

Waiting on God

Message 05 of 05 in the series, "Recommended Playlist"

A. In order to have a relationship with the Lord, we need to learn to wait on the Lord.

1. God looks at time differently than we do.

"For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night."
Psalm 90:4 (NIV)

2. God's plans are not our plans.

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9 (NLT)

B. Four good reasons we should wait on the Lord:

1. God is maturing us. (Character development takes time.)

"Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them— Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the LORD tested Joseph's character." Psalm 105:17-19 (NLT)

2. God is maturing others too.

"I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." Philippians 1:6 (NLT)

3. God is protecting us.

"You are my strength; I wait for you to rescue me, for you, O God, are my fortress." Psalm 59:9 (NLT)

4. Waiting builds intimacy and dependence on God.

"I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning." Psalm 130:5-6 (NIV)

C. Psalm 37 gives us great instruction on how to live while we're waiting on the Lord.

1. "Don't worry about the wicked or envy those who do wrong. For like grass, they soon fade away. Like spring flowers, they soon wither." Psalm 37:1-2 (NLT)

2. "Trust in the LORD and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper." Psalm 37:3 (NLT)

"Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, 'I will take revenge; I will pay them back,' says the LORD. Instead, 'If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.' Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good." Romans 12:18-21 (NLT)

3. "Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires." Psalm 37:4 (NLT)

"My heart has heard you say, 'Come and talk with me.' And my heart responds, 'LORD, I am coming.'" Psalm 27:8 (NLT)

4. "Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you. He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun." Psalm 37:5-6 (NLT)

"Commit" = "galal" (Hebrew) = "To roll"

5. "Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes." Psalm 37:7 (NLT)

"Be still, and know that I am God!" Psalm 46:10 (NLT)

6. "Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper— it only leads to harm. For the wicked will be destroyed, but those who trust in the LORD will possess the land." Psalm 37:8-9 (NLT)

"You can be sure of this: The LORD set apart the godly for himself. The LORD will answer when I call to him. Don't sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent."

Psalm 4:3-4 (NLT)

7. "Put your hope in the LORD. Travel steadily along his path. He will honor you by giving you the land. You will see the wicked destroyed." Psalm 37:34 (NLT)

"Yet I am confident I will see the LORD's goodness while I am here in the land of the living. Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD."

Psalm 27:13-14 (NLT)

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Quotations

"...the deepest spiritual lessons are not learned by his letting us have our way in the end, but by His making us wait, bearing with us in love and patience until we are able to honestly pray what He taught His disciples to pray: 'Thy will be done.'" Elisabeth Elliot

"We are inclined to think that everything that happens is to be turned into useful teaching. In actual fact, it is to be turned into something even better than teaching, namely, character. The mountaintop is not meant to *teach* us anything, it is meant to *make* us something." Oswald Chambers

"Everything is necessary that God sends our way; nothing can be necessary that He withholds." - John Newton

Discussion questions

1. Who is the most patient person you know? Who is the least patient person you know? Are you halfway between them or closer to one end?
2. Why do most of us struggle with waiting on God?
3. Read Psalm 40:1. Describe an answer to prayer that took a long time. How patient were you while waiting?
4. React to the following statement: "There are two common mistakes we make when waiting on God: a. We think God isn't working. b. We think we know what God is doing."
5. Read Psalm 37:1-9. How does it make you feel to know that David, who wrote this psalm, was probably 10-15 years old when he was anointed by Samuel but 30 years old when he finally became king over Israel?
6. Read Psalm 105:17-19. How does waiting test our character?
7. Read Galatians 5:22-23. Paul says patience is a fruit produced by the Holy Spirit working in our lives. So how do we get more patience?
8. Share with your group one thing you are waiting on God to do. Spend some time praying for each other.