

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Waiting on God's Timing—Part 2

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 64:4 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Psalm 37:9, 34; 40:1-3 | Isaiah 49:23
Lamentations 3:25-26 | Philippians 4:4-7

SUMMARY

God loves us and has promised to meet our needs, but He doesn't give us everything we desire when we want it.

Otherwise, He'd take second place in our lives because our main concern would be the things He could do for us. Furthermore, our requests aren't always in accordance with His will. Even when they align with His plans, we may have to wait until they fit His schedule. Instead of seeing delays as obstacles, we should look at them as loving interventions of our heavenly Father. By rushing ahead, we miss His very best blessings.

SERMON POINTS

Isaiah 64:4 tells us that the Lord acts in behalf of those who wait for Him.

Since He's omniscient, He knows all about us and works in every aspect of our lives to accomplish His will and conform us to the likeness of His Son. Throughout our lifetimes, He's committed to removing anything that hinders His good purposes, adding what truly blesses us, and guiding us through every situation.

Why are we required to wait for God's timing?

To receive His best, we must be willing to wait while He acts in our behalf:

- To ready the circumstances. When we are walking in the Lord's will, He actively works in situations and in people's lives to bring about the right conditions at the appropriate time so His plans can

be fulfilled. A willingness to wait reveals how much we value what He wants to give us, but impatience demonstrates that what we really want is to have our own way.

- To purify our motives. When God doesn't grant our requests, we should examine ourselves to see whether we're asking for selfish reasons, out of envy, or without considering whether other people might be hurt. The Lord's desire is for the motivations of our hearts to flow from a Christlike character.
- To protect us from making mistakes. When the Lord sees us headed in the wrong direction, He intervenes by putting obstacles in our way. He loves us too much to let us head onto a path of destruction.
- To make the greatest impact for our lives. When God withholds an answer to prayer, He's not being unkind, but He's actually demonstrating pure love by doing what is beneficial for us. His goal is to transform each of us into the best person we can possibly be.

When confronted with delays, we have three choices.

Every time God requires us to wait, we can respond in the following ways:

- **Manipulate the situation.** We're often tempted to maneuver around obstacles until we get our way. The problem is that our manipulations place us outside of God's will, and we eventually have to live with the negative consequences that follow.
- **Quit praying.** When the Lord doesn't answer our requests, we can simply give up and never pray about it again. However, some of the best things in

life require the longest waiting period.

- **Wait and watch God work in our behalf.** After making our requests, we could choose to trust the Lord, let Him accomplish His will in His own time, and watch Him work it all out.

What are the requirements for waiting on God?

We are a generation constantly on the move. Many of us don't take the time to sit quietly with the Lord, asking Him to speak to our hearts. Perhaps that's why many people experience trouble and pain—they haven't listened to God. Waiting on the Lord requires not only time, but the following attributes as well:

- **Trust.** God's best only comes in His way and His time. We won't always understand or appreciate what He's doing, but we must trust Him and obey His directions.
- **Humility.** Waiting upon the Lord also requires a humble spirit that acknowledges that His way is better than ours.
- **Patience.** God is not an errand boy who follows our instructions. On the contrary, we're the ones who must wait for Him to provide exactly what He's planned at just the right moment. Although the wait may be long, His best is always worth the delay.
- **Courage.** Waiting on the Lord requires the fortitude to resist three temptations:
 - **The temptation to follow our schedule.** We must keep our minds focused on what God desires, not on what we want.
 - **The temptation to yield to the pressure of others.** People may be quick to offer advice, but we must follow God's will, not theirs.
 - **The temptation to be afraid.** We may wonder whether the Lord's way could work for us. There is no reason to fear because He protects and defends His children when they walk in His will.

What if we fail to wait for God's timing?

When we insist on going our own way, we can experience the following consequences:

- **We step out of the will of God.** Altering or

adjusting the Lord's clear directions is an act of rebellion and will result in His loving discipline.

- **We delay His blessings.** When we go our own way, God doesn't bless our disobedience.
- **We bring pain and suffering upon ourselves.** Trying to adjust the Lord's plan by stepping ahead or doing what we deem reasonable never improves the situation, but instead, causes more problems.
- **We experience confusion.** When we don't follow God's will, we wonder what's happening in our lives.
- **We cause other people to suffer.** A decision to sidestep the Lord's way affects others because they share in the consequences of our disobedience.
- **We subject ourselves to financial difficulties.** If we don't wait for the Lord to provide in His way and time, we may make unwise decisions we can't afford.

What can we expect as we wait for God's timing?

When we wait upon the Lord, believing His way is best, He'll fulfill these promises in our lives:

- God will show His goodness to us (Lam. 3:25-26).
- He will answer our prayers (Ps. 40:1-3).
- We'll see the fulfillment of our faith when we obey Him (Isa. 49:23).
- He will help us conquer our struggles (Ps. 37:9, 34).
- We'll experience God's peace if we walk in His will (Phil. 4:4-7).

RESPONSE

- Can you see ways that the Lord has worked on your behalf when you've waited on Him? What did He do? How was your character shaped in the process?
- Think about a time you jumped ahead of God. What motivated you? What consequences did you face? What did you learn from the experience?
- What can you do to increase your trust in the Lord and His timing in your life?

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