**Wait…the Reward is Greater**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a professor at Stanford University who performed a series of studies on delayed gratification called, “The Stanford Marshmallow Experiment.” In this study, a child would be given two options: first, the child was offered a small reward immediately. The reward would sometimes be a marshmallow, but often it was a cookie or a pretzel. The second option was that if the child was patient enough to wait until the tester returned (in about fifteen minutes), then the child would receive two rewards, rather than the single reward in the first option. The studies showed that the children who waited actually succeeded in various ways later in life.

When Jesus was riding a donkey into Jerusalem, there were many different types of people in the crowd and He knew it. Jesus knew there were some who were praising Him, crying out “Hosanna,” who would later be crying out, “Crucify Him!” Jesus also knew there were those in the crowd that were looking for a Heavenly King, and those people would truly find what they were looking for. In Matthew 6:19-20, Jesus said, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth…but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” A few verses down from that, in Matthew 6:33, Jesus said, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” In essence, Jesus was saying that we do not have to worry about temporal provisions because if we think upon heaven and have a longing for His righteousness, He will take care of it all.

When Jesus died, there were Jews who were looking for instant gratification and instant relief from the governing figures of their time, but they were not thinking about the salvation of their souls. On the other hand, there was a group of people who were looking for the One who would become the perfect sacrifice to atone for their sins and He would transfer their souls from damnation to eternal sanctification. The cross poses a question for us all today: are we going to be impatient children who want our reward now (in the temporal), or are we going to patiently await the return of our Savior and then receive rewards forevermore? My prayer for us is that we do not find ourselves observing the cross rather than worshipping at the cross. May we never look at the moment that Jesus died as being the end of our reward because the fact is He is risen and that’s where our rewards begin!

*Pastor Andrew Enos*