence of a sinful self-love... promise themselves future opportunity... better opportunity... that God will hear...

6. The subtle temptations of the Devil...

III. The evil of it.

1. 'Tis exceeding wicked.

Direct disobedience...willful, resolved, wickedness....determine to continue in sin, and an allowance of it...

'Tis not only designedly committing one act of wickedness, but deliberately determining on a course of it... a course of manifested wickedness... neglect of many commands... gratification of many lusts... horrible ingratitude, abusing the past "long suffering"... horrible presumption on future mercy... contempt of offered mercy...

2. 'Tis exceeding foolish... Hereby they reject and miss a good deal of present good... willfully continue in a miserable state... bring a great deal of certain future misery upon them...

They run a dreadful risk...depend on innumerable uncertainties.. life continued... means of grace continued... use of reason... disposed... "more convenient season"...given one... if disposed whether succeed... whether God won't give over to delusion and to hard-heartedness...

Depend on many things that are not only uncertain, but very improbable... disposition... convenient season... thought when they were children... make their case more and more dangerous...depending on greater conveniences they make inconveniences for themselves... and by this means many thousands are actually undone...

APPLICATION:

This may be of warning to sinners not to delay and put off...

You have heard how common this is... Men are exceeding prone to it... Does your own experience confirm what has been said in this matter? And are there not some here who are now doing as has been represented? Have we not reason to think that there are many here present that say as Felix, "When..." etc.?

Undoubted, by what is everywhere to be seen at such a time of general deadness and regardlessness of religion as this is: a good evidence of the exceeding proneness to put off...

Let all take warning...

You have heard something in general of wickedness and folly; but here consider more particularly --

1. What guilt you contract: what a horrible thing it is to live in known and willful disobedience to God;... what great light ye will sin against if you...

2. What would you think of your delays if God should say to you, "Thou fool, this night...?"

3. If the future time you are putting off to should never come, how far it will probably be from being a "more convenient season."...

In many respects, far more inconvenient... God's anger increased... your heart harder, more stupid... every evil habit established... sloth... a carnal, worldly disposition... an habitual making light of things affecting such awakenings... Satan's great opportunity to establish his interest... commonly an increase of inconvenience of outward circumstances... increase of temptations... commonly many inconveniences arise that never would be thought of... less likely ever to set about the work... Satan hath greater advantages if they do... more likely to be unsteady...more likely soon to be discouraged... the work is greater and harder that they have to do... less time to do it...

4. Others have lamented their folly in delaying... many when under concern... I who have long been in the work of the ministry... many on a death-bed.

5. How much otherwise you deal with God, and desire that God should deal with you.

6. If you continue still to delay after the warning you have this day, how aggravated your wickedness will be!

How have you been warned hereof before... and how have you gone from the meeting-house and still...

How can you excuse yourself to go home tonight and do nothing? or to do a little this evening, and then to-morrow, or in a few days?...

Consider how unreasonable this is...

And if now again, ... and there be a God,... how many you reasonably suppose He will resent it?

7. If you still... what danger that you will be utterly given up before the time comes... Giving up a common thing...

8. Inquire whether you yourself don't believe [that] there are many now in Hell through this very means?

Here some, perhaps, may say, to excuse themselves, and quiet their own consciences with respect to this, "I don't delay and put off the concern of my soul. I am in a way of seeking my salvation."

Here I would put two or three questions to such persons.

1. Whether you are in a way of minding this affair more than all other? "Seeking FIRST the kingdom of God," -- "one thing."...

2. Is your reformation universal? Sins of omission... commission...

3. [Do you feel] as much pains as ever you take will be needful? Forsaken all practices you think you would need to forsake? Complied with all duties? As earnestly?... Do you intend to continue? How has secret, closet religion been with you? How have you kept the Sabbath? Attended the sermons? If not, ... you are guilty of the forementioned wickedness,...willful disobedience -- guilty of folly. Therefore, if you have any regard to... think on your mercies, and "turn your feet,"... and whatever "your hands find to do."...

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