

Waiting on the Lord

When I was a child, I never liked waiting for anything. Christmas was a difficult time for me because I had to wait weeks to open up my presents. I would sometimes cry and beg my parents to let me open up a present before Christmas Day. I hated waiting. And to be honest, I still don't like to wait but it's not nearly as bad as it used to be. I've learned that waiting is a part of life. I've also learned the significance of waiting as it pertains to our relationship with God. Scripture tells us to wait on the Lord. For instance, Psalm 27.14 says, "Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD." To wait on the Lord means that you trust God to work out things in his time. It means that instead of taking matters into your own hands, you place them completely into the hands of God.

Many of God's servants have had to learn to wait on the Lord. After being told he would have a child, Abraham waited twenty-five years before Isaac was born. Think of how hard that must have been. Yet, also think of how exhilarating it was when Abraham and Sarah finally received the promise of a child. David had to wait years before he became the King of Israel. Samuel had anointed him as king while Saul was in office, and Saul even tried to kill David on a number of occasions. Yet, David kept waiting on the Lord and finally Saul was killed and David was made king. Even Jesus had to wait. He did not begin his earthly ministry until he was thirty years old. Until then his life apparently was pretty normal at least in the eyes of people.

Waiting on the Lord is something we all have to do at times, yet it's not easy. Why is it so hard to wait? Well, the bottom line is: we want results now. We don't like to wait, and we don't like to go through times of suffering. We would rather have God step in immediately and rectify the situation. Yet, God doesn't always do this. Sometimes he sits back and waits for the proper moment to step in and deliver us. Do you remember the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (see John 11)? This is a story about waiting on the Lord. Though Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, he waited until he had died and he did not return to where Lazarus was buried until he had been in the tomb for four days. Mary and Martha did not understand why Jesus did not come sooner or why he did not prevent their brother from dying. Yet, God had a purpose in all of this. When Lazarus was dead beyond any doubt, Jesus stepped in and raised him from the dead and so God received great glory from this. And God will receive

great glory when he steps in and helps you as well. But we need to wait on the Lord.

What should we do while we wait on the Lord? First, we need to realize that waiting is not the same as being idle. We should do our part as we wait. For instance, if you are waiting on the Lord to provide you with a job that doesn't mean you don't go around and put out applications. You do this, but you also trust the Lord to work out things in his time and in his way. Secondly, we need to persevere in prayer. Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matt 7.7). God moves in response to the prayers of his people. As we wait on the Lord, we should keep praying and trusting in the Lord. Finally, we need to cling to the promises of God. The Psalmist said, "I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope" (Ps 130.5). God says in his word that he will hear our prayers and deliver us. We need to believe this even when it seems like the heavens are brass. God will honor his word, and God will come through for us. Don't give up. Help is on the way.

Pastor Mark