

Eight Obstacles to Finishing What You Start

Piles of books. Stacks of magazines. Untried recipes. Unfinished projects. Does any of this sound familiar to you? Truth be told, I have way more plans I want to accomplish and things I want to do than time to finish them all in. I often feel frustrated when I see around me the evidence of my yet-to-be completed projects.



Lately, well actually over the last year, I've felt the pull from God to get this under control, to learn how to hone my ability to truly focus on a task from start to finish. It's not that I never complete anything. I've even hit a milestone this past year with one of my finished projects. It's more that I'm not the best at planning and prioritizing. So, before I look at ways to improve this area of my life, I need to understand what throws me off track. Maybe this honest look will help you too.

Ways to Derail Your Projects

1. **Not having a long-term plan.** It seems to me that the people who get the most done are the ones who plan ahead of time. They sit down with a calendar and plot out what each of their major projects will be for the entire year and roughly when they will work on each one. They then further break them down into monthly, weekly, and daily goals.
2. **Not allowing enough time.** I'm learning that most projects—whether they be writing books or reorganizing closets—take longer than I think they will.

3. **Not planning for the urgent.** Emergencies and last-minute changes to my schedule happen more often than I realize. So that means I need to add even more time to point #2.
4. **Procrastination.** Perhaps a beautiful day is beckoning me outside, or someone calls with an invitation that's hard to resist, and I put off my priority for the new thing that's come along.
5. **Being overwhelmed by the size of the project.** Sometimes I just don't know where to start, so I don't.
6. **Not having God's perspective on a project.** On the other hand, I also have a tendency to jump right in with an exciting idea before I've really hashed it out with God to see if this is something I should be pursuing.
7. **Being overcommitted.** Impulsively saying yes to too many things. This follows closely on the heels of #6.
8. **Not taking my goals seriously.** So often, I will stop what I'm doing to help someone else. This can actually be a good thing, but not when it becomes a regular occurrence. As my husband says, "Sometimes you have to learn how to say 'no.'"

Does God Want Me to Be Productive?

You don't have to read too far in the Bible to see the importance God placed on doing things in order. God created our world in an orderly fashion, and the universe functions in an orderly manner. Consider the following facts: *We know that every year we cyclically move through four seasons. *We can see an order to how animals live. *God gave Moses detailed directions on how to build the ark and finish the mammoth project of rounding up all the animals.*Look at all the precise detail that went into building the tabernacle. *In the book of 1 Corinthians, God makes it very clear that He wants our worship services to have a sense of order to them when He says in verse 40 "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." *The human body is a masterpiece of design.

It just makes sense that God wants us to have a semblance of

order, balance, and thought in our daily lives too.

In the next blog post, I'm going to address ways to overcome some of the obstacles of finishing what we start. In the meantime, I'd like to hear your thoughts on what keeps you from being productive in your days. Please leave your thoughts in the comments below.

Thanks and pray on!

Jane