As A Man Thinks Series presented by The Ministry of YOU: 5/13/25

Subtitle: Pay Now/Play Later

Pay Now/Play Later is a principle or a rule of conduct. I like how Terri Savelle Foy describes this principle in her book, The Alone Advantage. She says, “It all boils down to delaying gratification. I call it “pay now, pay later” principle. Get up early, do the hard things, pay the price so YOU can play later.”

Some years ago, behavioral scientists did a study based on this principle. They took children into a classroom and offered them a marshmallow to eat immediately. However, they told the children “If you wait to eat the marshmallow until we tell you to, then you can have two marshmallows.” The children’s responses were later categorized, which fell into three groups.

The first group, which made up one-third of the kids, shoved the marshmallow in their mouth instantly. They couldn’t wait. Instant gratification was their natural tendency. The second group, which made up another one-third of the kids, decided to wait. They naturally had the behavior of delaying gratification with ease. The third group, that made up the final one-third of the kids, were very interesting. They desperately wanted the marshmallow, but they equally had a strong desire to get two marshmallows. The struggle was real. They didn’t have the natural tendency to just patiently wait, so they turned their chairs around so they couldn’t see the temptation. They made funny faces to distract themselves from thinking about marshmallows. They literally forced themselves to delay their desire and they were rewarded for their efforts and received two marshmallows.

Group one wanted instant gratification. Group two naturally delayed gratification. Group three naturally were programmed to be group one but fought with their flesh or human nature (practiced mind-management) to become group two. Some years later the researchers followed up on those same children and discovered that those in group two and three were far more successful than group one. What was discovered from this study is that it does not matter if YOU are naturally equipped to delay your rewards like group two or not, YOU can train yourself to become group two.

We can train ourselves because our Heavenly Father has given us the “Gift of Become.” The word “become” is defined as; to undergo change or development. To bring out an even deeper understanding of this word, here are a few synonyms of the word become: grow, transform, metamorphosis, mutate, alter or modify. The antonyms or the opposite of become reveals what will happen if we don’t “become.” They are the words remain (the same), continue (no different.

The Apostle Paul reveals the “Gift of Become” in his letter to the Roman church. We are invited to “Become” AMPC Romans 12:1-2; I appeal to you therefore brethren, and beg of you in view of (all) the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies (presenting all your members and faculties) as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world (this age), (fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs), but be transformed (changed) by the (entire) renewal of your mind (by its new ideals and its new attitude) so that you may prove (for yourselves) what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect (in His Sight for you). It’s interesting that Paul said, “Presenting all our members and faculties.” Members meaning all parts of the body including our brain and faculties meaning any powers of the mind, such as reason, or instinct. So, we are to present or thinking or reasoning as a living sacrifice to God. The results will be the “Mind of Christ.” TPT 1 Corinthians 2:16; We possess Christ’s perceptions.

In other words, we can “Become” a walking advertisement for the Kingdom of God. I believe William Shakespeare in his screenplay is contemplating the “Gift of Become” when he said, “To be or not to be, is the question.” The character Hamlet is questioning whether it’s worth enduring the pain, suffering and injustices of life. He goes on to say, “Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune or take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them? To die: to sleep: no more, and by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, tis a consummation.

This is the dilemma that we all must face. Are we going to be willing to grow through the process of dying to the life of the flesh or human nature without God? So, we can become like Jesus. There’s an anonymous quote that gives us some very good insight into personal growth. “If YOU can train yourself to do what YOU should do, when YOU should do it, whether YOU feel like it or not, your success is virtually guaranteed.”

The Linked Scientific Concept

Our Heavenly Father along with our “Gift of Become” has given us a powerful tool to assist us with our transformation. This tool is revealed in the book of Lamentations 3:23; New, fresh mercies greet me with every sunrise. What are these new mercies? Scientifically speaking they are referred to as neurogenesis. Neurogenesis is the development of nerves, nervous tissue, or the nervous system. Each morning when YOU wake up, YOU have new baby nerve cells born inside your brain to use wisely as YOU remove old bad thoughts and wire in new ones. According to neuroscience, as we consciously direct our thinking, we can wire out toxic patterns of thinking and replace them with healthy thoughts. New thought networks grow. We increase our intelligence and bring healing to our minds and physical bodies. In conclusion, John Maxwell was asked. What’s the number one predictor that YOU will be successful? “Be intentional about your personal growth.”