

## Delayed Obedience is Disobedience

Let's give a rousing shout out to everyone's favorite Scottish chemist: James Swinburne.

### Who?

Exactly my point. Swinburne might have been everyone's favorite Scottish chemist had he not been so overly cautious.

Swinburne (born February 28, 1858) was actually an electrical engineer, but he was trying to find a way to insulate electrical wiring. (*If you've ever touched a wire that wasn't wrapped in insulation, you know why this was kinda important.*) Folks had already played around with mixing phenol and formaldehyde, but Swinburne discovered a way of heating it and shaping it into something useful. We don't call it "baked phenol and formaldehyde;" it has a simpler name:

### Plastic.

But Swinburne took his time with doing anything with his invention of plastic, and when he finally got around to taking it to the patent office, someone had beaten him to it—by one day.

Swinburne was the first to invent plastic, but he would not reap the benefits of his discovery.

---

When God gives you an opportunity, take it. If there is something you can do—something you know you *should* do—do it. Don't delay. And if it's something you know God wants you to do, then get after it.

I don't know who first said this (*but a dozen preachers would like to take credit for it*), but it rings true:



### Delayed obedience is disobedience.

God's Word is not there simply to be read. You get no extra points for studying the Bible. What matters is our obedience to God's Word. You might impress people with your knowledge of the Bible as a Jeopardy contestant, but what gets God's attention is your submission and obedience to His Words.

Maybe that's what David had in mind when he said, "I hurried, not hesitating to keep your commands" (Ps. 119:60).

Maybe the point I'm driving at speaks to that invention you've been working on in your basement. But I'm guessing it more likely speaks to your need to ...

- ... call your mother.
- ... invite that friend or co-worker to your Bible study group.
- ... check up on someone and offer encouragement.
- ... apologize.

The opportunity won't always be there.

Oh ... and that passage you read in the Bible this morning? Follow through in obedience *now*.

"But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone looking at his own face in a mirror. For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of person he was. But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works — this person will be blessed in what he does" (Jas. 1:22-25).