



## INTIMACY WITH GOD THROUGH WAITING

**WORSHIP:** Trading my sorrows/ In Your Presence O God/ Trust His Heart

**WELCOME:** When was the last time you waited? How long did you wait?

**WORD:**

*"To whom then will you liken Me That I would be his equal?" says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high And see who has created these stars, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the <sup>[b]</sup>strength of His power, Not one of them is missing. <sup>27</sup> Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, And the justice due me <sup>[b]</sup>escapes the notice of my God"? <sup>28</sup> Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. <sup>29</sup> He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. <sup>30</sup> Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, <sup>31</sup> Yet those who <sup>[e]</sup>wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will <sup>[e]</sup>mount up with <sup>[e]</sup>wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary." Is 40: 25-31*

What is waiting?

To WAIT or to hope has the idea of binding together. Think of a cord, by itself it is weak but if you take several strands and twist them together binding them that piece of cord becomes stronger.

Another word we have to consider is RENEW which means to change or exchange.

The Bible tells us that if we wait ON the Lord, He will exchange your strength for His strength. Similar to how an eagle will molt his old feathers for new ones allowing him to once again fly new heights. As we are renewed in the Lord, He gives us the new strength.

What does it mean to wait on the Lord?

*"True waiting on the Lord, is a confident, expectant hope that sometimes requires a desperate clinging onto God."* Often times we have to come to a point when we have nothing else to do but to cling in desperation to the Lord. We think that nothing is happening, but the Lord is there in the background working there. But as we wait we are not doing nothing, it is not waiting in desperation – we should have a confident, expectant hope that God is doing something. It is not clinging on to your desperate situation, rather it is clinging on to God.

Some men in the Bible who waited on God:

- David had to wait 15 years to become king
- Moses waited 40 years in the desert before God called him to deliver the people
- Abraham (at age 75) had to wait 25 years to have a child
- Paul waited 3 years in the Arabian Desert
- Joseph had to wait 13 years in Egypt

JOSEPH The Dreamer, was a man who waited on God. He waited 13 years:

- Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:5-10
- He was sold to slavery in Genesis 37:28
- While he was in Potiphar's House Genesis 39:1-10
- He was falsely accused and imprisoned in Genesis 39:21-23
- He interprets the dreams of the Cupbearer and the baker in Genesis 40:16-23
- The Cupbearer remembers Him, Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream --- God fulfills His promises to Joseph Genesis 41
- Joseph is reunited with all His family in Genesis 46

In the 13 years that Joseph was waiting, he continued to bloom where he was planted and remained intimate with the Lord. He could have chosen to be bitter or angry but he trusted the Lord and believed in the dream that God had put in his heart. When Joseph was reunited with his family, he told them in Genesis 50:20 *"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people."* In those years that Joseph was waiting, God was preparing him to become a man fit for the task that was meant for him. Joseph never lost his intimacy with God, he continued to stay busy doing whatever was in front of him all the time believing and trusting that God would fulfill his promises. Joseph was able to do this because he knew his God.

SAUL was a man who refused to wait. (1 Samuel 13:8 – 11a)

Why couldn't he wait?

1. He was focused on the situation and not on the Lord.
2. He lacked intimacy and trust in God.
3. He moved ahead of God.
4. The root of pride is self-sufficiency.

In 1 Samuel 15:22b we are reminded “ *To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.*” When the Lord tells us to wait, He expects us to obey Him and not to make a move until He says “Go!” God's waiting room is God's classroom. Many times when God asks us to wait, it is a test of our character. God wants to see what we are made of. If we pass the test, he prepares us for something greater. Saul didn't pass the test.

We have to bear in mind that the more intimate you are with God, the easier it is to wait for Him. Waiting is an active process not passive. Waiting for God is NOT laziness, going to sleep, or the abandonment of effort. Instead waiting for God means: *activity under command, a readiness for any new command, and to do nothing until the command is given.*

There are two things we must understand: to wait FOR has to do with timing – God's timing. God's timetable, not manipulating the situation, doing things your way . To wait ON is while you are waiting for God's timing you are active while waiting for God to reveal His will and His answer – in His time and in His way.

What are the character traits of someone who waits?

1. TARRY with God – to stay intimate with God
2. THRIVE where you are planted – continue to bloom where you are now, like Joseph he continued to do his best
3. TRUE to yourself – maintain your integrity, do not compromise your values
4. TAKE CARE of your heart – guard your heart because the heart is deceitful.

Bear in mind Romans 8:28 “ *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*” We do not know God's timing but we know that God has a purpose for us, this should encourage us to wait. Don't be a step behind God. Don't be a step before God but rather keep in step with God. Then you will always be in the center of God's will and waiting does not become a burden.

Discussion Questions:

1. Am I most often: in step with God's timing? Behind God's timing? Ahead of God's timing?
2. What are the benefits of waiting upon the Lord?
3. What are some of my waiting experiences? How did I respond?

#### **WORKS:**

Sometimes waiting can be difficult and even excruciating. But God tells us to wait. Whatever circumstance or situation you are in, we must understand that God has a plan for us and that He is always in control. His answers to our prayers are never too late, never too early but rather He is always on time.

#### **GOD'S WAITING ROOM**

The Bible commands us 43 times to WAIT. Some of these verses are Psalm 27:4; Psalm 37:7; Isaiah 64:4. This assures us that if we wait patiently for the Lord, God will act on our behalf but we must learn to trust Him. Waiting is part of the process of becoming what God wants us to be. In the same way that Joseph had a dream, what is your dream? Now that you understand what waiting is -- Is there anything you need to change in your attitude? In your outlook? In your heart? What do you think God is changing in you or teaching you while you are waiting? What has become the biggest obstacle in your waiting?

**EAGLE'S WINGS.** Using the analogy of how the mother eagle teaches her young to fly – try to ask yourself where you are in the process of renewal. Are you in the stage that God is taking away everything that you have become comfortable with? Are you standing at the edge of the nest? Are free falling? Or are you flying on eagle's wings?

Check your heart: Are you anxious? Are you scared? Are you peaceful? Are you trusting? Are you self-sufficient or God reliant?

Waiting for God is never a waste of time, instead we can use our waiting time wisely by reading the book He has left in His waiting room – the Bible.