



LCBS-2023-08-30-MinimalismAndDelayedGratification.pdf

## Minimalism and Delayed Gratification

Minimalism speaks of living a simpler, more focused life. Do you ever consider the difference in having it right now, or waiting for a bigger thing later on?

The ability to delay an impulse for an immediate reward to receive a more favorable reward at a later time is the standard definition of delayed gratification. Studies have shown that the ability to delay reward is not easy but has great rewards for those who can learn to do it.

The ability to self-regulate and show control will directly impact the outcomes of all your future plans. In a culture surrounded by messages saying that you can lose the discomfort right now, the ability to wait for a long-term reward is less attractive and few are willing to wait.

Delayed gratification is a muscle we can all grow to serve our future selves. Sometimes discomfort is the more beneficial choice.

Today we are living in a time when people want things, and they want them now. Patience has almost begun to be a thing of the past. Christians sometimes forget that we are commanded to wait on the Lord.

*(Pro 20:21) An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.*

*(Pro 20:22) Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.*

*(Psa 27:13) I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.*

*(Psa 27:14) Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.*

And the bible tells us we can manually acquire patience, but it comes from a tough source.

*(Rom 5:3) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*

*(Rom 5:4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

*(Rom 5:5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

So verse 3 says we can acquire patience, but it comes via tribulations. I think it best to learn a little patience without having to go through the tough times.

I am sure you have friends who got married and expected in their first year of marriage to have a lifestyle better than their parents. It may have taken the parents a lifetime to acquire their home and possessions. But the newlywed couple immediately want a large home and two cars. And with credit so easy to obtain, many buy houses that cost over 30% of their take-home pay, putting a crunch on their finances.

Part of this is due to FOMO. The Fear of missing out. Best to do JOMO. That is the Joy of missing out.

[Article on FOMO.](#)

Buying things on credit is just the way people do things today. But the bible is clear on this plan.

*(Rom 13:8) Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

I think this verse goes way beyond debt, but it is about having a life honest before all men and carrying our own weight. Not owing anyone but being a giver rather than a taker.

So what happens when the young couple gets in a bind? Pull out the plastic and continue spending as if it were cash. The government reported that in July Credit card debt in America exceeded 1 trillion dollars. Not billion... one trillion. The student loan crisis is at 1.4 trillion and many discuss it on the news. Not a word is mentioned about the credit card disaster Americans are facing. Why is that? Money talks and credit card companies carry big power. They spend thousands of dollars advertising each day.

I have had people say that we just have to accept that you will forever have a car payment. That may be what the banks want us to believe, but it is not a biblical decision.

Dave Ramsey says that the bible is filled with financial advice which is totally true. Over 2,000 verses are directed on how to manage our money and finances.

He pointed out in his book "The Total Money Makeover" that if a person starts paying a \$495 a month car payment at age 25 and continues to do that until retirement age of 65, it will cost you a lot. If you put that \$495 a month into a mutual fund that averages 12% return, that would come out to almost 6 million dollars. Say it only averages 8%? Only about 3 1/2 million.

So the money to retire wealthy is there if we will just be disciplined and use the right mindset from our youth up. He points out that if a person would put that \$500 a month in savings for one year, then you could buy a \$6000 car with cash. Do it again for another year and now you trade up to a \$12,000 car with no interest. Then you could begin that path down a road to success by investing that car money.

Is it good to owe money? Coming from a background of spending more than I made, I can tell you the answer is “NO”. It is not good.

*(Pro 22:7) The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*

I don't want to be a servant to anyone anymore except God. The devil wants us to go down a tough path in life. That is not God's plan for us.

Back on the topic of credit cards, I want to mention that credit card companies spend millions of dollars on advertising and gimmicks to get us to use them. The biggest temptation they throw out is cash back rewards. This one is one that I decided was worthwhile. I mean I am spending the money, anyway, why not get 2 to 5% back.

Well after watching the show on credit cards on the Dave Ramsey show, I have even decided to stop using those. He ranted and raved about how stupid people are to have run up a trillion dollars of debt on credit cards. Before watching that show, I spent several hours a month making an XLS sheet to expense all my items making use of the best cash rewards.

What I did not consider in this is that if you get back 2%, how much is that really? That is 2 cents for each dollar spent. So if you spend \$1,000, they pay you \$20. Think about how minuscule that is. And while we have been able to pay those off monthly, 60% of people will not do that. So you are spending a thousand to get back \$20? The first month you don't make that full payment, guess what happens? 23% interest. Think how much you made on getting 2% back. You just lost 21%. According to research I did, 60% of credit card users DO NOT pay off the balance monthly. We lose, the credit card companies win.

Don't fall for these credit card gimmicks. Dave Ramsey said that free airline points are big sellers. Guess why? 80% of those free miles are NEVER redeemed. And those few who fly to Hawaii or Cabul for a free vacation, guess what happens? They run up a big vacation bill on their credit card that they can't pay. Who owns all those shiny chrome buildings? Not you and me, but Discover, American Express, Visa, and Mastercard do.

Once I swore off cash-back cards, I have been happier and feel the most free I have ever felt. As Dave Ramsey points out, a Debit card will do everything a credit card will do except for one thing. A Debit card will NEVER get you into debt. The reason is you are spending your own money.

Spending your own money is always the best policy. Learning to live a disciplined life is so important and it is a plan that synchs with God's instructions on how to deal with money. If you want freedom, it can be found. But you must make a decision today to do it, and then seek the Lord's help. When we fully rely on the Lord, we can get the help we need.

*(Luk 18:27) And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*

*(Luk 11:9) And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*

*(Luk 11:10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

If you want the most gratification out of life, EXPECT DELAYS. But if you are patient and will wait for your blessings, I believe you will be shocked how many blessings await for those who will do things God's way.

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