

Invisible Power | Part 2 | Pastor Steve Wells | 08.29.2021
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God is Working – In the Waiting!

Ice Breaker: Tell a humorous story about the impatience of your children.

The last thing kids want to hear is Mom say, “Not now.” It can prompt anger, frustration, even hopelessness. This “dis-ease” of waiting follows most of us into our adult years. We may not respond with the same emotional outbursts as children, but most of us still hate waiting for what we want.

Share a candid story about waiting recently with the group. (Grocery Store, DMV, Appt.) How did you do?

And our modern society just makes it worse. We want everything done quickly — and new devices constantly spring up to meet those demands and encourage our impatience. We are not used to waiting, and the more our technology caters to our immediate desires, the less we feel willing to wait.

Such is our dilemma as Christians. While society makes every attempt to make our life easier and faster, God works on a very different timetable. In his mind, nothing is wrong with waiting. In fact, waiting can actually be a positive good that He often uses to make us more like his Son.

The story of Adam and Eve is a story of rebellion against God. Once they believed that God didn't have their best interests in mind, they decided to go ahead without God and do what they wanted. They became, in effect, their own god. Too often, this is exactly what we do today. When God tells us to wait, we don't trust Him, but go ahead and find ways to accomplish what we want to happen.

This tendency to push God to the side goes against His plan for us. It creates distance in our relationship with Him. It causes us to get into trouble and brings pain. What good is it to gain the whole world *now* — whatever it is we think we want — and forfeit our souls' intimacy with God ([Mark 8:36](#))?

God wants us to learn how to follow Him and put down our demanding selves — to calm that screaming child in us. One way He helps us do this is to say, “Wait.” That miserable, uncomfortable, sometimes painful state of silence is one of God's most powerful tools to set us free. If we are willing, that is.

ASK: Can someone share a personal testimony of Waiting on God – in the past – that has been resolved in an answered prayer?

Choosing to Wait – Yeah, it's a Choice (Hint: How you Wait)

We don't start out willing to wait. Our natural response to waiting is often anger or doubt. Fortunately, God is gracious and merciful, understanding of our tendencies. Simply feeling deep, complex emotions in waiting — especially for significant things, like a pregnancy or a job — is not necessarily sinful in itself. But we can decide where those emotions take us. We can decide to exalt these feelings. We might act on them by taking matters into our own hands. Or perhaps we will not act, but we'll make an idol out of the good for which we are waiting — every passing day is another log on the fires of bitterness, impatience, ingratitude, perhaps even resentment against the God who won't give us what we want. Or, by God's grace, we can choose to wait as He intends.

“Waiting on the Lord is the opposite of running ahead of the Lord, and it's the opposite of bailing out on the Lord,” writes John Piper.

The choice is ours, to take a deep breath, release our clenched hands, and let God be God. And when we do - we are invited to experience the expectant, joyful hope of waiting on the Lord.

Pray for God to Work in You

As we seek to accept and rejoice in God's handling of our lives, including His timing, we can ask God to work in us two main things, so that our waiting is not in vain: humility and trust.

1. Humility

Sometimes, when I've found myself getting impatient and upset, I will remind myself that God is the one who put me here. My life is not my own. This is humility. It is coming to realize that we are a breath and God owes us nothing ([Psalm 39:5](#); [Luke 17:7-10](#)).

2. Trust

Then comes trust, which means believing at least two things about God: He is *powerful*, and He is *loving*.

Believing God is *powerful* means that we know He is in charge of what's happening. Much of our anxiety in waiting is because we forget that "God is able to make all grace abound to you" ([2 Corinthians 9:8](#)). You are not at the mercy of your circumstances.

Believing God is *loving* means that there is care and purpose behind all that he does. It means that He is faithful to help us right now and bring us blessings later. It means that his judgment and timing is always perfectly good. True, He owes us nothing, yet He has promised to give us everything we need ([Philippians 4:19](#)).

Even during that long road of silence, God cares deeply for us. We can be like David and remind ourselves, "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" ([Psalm 27:14](#)).

Blessing of Waiting in Faith

Some of the greatest figures in the Bible — Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David — had to wait for many years for God's promises. Everything that happened in the meantime was used to prepare them, inwardly as well as outwardly. Then, when they reached their promise, they were blessed beyond measure.

God invites us to trust in His goodness today and His faithfulness tomorrow. Relinquishing control to Him is the main route to experience His love and peace. It unites our hearts with His. It creates a level of maturity and character that we will take with us into the future, and it enables us to enjoy His future blessings all the more.

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