



**The Time
to Practice
Delayed
Gratification
is Now!**

HEBREWS 11:24-25

Observations



▶ As a Gospel Preacher, part of my job is to warn you of the dangerous trends in human behavior. A preacher is a watchman, Ezekiel 33:3-9

▶ I need you to be able to see a problem before it ever develops (*some problems to avoid may be too late for my generation*)

“See then that you walk circumspectly (be careful how you walk), not as fools (unwise) but as wise, redeeming the time (making good use of every opportunity) because the days are evil.” Ephesians 5:15-16

Ephesians 5:8

“For you were once in darkness but now you are light in the world. Walk (live continuously the same way; develop a consistent pattern of right doing, right living) as children of light.”

- ▶ Don't dabble and dabble in and out of righteous living (like the Dow Jones Industrial Average, or flickering lights)
- ▶ Do those things that help you to continue in God's word, especially in times like these (like surrounding yourselves with Christians, and staying connected with other people who strive to live like you want to live, avoiding actions that precipitate strife, remembering God's word in your heart, Psalms 119:11)



Ephesians 5:8-12

“For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.”

- ▶ **Children of God have to be willing to take a position against sin (not participate in or condone it, but reprove or expose it, verse 11)**
- ▶ **It’s bad when individuals waste their time and live their lives in a way that they must do things in the darkness where others can’t see them (that idea should deter you)**
- ▶ **Some of the things we text, tweet, store in our phones and computers, and view when others are not around, are just not appropriate**





Ephesians 5:14

“Therefore (in light of what I have just said) He says:

Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”

- ▶ I’m going to give you the light so that others can see (how to behave in a Pandemic, times of trials, as single Christians, as single parents, as married couples, when pulled over by officers) Matthew 5:16; curtail your “doomscrolling” I’m with you
- ▶ Be a doer of the word and be blessed in what you do, James 1:22-25

What Behavioral Scientists Discovered In the Seventies

- ▶ They sat preschoolers at a table and placed a single marshmallow in front of each child
- ▶ They explained to each child that they could either eat that marshmallow immediately, or wait for 15 minutes and get 2 marshmallows
- ▶ Predictably, most of the children decided that “*one marshmallow in the hand was worth 2 in the future!*”

But the Researchers Didn't Stop There!

They Tracked the Children For the Next Ten Years and Found Differences!

- ▶ The children who had waited for two marshmallows (postponed their gratification) were more successful teenagers

Less prone to give in to peer pressure

Less likely to panic under stress

Overall, they tended to be more self-reliant, more confident, and more trustworthy than those children who had trouble postponing their gratification or yielding to “impulse”

- ▶ A follow-up study, 20 years later, showed better S.A.T. scores in the preschoolers that waited

But Parents, We Have Created a Society of Instant Gratification!

What Was True of Children Has Become a Rule Throughout Our Society!

- ▶ Indulge in a high-calorie treat rather than a more healthy snack
- ▶ We buy cars with “high-interest loans” attached to them, rather than save and wait to make a car loan more manageable for us
- ▶ We service our whole automobile at “Firestone”
- ▶ We tell “Alexa” to tell our cars when to start up and the lights in our houses, and water faucets when to turn on
- ▶ We settle for “easy courses” early in our career rather than the courses requiring discipline on our part to conquer them and be successful later on in our lives



We Live In a Society That Doesn't Just Simply Prefer Instant Gratification, It Demands It!

- ▶ How else would you explain a burst of anger when your “drive-thru chicken nuggets,” will take 5 more minutes, so they put you in the “other spaces” that demand you to wait!
- ▶ Explain when two of the worst phrases given to you in society are, “*stand over to the side please!*” or “*windows update, wait a few minutes!*”
- ▶ Explain how you almost hemorrhaged a blood vessel when a document had to be “downloaded” on your computer before you could access it



Definition of Delayed Gratification

A process in which you schedule the pain and pleasures of life in such a way as to enhance the pleasure by meeting the pain first and getting it over with

It Is Really the Only Decent Way to Live!

Hebrews 11:24-26

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years (when he was grown up), refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Esteeming the reproach of Christ (regarded the disgrace of Christ) greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect (looking ahead) unto the recompense of reward (suffer now, reward later)

God's Way Is to Suffer First and Achieve the Rewards Later!

- ▶ Work or Study hard while you are in the prime of your life like the ant, who even with no commander, stores his provisions in the summer; (They know winter is coming) Proverbs 6:6-8
- ▶ Avoid a life of instant gratification (laziness)
“A little sleep, a little slumber (a nap here and there), a little folding of the hands to rest (skipping work here and there) – and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man (you can look forward to a dirt poor life).” Prov. 6:10-11
- ▶ For the 1st time since the Depression, over 50% of members the young adult population (18-29) live with their parents (Pew Research Study, 2020)

Ecclesiastes 12:1

“Remember now thou creator (don’t let the excitement of youth cause you to forget your creator) in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them (before the days of trouble come).”

- ▶ Live with the principles of God in mind
- ▶ Don’t shortcut work (It’s easier to make false statements, skip the educational process, rather than to do the work)
- ▶ Don’t go to church just enough to get a recommendation. People want the piece of paper rather than go through the process

The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38