



## Delaying Gratification

- If we are going to live a disciplined life
  - If we are going to start solving our problems
    - If we are going to remove the obstacles in our path to the Kingdom, the first thing we have to learn is to Delay Gratification
- The Road Ahead of us is a long road...
- Delaying gratification means planning your life so that you experience the painful things first; get them over with, and then enjoy the nicer things later
- Simply stated, it means eating your peas first, and then relaxing to enjoy your dessert
- Spiritually, we have a perfect example:
- **Jesus**
  - Hebrews 12:1-3
    - 1) Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin

which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

- 2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- 3) For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

- Jesus had The Entire World in the palm of his hand...

- Gave it all up in his desire to serve his Father...

- Looking forward to the reward that was to come later...

- Delaying Gratification is often giving up present joy in pursuit of a future greater joy

- It can be simple little things in your everyday life that will make your day go nicer

- Or major things that can change the course of your entire life

- Consider these examples:

- **Abraham**

- Hebrews 11:8-10

- 8) By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

- 9) By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

- 10) For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

- When the archaeologists uncovered Ur of the Chaldees they discovered that they had running water and indoor plumbing at the time of Abraham

- They had fantastic gardens and an advanced market system bringing in the best foods and clothing from around the world

- God called Abraham, and he gave it all up

- He lived in tents for 175 years - CAMPING!

- He didn't even have a place to bury his wife

- He was waiting for a city whose builder is God...
  - He was looking forward to the Kingdom
  - He was willing to suffer some momentary unpleasantness in order to receive a wonderful blessing in the future
- The Bible is full of stories of people who Delayed Gratification
  - Just look a little further here in Hebrews

- **Moses**

- Hebrews 11:24-26

- 24) By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
- 25) Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
- 26) Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

- Chose rather to suffer affliction than the pleasures of sin for a season
  - Gave up all the riches of Egypt
  - For a place in a Kingdom yet to come

- What Faith!

- One of the first things for us to understand is:

- Delaying Gratification requires Faith

- We "pass up" certain things in this world, because we have Faith that God has something better planned for us

- I Peter 1:3-7

- 3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- 4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
- 5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- 6) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:
- 7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

- So, how's does all this HELP us, you might ask?
- Delaying Gratification and Problem Solving
  - Most common reaction is to just ignore your problems and try to have fun
  - Why do people smoke pot? "My life is so screwed up, it's just kind of nice to forget about it all for awhile."
  - "The problem I have to deal with is so big that I just can't deal with it, so I'm just forget about it for awhile, and go ahead and have some fun now."
- This is crazy...
- This completely ignores one of the great truths of life:
  - Problems DO NOT go away
    - Do not ignore them
    - Address them
- When a problem arises, take the time, solve it, correct yourself, clear it up, make it right with God, and right with those around you, and all those involved in it... then go ahead and have some fun.
- I never asked my parents permission when I wanted to do something, because it would always be this big massive argument...
  - So, I would avoid the conflict, and just go ahead and do it...
  - The whole time I'd have this cloud of dread hanging over my head, and as soon as I'd get home, I'd get in trouble.
  - What kind of solution was that?
    - Why not ask permission first, confront the painful part first, and get past it... then you can move forward freely.
- The classic example of not Delaying Gratification

- Pre-Marital Sex and unwanted pregnancies
  - Two people honestly do love each other, and plan on getting married
    - They just need to work out a few problems first
  - Instead of doing the hard thing and Delaying the Gratification of Sex and working on their personalities and characters (problems) first
    - They have a baby together
      - And now they are worse off than they ever would be
    - Now they find themselves unhappy with each other AND parents
- Why not solve the problems first?
- Wouldn't it be so much better resolve our character issues and personality problems that need to be addressed first
  - And THEN move on to enjoy our lives?
- Do not avoid your problems and attempt to live a life of "fun."
  - Face your problems
  - Face your weaknesses...
    - Correct them
    - Solve them
      - Then go on with your life.
- Delay the gratification of the fun things, until you have addressed and conquered the hard things...
- To successfully face our problems, we have to be willing to accept responsibility for our problems....
  - We'll talk about that next...